

Ep #45: My Top 3 Secrets for Success as a Clinician



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Heather Branscombe

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Welcome to *Clinicians Creating Impact*, a show for physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists looking to take the next step in their careers and make a real difference in the lives of their clients. If you're looking to improve the lives of neurodiverse children and families with neurological-based challenges, grow your own business, or simply show up to help clients, this is the show for you.

I'm Heather Branscombe, Therapist, Certified Coach, Clinical Director, and Owner of Abilities Neurological Rehabilitation. I have over 25 years of experience in both the public and private sectors, and I'm here to help you become the therapist you want to be, supporting people to work towards their dreams and live their best lives. You ready to dive in? Let's go.

Hi there, friend. Welcome back to the podcast. I'm so happy to be connecting with you today. At the time of this recording I really am having so much fun at work, which I want to say doesn't mean that everything is going well at work, because it kind of isn't. But it does mean that I am able to find a space to have so much fun. And today I want to share my secrets to why I think that is.

This last month of work has been a series of both amazing successes and some massive challenges. We're in the hiring stages and we've started to onboard some simply outstanding therapists on our team. I love this because I just find it so much fun, not only to help them be successful, but also to find ways to leverage that success and ways to leverage their unique strengths to benefit both our clients and our team. It's so fun.

This month, as I mentioned earlier, it's also been a huge challenge. Without going into a lot of details, just to say we've had a major challenge with one of our funders and because of a back end snafu on their end, which we neither caused nor could actually fix on our end, it all ended up resulting in payments from this funder coming – Well what it used to be coming from was multiple times a week and then it turned out that we hadn't got payments from the funder to over a month.

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It took that long to resolve the challenge. Now, when you're responsible, like I am, for the payroll of staff within five locations, I'm here to tell you that doesn't feel awesome. It feels super challenging, especially when you're not in control of how or when or even if the issue is going to be resolved.

Now, I share this now because it has been resolved and I do feel good about how it was resolved. I just want to share, I think it's important to highlight the challenges of things like this because sometimes, especially in our culture right now, entrepreneurship is sold to us as being kind of fun and easy. And the truth is there are pros and cons to entrepreneurship, just like there are pros and cons to being an employee.

One of the reasons my month has been amazing is that I work with some of the best people ever. And those people have made even the challenges so much lighter. Working with the right team is a game changer. I'll talk a little bit about why that matters a little later in the podcast, but if that alone piques your interest, I would really invite you to come to our website and explore the current positions that are available at Abilities.

We're really working to empower our team to co-create something pretty special and I would love for you to explore and see if it might be a good fit for you. Now, we hire slowly and we're very strategic about when and who we hire. But the fact that you're listening to this podcast today tells me that you might just be a great fit at Abilities.

So, as a listener of the podcast you don't need to create a resume, we don't need to make this harder than it is. Just send me an email and we can set up a 30-minute confidential conversation to talk about what you're looking for in your next position and if we might at all be a fit for you. So, having said that, let's get back to the secrets of success I want to share with you.

I don't want to claim that I'm the most successful clinician ever. I mean, first of all, success is definitely in the eye of the beholder. But the fact that, collectively, we run five successful locations and have grown to this point over the last 15

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years, I just share that from the fact that there's probably something to be learned here. And it's definitely something that I want to share with you today.

So let me save you the 25 years of my professional experience and the 15 years of being a leader here at Abilities and successfully growing an organization, and give you my top three secrets for success.

So my first tip is to work with your strengths. I have no doubt, as a clinician, that you at least have an understanding of the strengths that you have and how those strengths help you to be successful because fundamentally, you can't become a clinician without working to some level of success, right?

Many times we ask and we also look for those strengths when we are assessing our clients or patients as part of that overall assessment. So I'd offer that you can do the same thing for yourself. What strengths do you have? And how could you use them to be successful at work?

I think that there's this myth out there that it takes a certain kind of strength to be successful, especially in the context of work. And I just want to say I fundamentally disagree with that. I see so many of my colleagues, inside and outside of Abilities, and peers that are all objectively successful and definitely have different strengths.

Some of them are super detail oriented and others naturally see the big picture. Some are super caring and may even identify as a people pleaser, others just have this amazing ability to say what's true to them, despite the cost. Some love the clinical part of our profession, others love that part but also love the back end support side of it.

I just want to say none of these strings are a barrier to success. What is a barrier is deciding that your unique strengths aren't enough to be successful or that you need to be someone else even, to be successful. I can say that I am fundamentally the same person I am now, running five locations, as I was when it was just me in the first month of opening Abilities. And then the same person I was when I had one other part-time staff member one month later.

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So, sure, I have a different skill set now than I did before, but as I have embraced and really leaned into my strengths, what I notice is success is really just becoming more of who you really are. Which brings me to my second tip, ask for help in areas that you need help.

Now, that might sound easy and kind of obvious. But remember that team I referenced at the beginning of the podcast episode today? You do not become successful alone. Now, I absolutely understand that any success that I have is only because I work with amazing people. Now, they're not perfect people, which is fantastic because if you can ask any one of them, they will absolutely tell you that I am also far from perfect.

But together we have this diverse skill set which is complimentary, especially to my strengths and helps me enormously at work. And really, this started early on. The first person I hired, which I am so happy to this day still works with me, was very similar to me in terms of the values of what I wanted to create in Abilities, but very different in her strengths. She is kind and dependable, hopefully things that she would agree we share. But she was also able to set boundaries around scheduling and finances, which I really did need help with at first.

I have an outstanding team today, both clinically and with the back end support. I have these people now on my team with expertise in specific clinical areas, in administration, finance, legal, operations and AR. The mind kind of boggles when I speak it out like I am right now. And the truth is, I depend on all of those people to help us together to create this outstanding staff and client experience.

And they show up all the time to advise me, to show me another perspective, to tell me when I'm wrong – I love when they do that – and to support the areas where I am objectively not strong. These are people who, obviously, are on the payroll at Abilities, but there's also trusted outside professionals, colleagues, friends and also family.

So the question that I would ask you is who is on your team to support you? And even more importantly, what support do you think is missing right now? How can you find that support in a way that works for you and your work right now, today?

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What resources do you have right now to help you? And those could be other team members at work, other colleagues, friends, families. Decide what you have, and be grateful for it and also decide what you need next.

Now, my last secret is my newfound mantra that I personally love and hopefully gives you some value as well. This is my new mantra, dream big, but do less. I'm actually kind of done with smart goals and maybe you are, especially as a clinician, familiar with those smart goals that can talk about a lot of different things, but they're usually specific, measurable, actionable, reliable or realistic, and time-driven.

I'm definitely done with smart goals when it comes to being realistic for myself. If you want to know the backstory about why that is, I can point you to episode three, Why Create a Bigger Impact, episode eight, The One Key To Your Goal, and episode 18, Why Failure Is Amazing. My goals, as it sits right now, do not actually seem realistic to me. And I am totally okay with that.

Now, if I haven't convinced you of that and if you don't believe me, and books maybe are your thing, I totally recommend the book 10X Is Easier Than 2X by Benjamin Hardy. One, isn't that an amazing title? I just love that title. It really helps you to see a different perspective to see why 10X is actually better than 2X.

The premise is that dreaming bigger helps me to think in new and different ways, which actually allows me to create different results than my current thinking does. I would say, by far, it's the number one thing that has changed my work in the last two years. One of the reasons that I actually didn't want to dream big in the past, which may be the same for you right now, is that my brain automatically thought that bigger dreams meant more work.

I used to think that because that's how my brain would solve that problem. And it's also how I actually grew Abilities, if I'm being honest, in the first few years. When I first started Abilities, I worked six days a week and I didn't take a salary for the first two years. I now know there is absolutely another way, and it actually came to me when I was working with some of my clients.

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For now I just want to share, there is a way to dream big and to do less. The first way to do that is to use those first two tips that I shared, and go in on all your strengths and get help in those other areas. That's how you do less. But there's another layer to this, and I actually want to talk to you more about it. And I've just decided now, I made that executive decision, that there's a whole story behind this and I want to share that with you in next week's podcast episode.

But for now, I just want to leave you with a couple of questions. So you can start by asking yourself, what would I create if I could work the same or less than I do right now, but dream bigger? Of course your brain is going to tell you it's not possible, that smart goals are the way to go. And if you want to go that way, that's amazing. I love that for you. I'm not here to force you to change your mind, if I could even do that.

But what if you didn't have to work harder to create your big dream? If that's appealing to you, I'd invite you to listen to next week's podcast episode. In the meantime, try out these three secrets and let me know how it goes. Play to your strengths, ask for help and dream big but do less. I know that as you do that, success is almost guaranteed. I know that because I'm living that right now. Thank you so much for listening and I'll talk to you next week. Take care.

If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, you can follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. And if you haven't already, I would really appreciate it if you could leave a rating and review to let me know what you think and to help others find *Clinicians Creating Impact*.

It doesn't have to be a five-star rating, although I sure hope you love the show. I'd really want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome podcast that provides tons of value. To learn more about me and the work that I do, visit my website at www.abilitiesrehabilitation.com/clinicianscorner to download your free Getting it All Done at Work process and to see what I'm up to. Thanks so much.

Thanks for joining me this week on the *Clinicians Creating Impact* podcast. Want to learn more about the work I'm doing with Abilities Rehabilitation? Head on over to abilitiesrehabilitation.com. See you next week.