

ONE PROUD PRACTITIONER

BY GLENN BAKER



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DR PAT WIGLEY HEADS UP BAY SPORTSMED, AN AWARD WINNING TAURANGA-BASED CLINIC WHERE PHYSIOTHERAPISTS AND CHIROPRACTORS COMBINE SKILLS TO PROVIDE AFFORDABLE RESULTS-DRIVEN CARE.

As a 17-year-old school-leaver growing up south of Auckland’s Bombay Hills, Pat Wigley got his first taste of business management when he ran his own windsurf hire school over the summer holidays. He thrived on his new found freedom to make choices and made a modest profit.

Next stop was Otago University where he picked up a physical education degree and marketing diploma, while completing his Army Territorial Force Officer Training.

After graduation Pat took up a profit-sharing position with a gym, and over two years proceeded to turn it into a very profitable business. But the real value came when he met a chiropractor client, who convinced him he should train to be a chiropractor.

“As someone who is into health, biomechanics and human performance it didn’t take me long to enrol for a further four years of tertiary study,” says Pat.

Graduating a third time, he then set up a clinic called Chiropractic and Sport (CNS), in South Auckland in 2001. Two years later CNS won the Papakura Business Awards in two categories and claimed the overall Supreme title.

In 2007 Pat relocated his family to Tauranga – his wife Virginia’s home town.

“We wanted to invest time and energy in our boys’ lives as we believed this would be more beneficial for their development than us just pounding the money-making treadmill,” explains Pat. “Now every week you’ll find me

coaching my boys’ sports, helping them sail, teaching them to fish, taking them to school, making dinner and helping with school activities.”

It didn’t take Pat long before he stumbled across the ideal location for a new type of clinic. It was a Tauranga City Council-managed facility with an unused dark, dingy chair storage space. “Business is easy when you have a Council willing to support positive business initiatives and they consented to a custom healthcare clinic fit-out – at my expense of course!”

Pat believed that if he wanted to build a truly great brand then he needed to own it. So he learnt how to trademark Bay SportsMed and the catchphrase ‘One Body, One Choice’.

What makes Bay SportsMed (BSM) stand out is the fact that physiotherapists and chiropractors work together with the patient in one clinic.

“The practitioners leave their egos at the door and utilise each other’s strengths. The patient is the ultimate winner,” says Pat.

For Pat, success comes down to having a simple approach to business: “Provide what people want, and treat them the way you would like to be treated.

“Our service is a hybrid of freshly ground coffee, the latest magazines, and a friendly BSM team committed to making people feel welcome and offering affordable results-driven care.”

AWARDS RECOGNITION

Pat admits to enjoying the peaks and troughs of business ‘mountaineering’. “I enjoy planning and part of that is entering business awards,” he says. “It’s great to go through a business awards process and be judged, make improvements, and run the best business I can. Yes, we were only finalists in 2013, but we relooked at our model, fine-tuned some areas and eventually won in 2015. That’s the true value of entering awards.”

Like any business, BSM has delivered its highs and lows for Pat. For him the proudest moment was the afternoon of Friday, November 20 last year, prior to the Awards gala evening. “The Bay SportsMed team gathered in the clinic carpark and drank champagne out of paper cups. This was in recognition of the two years they had spent focused on the awards process whilst striving to provide a customer service worthy of winning an award.”

Dealing with HR issues has been one of the toughest aspects of the business, according to Pat.

“Fortunately I’ve only had one HR issue in 15 years of business. Even though I’m well organised with process and procedure it was an energy-sapping process.

“Sometimes it’s impossible to get HR 100 percent right, 100 percent of the time. But that’s life; learn from it and move on!”

DEFINING LESSONS

There’ve been many lessons along his business journey, but Pat’s favourite is “Start the way you want to finish”.

“My business model is simple. I’ve set it up that way



intentionally. As soon as you require specialist skill-sets then business sustainability becomes much harder.”

When setting business goals the whole team has to buy into it, he says. “For my business model I wanted the team to fully engage on a weekly basis, and reward effort and attitude, not profit. If you keep this going you should attain your goal.

“So every week I spend time as a Technician, Manager and Entrepreneur (TME). Monday, Wednesday and Friday I see patients as a chiropractor (technician). Tuesday between 11 and two is management time, and Thursday is ‘float time’. That’s when I put on my entrepreneur’s creative hat.

“A famous coach once said to me ‘world class coaches don’t coach, they manage egos! They know when a player’s off their game and have a way of getting them back on track’. So my weekly TME profile allows me to constantly look at my team from different angles and manage egos to get the best out of them.

On the subject of coaching, Pat has never taken on a business coach.

“I just don’t get the concept. However over the years I’ve been fortunate to meet a lot of successful people – from Olympic athletes, to celebrities, to successful entrepreneurs. Each has helped shape my thoughts on business and many have shared advice.

“Currently I’m training a 79-year-old successful businessman to do the Tongariro Crossing. It’s amazing how inspiring older folk can be; those who’ve ‘been there, done that’ in business!”

Going forward, Pat’s mission is to create a genuine turn-key business that can be replicated as a franchise or for a licensee once his boys grow up.

“After all, I’ve never met a rich businessman who’s genuinely happy making millions at the expense of being actively involved with their children and family.”

Pat believes one of his greatest achievements has been getting his work/life balance right, so Virginia could return to work and further her career, whilst they both stayed fully involved with their children. **NZB**

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