Essential Business Tools for Australian Speech Pathologists

Running a private practice is hard work, especially if you lack formal business training, business and compliance systems, time, energy and money. As a profession, we spend too much time weighing up options and reinventing wheels. Many of us are reluctant to think about ourselves as business owners – fearing – wrongly - that we can't be successful commercially and ethical at the same time. And most speech pathologists (the ones I know anyway) loathe marketing and self-promotion, leaving many potential clients and their families unsure about the benefits of our services.

To help overcome some of these obstacles, I've pulled together a list of free or low cost, efficient, resources you can implement to improve your business knowledge, systems and marketing.

	Tool	What it is	Links
A. Tools to learn about planning, starting and running a business			
	business.gov.au	Template business plans, information about business structures, licences, filings, running a business.	https://www.business.gov.au/
	Speech Pathology Australia	Guide to Setting Up A Private Practice	SPA members download
	Open Culture	Curates a list of 150 free business courses from leading business schools, including Stanford, Oxford, and Carnegie Mellon.	http://www.openculture.com/business_free_courses
	Video and Podcasts	Learn about business while you commute or exercise with podcasts.	TED Talks Business (https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/tedtalks-business/id470622782?mt=2) How I Built This (https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510313/how-i-built-this) Unemployable (https://unemployable.com/podcast/) Entrepreneur on Fire (https://www.eofire.com/)

	Tool	What it is	Links
B. Business Systems			
		Practice Management Software to support your service delivery model and work with your payments/accounting systems.	http://trainitmedical.com.au
		Accounting software	Xero (https://www.xero.com/au/) MYOB (https://www.myob.com/au) Freshbooks (https://www.freshbooks.com/)
		Notetaking, archiving, organising and task lists.	Evernote (https://evernote.com/) Asana (https://asana.com/) Trello (https://trello.com/)
		Non-client document/resource management and storage	Dropbox (https://www.dropbox.com) Google Drive (https://www.google.com.au/drive/)
		For inexpensive domain names, websites and webhosting.	GoDaddy (https://au.godaddy.com/) Wordpress (https://wordpress.com/) Wix (https://www.wix.com/) Square Space (https://www.squarespace.com/)
		Team communication. Make your policies and procedures easily accessible to everyone in your organisation.	Slack (https://slack.com/) Free Intranet using Google Sites (https://sites.google.com/)
C. Resources to help you save time and to stand out			

	Tool	What it is	Links
		Time management, Pomodoro Technique	Various apps. Read more about it here: http://bit.ly/2kmXFPt
		Schedule all of your social media from one place	Hootsuite (https://hootsuite.com/) Sprout Social (https://sproutsocial.com/)
		Video conferencing	Zoom (https://zoom.us/) Skype (https://www.skype.com/en/) Google Hangouts (https://hangouts.google.com/)
		Design/marketing/social media materials	Canva (https://www.canva.com/) Fiverr (http://fiverr.com) Upwork (https://www.upwork.com/) Freelancer (https://www.freelancer.com/) 99 Designs (https://99designs.com.au/)
		Manage your email marketing/digital product downloads.	Mailchimp (https://mailchimp.com/) AWeber (https://www.aweber.com) LeadPages (https://www.leadpages.net/)
		Record your screen to model and deliver training for clients	Camtasia (https://www.techsmith.com/video-editor.html) Screenflow (https://www.telestream.net/screenflow/store.asp)
D. To fight stress and isolation		Join SPA Private Practice Facebook Group. Sign up to other online communities. Join local chamber of commerce and other local business groups in the real world.	http://clinicmastery.com/
		Relax with meditation	www.calm.com
		Exercise with music	PodRunner (http://www.podrunner.com)