



## **DIY Incubator Program Starter Guide**

### **Building the Bridge to Practice Success**

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#### **Introduction:**

This comprehensive Starter Guide is designed for dispute resolution professionals interested in creating their own incubator groups in order to jump start their practice success. The guide includes frameworks, actionable tips, insightful strategies, sample agendas, and best practices to support your journey in establishing and nurturing a successful incubator experience.

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#### **Section 1: DIY Incubator Framework**

**Follow these essential steps to create a successful peer-based incubator experience:**

##### **1. Define Your Goals and Purpose**

- Clearly identify the group's primary focus (launching a practice, scaling a business, developing a niche).
- Tip: Use initial meetings to collaboratively refine and align goals.

##### **2. Assemble Your Members**

- Aim for a diverse mix of professionals with varied experiences, specialties, and backgrounds to enhance group learning and support.

##### **3. Secure a Facilitator or Coach**

- Identify a professional with practice-building expertise and strong facilitation skills.
- Set clear expectations for their role and establish fair compensation.
- Insight: Facilitators can significantly enhance group dynamics, accountability, and productivity.

#### **4. Establish Group Structure**

- Schedule regular meetings (bi-monthly recommended) with clearly communicated agendas.
- Implement structured accountability systems to keep members engaged and progressing.

#### **5. Source Tech and Resources**

- Select user-friendly tools for scheduling, video conferencing, file sharing, and practice management.
- Action Tip: Regularly evaluate tech efficiency and adapt tools as needed.

#### **6. Create a Curriculum**

- Develop content around critical topics such as business planning, marketing, financial management, and client experience.
- Invite external experts periodically to enhance learning.

#### **7. Launch, Evaluate, and Evolve**

- Start your group with clearly communicated expectations.
- Regularly gather feedback and adapt the program content based on participant needs and evolving practice landscapes.

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### **Section 2: Sample Annual Agenda**

**This adaptable agenda provides structure; tailor it according to your group's needs and interests:**

#### **Month 1: Foundations**

- Introductions & Business Planning Overview

#### **Month 2: Vision & Mission**

- Crafting Vision & Mission Statements

#### **Month 3: Services & Audience**

- Defining Services and Ideal Client Profiles

#### **Month 4: Branding & Differentiation**

- Unique Value Proposition (UVP)

#### **Month 5: Marketing Strategies**

- Online Presence & Networking

#### **Month 6: Financial Planning**

- Pricing, Budgeting, Revenue Goals

#### **Month 7: Peer Review & Refinement**

- Feedback and Plan Adjustments

#### **Month 8: Operational Systems**

- Workflow & Technology Optimization

#### **Month 9: Client Experience**

- Building Strong Client Relationships

#### **Month 10: Sustainable Practices**

- Time Management, Productivity, Work-Life Balance

#### **Month 11: Progress Evaluation**

- Reviewing Goals and Addressing Gaps

#### **Month 12: Future Growth & Action Steps**

- Next Steps and Celebrations

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### **Section 3: Best Practices for Creating an Actionable Business Plan**

- Clear Vision & Purpose: Clearly articulate what your practice aims to achieve.
- Define Your Niche: Identify your specific market and ideal clients precisely.
- Strategic Marketing: Leverage effective platforms and maintain consistent messaging.
- Financial Clarity: Develop a clear pricing strategy and accurate budgeting.

- **Operational Efficiency:** Implement robust systems for client management and workflows.
- **Regular Reviews:** Frequently review your business plan and adjust strategies as necessary.
- **Utilize Resources:** Engage with peer networks and leverage AI tools like ChatGPT to refine your planning.

### **Using ChatGPT to Support the Creation of a Business Plan:**

**Starter Prompt:** "I'm creating a business plan from scratch for a dispute resolution practice focusing on [your niche]. Help me outline my vision, client profile, services, pricing, marketing, and operational needs."

### **Best Practices:**

- Provide detailed responses to ChatGPT's follow-up questions.
  - Edit AI-generated drafts to ensure they reflect your authentic voice.
  - Continuously refine prompts and responses as your business evolves.
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## **Section 4: Best Practices in Creating a Practice Building Incubator Group**

- **Set Clear Objectives:** Explicitly define and communicate your group's goals.
  - **Curate Cohort Members Thoughtfully:** Ensure diversity and active engagement.
  - **Regular Meeting Cadence:** Maintain consistent, scheduled interactions.
  - **Effective Facilitation:** Choose facilitators skilled in managing group dynamics and dialogue.
  - **Incorporate Expert Insights:** Regularly include guest speakers to provide external expertise.
  - **Foster Accountability and Peer Support:** Clearly communicate expectations and encourage collaborative feedback.
  - **Continuous Feedback:** Regularly solicit and apply participant feedback for continuous improvement.
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### **Or Let ABA DR Handle the Setup:**

### **Consider the ABA DR Incubator Program if you prefer:**

- Pre-established structure with professional facilitation
- Access to expert resources and innovative technology (FourthParty)
- A clearly defined success roadmap

Apply for the 2025 Cohort here: <https://bit.ly/ABADR-Incubator-Application>



For questions, contact Program Lead Susan Guthrie at [susan@susaneguthrie.com](mailto:susan@susaneguthrie.com).

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