

## FIVE THINGS I'VE LEARNED IN SIX MONTHS AS A SOLO-PRENEUR

5. **Sending your first bills is the second best part of your practice – collecting your first check is the best!** *I'll never forget sending my first set of monthly bills. I know it sounds selfish, but these were little messengers sent out to collect little gifts that would belong just to me! Not to the "firm," not to be thrown into the black hole, wondering what will trickle out at the bottom. But to me! Then, one day soon after, I opened an envelope and there was a check with MY NAME on it. It makes you understand Sally Field at the Academy Awards when she exclaims, "They like me! They really like me!"*

4. **You've got to have faith and believe in second chances.** *As a solo entrepreneur, you are the marketing department. Developing clients becomes critically important. Not every presentation to a prospective client will result in a retainer fee. But...just because one prospect says no does not mean the next one (or the one after that, or even the fourth or fifth one) won't say yes. Marketing is a numbers game and you cannot become discouraged the first time someone turns you down. Likewise, you may develop a marketing initiative that goes nowhere. Most entrepreneurs fail at their first attempt, or their first ten attempts. You will always have a second chance.*

3. **You've got to create a result!** *In my "prior life" working for a large firm, the necessary result was showing up each day. In my "new life" as an entrepreneur, it's all about the client and the results the client seeks to achieve. Discussing, defining, understanding, and mutually agreeing upon the desired result is vitally important.*

2. **You need a support structure, preferably a supportive spouse!** *My wife is the best! She collaborates with me on plans for the practice, she helps me analyze client matters, works with me on marketing strategy, reassures me when I need it, and – because she is a lawyer in a firm of her own – she has medical insurance! Launching a solo practice would be much more difficult without a supportive spouse, and impossible with a critical spouse.*

1. **You can do this!** *Six months ago, looking at solo-preneurship from the other side of the chasm (from my office at the big firm) I sort of thought I could make it work – but I wasn't really sure. Others with less knowledge, skill and/or attitude seemed to succeed at it, but would I? Now, six months later, there are still up and down days (and sometimes both ups and downs in the same day). But I now know I can do this – you can too!*

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