

# **Starting a Coaching Program**

By

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# Introduction

What if...

- √ You could DOUBLE your profit with 30-60 minutes of work, 4 days per week?
- √ You did NOT need to create any additional products, materials or other tangible things to begin?
- √ You could do this with only 50 customers total?

Is that something you'd be interested in? Of course!

So, let's talk about HOW to do it. The answer is incredibly simple ...

## ***Create your own "Inner Circle" Coaching Program.***

Now, before you go into defense mode and say "I can't do it", let me show you an incredibly simple way that you CAN do it.

We'll get to that in just a moment. But first, let me show you some numbers...

⇒ Let's suppose you work really, really hard to get 1,000 members paying you \$10 per month for your membership site. That's \$10,000 per month, right?

⇒ To DOUBLE your profit, you'd only need 50 coaching students paying you \$200 per month. That too equals \$10,000 per month.

If you aren't up to \$10,000 per month with your "regular" memberships, you'd need even less coaching students to DOUBLE your profit.

I consider this to be a no-brainer. In fact, if it were up to me, I'd make it a MANDATORY part of 99% of the FTM sites created as a result of using this course.

What I'm going to propose to you in today's lesson is going to AMAZE you at how simple it is.

Let's approach this by answering the four main questions that most students ask about starting a coaching program...

**Question #1: What should I offer in my personal coaching?**

This is the real beauty of the FTM coaching model. It takes so little to make this work and work well.

With a "traditional" coaching model, you have to create some kind of curriculum or course for students to follow along with as you interact with them on a one-on-one basis.

But, you've already got the curriculum don't you? It's your FTM site content. That's what they are putting into practice already. You don't need additional course materials for the FTM coaching model.

So, what then do you offer?

***You offer personal feedback as you answer the questions of your coaching students.***

Do you get that? All you do is ANSWER QUESTIONS. That's it. That's what your students pay you to do. No added curriculum. No fancy gameplan to follow. You simply answer questions.

For Example: You can use an offer for a Inner Circle for your membership site. I have done this and charged \$197 per month.

The example below is taken from a fixed term membership site, sales letter I used.

You may ask me ONE question per day (Monday-Thursday ... I don't do weekends :-)) related to the lesson that you are currently working on.

That's what people would pay you for ... You answer ONE question per day ... a total of four per week ... related to content that you've already written.

***You simply help students apply the lessons to their specific situation by answering questions.***

People pay for access to a helping hand. They pay for access to someone they can bounce their ideas off of. They pay for access to get feedback and input on their usage of the content.

And they will pay YOU to be that coach if you'll offer it to them.

Bottom line: all you need to do to start an FTM "coaching program" is to put up a sales page offering to answer the questions of those who enroll.

Nothing complicated. Nothing time-consuming. Nothing additional to create. You're ready to go with this immediately.

If you don't offer your own coaching program you're just leaving money on the table. Especially with this model when it takes virtually nothing to get started.

### **Question #2: How much time will it take?**

A while ago, my friend Jimmy offered a coaching program for his members. One of his students asked this question. He already had in mind the idea to start a coaching program (he saw that Jimmy offered one and modeling his FTM after his, he took the initiative to start his own).

He just wanted to know how many positions he should make available based on the amount of time needed to personally respond to each student.

I'm going to share an excerpt of Jimmy's response to his question...

Hey Shaun,

Good question. Here's a funny, but kinda sad, fact for you: only about 1/3 of those paying \$197 per month for the Inner Circle coaching are using it 3-4 times per week.

The rest are asking about one question per week, which boggles my mind.

But, this isn't anything new.

In a response I recent gave a client about coaching. . .

People WANT personal coaching. And they PAY for it. But, sadly,

most don't USE it.

Bottom line: If the numbers are consistent, you'll have about 20-30 of the 50 who use it and even those won't post questions every night. After a month or two you will only have about 10 questions a night.

I spend about 20 minutes each night ... well worth the money!

See you tomorrow.

Paul

Obviously, there are many variables involved, but the "average" student asks me 1-2 questions per week. How long would it take YOU to respond? That's the real question here.

My guess is this: if you have 30-60 minutes to invest each night in coaching, you can make a nice amount of money offering the service.

And, remember, this is only Monday-Thursday!

### **Question #3: What fee should I charge for access?**

My recommendation is that you charge a minimum of \$97 per month and a maximum of \$197 per month.

Finding a qualified coach to interact with you personally four nights each week isn't something you'd expect to get for pennies. But, on the other hand, charging too much for answering 4 questions per week won't get you too many takers.

In my own experience, \$97-\$197 is a nice price point for this kind of coaching program. Somewhere around 7-8X the fee you charge for a "regular" membership to your FTM site.

One other thing I want to mention as it relates to pricing.

In addition to the financial gain from your own coaching program, you'll also find two other great intangibles ...

#### **1) New ideas to develop into lessons.**

Over and over again I received questions from coaching students that I think "Wow, I could write an entire lesson about that!" And so I do. I turn coaching clients' questions into ideas for lessons. So many times we as the creator of the content see things from OUR viewpoint that we may neglect important aspects or additional concepts that the end user sees clearly. By getting these ideas from those using our materials it enables us to create additional content that is both useful to all members and also increases the value of our service.

## **2) New content to share from your posts.**

There are also times when I'll write a response to a client and think, "That's pretty good stuff" and I'll use it verbatim in a future lesson. You can look back to this lesson for an example of that. A student asked about the amount of time needed to run a coaching program and I used my entire post to help answer that same question here in this lesson.

**Important:** Bear in mind, in both of these cases, this is only for things I've written that apply to a group. I would never take **confidential** statements or information shared by and with a client and make it available for the masses.

That brings up one important aspect of coaching that I need to mention: your complete confidentiality and trustfulness is REQUIRED. Without it, you're done. Period. When you interact with a client, you should NEVER divulge anything they've shared with you without their expressed permission.

### **Question #4: How will I communicate with clients?**

There are two ways to handle the "technical" side of things as clients send you their questions and you respond back...

**1) Communicate via email.** One option is to simply have your clients submit their questions to you via email. You'd then reply to their questions as a return email. And everybody goes home happy.

There's only one problem. Email isn't always 100% reliable. I've done this in the past and a lot of times I'd never receive a question or the client would never receive an answer. And this would result in some mistrust, dissatisfaction or frustration at times.

And, truthfully, there were some other minor issues at times with using

email, but we worked around them. At a minimum, you can run your coaching program by email.

## **2) Communicate via private message board.**

A better option is to use a "private message board". I spent several thousand dollars to have a personal coaching script created that allows me to interact with students one-on-one in their own private message board. Each student has a username and password to enter the secure zone where we communicate behind closed doors. There are no email delivery problems because no email is involved. And there are many other features that we use (uploads, live chat, etc.) that make this the best option in my mind.

How you decide to communicate with your coaching clients is up to you. The bottom line is: you need to offer coaching.

It's a great way to DOUBLE your profit in one easy step!

Once you have it in place, mention it in your FTM lessons, on download pages, in emails, etc. to get your existing FTM members to join in.

## **Who Should Coach?**

If you're in business online, you're already perfectly positioned to coach. That may be equally true of your offline business networking too.

Has a client, subscriber or fellow forum member ever asked for your advice or feedback? If so, and you've answered, you've already taken the first step towards becoming a coach.

Have you ever delivered a speech -- even a mini-presentation -- at a local business organization meeting? Again, one more step towards coaching.

If you're knowledgeable about any business practice or niche subject, definitely consider adding coaching to your sales funnel and business plan.

In addition to the satisfaction of helping someone reach a goal and attain their life's purpose or merely enhance their enjoyment of life, becoming a coach grants you side benefits, allowing you to:

- Charge well for your services
- Add high end value to your sales funnel
- Gain prestige and niche authority
- Brand your own business
- Create devoted affiliates

Coaching doesn't have to involve intense, one-on-one sessions at a high level of involvement, utilizing a superior skill set: You can tailor it to be as low key or informal as you like. A passionate quilter helping out six members of a quilting circle is as much a coach as a top sports coach for an NHL hockey team.

## Coaching Models

Before you pick the specific type of coach you'd like to become, spare a thought to the method most comfortable for your personal style and potential clients.

Do you want to...

- Coach via seminars and teleseminars, webinars, workshops, etc., to large groups on an "as come" basis?
- Coach via your large membership site (paid or free)
- Coach a small, select "gold" or "platinum" core groups, each of them keener than your average paid member
- Coach "one-on-one" -- and only have between 1-6 clients (each paying up to four figures for the privilege?)

If the idea of coaching actually intimidates you, seminars, workshops or webinars offer a great way to get your feet wet and become known.

## 3 Myths about Coaching

Let's clear away some misconceptions that may be holding you back...

### **1. You need to be at the top of your field before you deserve to coach.**

Not really. You need to be at the top of your field before you can command four-figure prices and train only the best of the best... **but people need coaches at every level in their journey.**

An Olympic-level figure skating coach needs to know exactly how it feels to compete in top-flight, international events. She needs to have experience as a competitor at that level and be aware of a million small and large, highly niche-specific details as well as be aware of international coaching rules and regulations.

She needs to be qualified and have the correct coaching certification or credentials herself. And, above all, she needs to know how to handle goal-driven, super-athletes -- most of them still in their teens.

A small child learning to figure skate really only needs someone who can teach her to stay on her feet and wobble round a rink. The person teaching her is just as much a coach, even if that teacher is actually still a student herself.

You'd be wasting money on a top level coach: The person teaching your six-year-old to skate just needs to be **a few levels ahead**.

## **2. You need to be certified or have a degree before you can call yourself a coach**

While it is true that some fields and specialties do require certification, not every field requires it. Experience often makes the best teacher -- and possessing the type of personality to enjoy mentoring and helping people achieve their highest potential (generally or within a highly specific area) is essential too.

A good coach needs to...

- Possess a healthy supply of patience
- Inspire and nurture self-confidence
- Have a passion for helping people succeed
- Know how -- and when -- to step back

Types of coach that do need to be certified are:

- Coaches teaching specific methods (e.g. 'grow')

- Coaches whose clients need some form of professional accreditation only a certified member of that profession can supply

It is entirely up to you to find out and determine if your chosen area requires any sort of professional accreditation or certification.

### **3. Being certified automatically guarantees you'll be a better coach.**

Not always. While a certified coach is far less likely to over-inflate his credentials, there are plenty of dynamic coaches getting wildly successful results for their clients who do not possess any sort of certification.

One trap you never want to fall into, however: Representing yourself as more experienced or qualified than you actually are.

A good coach is also **honest** -- with her clients and, most of all, with herself.

## **Common Coaching Characteristics**

No matter what type of coaching you plan to specialize in, there are common traits and skills all top-notch coaches possess. If these come naturally to you (or you can learn them well enough to make them part of who you are) your coaching efforts will be far more successful.

Client success brings **demand**.

Demand reaps healthy fees -- and **profits**.

Check your own personality traits and skills against this proven, coaching core structure....

"I already..."

- Possess the accreditations or experience necessary to help my client actualize her goal

- ☑ Own the ability to help my client question and explore her own motivations, needs, objectives, skills and strategies
- ☑ Can help my client determine best tools and strategies, to help her achieve maximum potential
- ☑ Can facilitate my client to self-analyze actions and come up with viable solutions that feel natural to her
- ☑ Possess skills needed to help my client assess her own progress and regularly re-examine goals and needs
- ☑ Know how to offer objective and unconditional listening and support
- ☑ Encourage regular, objective evaluation and self-assessment
- ☑ Am committed to helping my client to improve her skills and strengthen her strategies
- ☑ Know how to facilitate changes that are permanent and for the client's ultimate benefit
- ☑ Take pride in helping client take responsibility for her own growth and independence, avoiding co-dependence on my coaching
- ☑ Know how to help my client develop her own "style"
- ☑ Will have no problem encouraging my client to positively sever our professional relationship and/or move on to a higher level of coaching, when the time is right for her

If helping people be the best they can be (generally or in a specific field) then coaching will be a natural step for you -- whatever your current level, in your field.

## **Four Essentials for Effective Coaching**

While anyone can become a coach, there are four absolute essentials that pre-qualify you as having natural potential to be an effective one, likely to reap maximum success...

- **Lead a balanced life.** If you can't balance your own life, it will be hard to convey with conviction the need for your client to do so.

- **Practice effective time management.** This includes skills such as knowing how to stick to an agenda, making sure you factor in time for your own decompression and ongoing learning, and ensuring your client content flows smoothly and that you, too, are focused on his ultimate outcome.
- **Know how to motivate** -- and that has as little to do "butt kicking" or "shaming and blaming" your clients into better behavior as it does with being overly sympathetic and passive.

Motivation is nothing more or less than gifting your client with the ability to believe in a goal and in their own ability to move (under their own steam) towards it

- **Care about people** -- when you coach, the most important factor in the world is your client; his needs; his aspirations, hopes and fears.

If caring about others and their goals and aspirations isn't one of your deepest core values, you won't enjoy the trip, and will burn out quickly.

Remember, coaching is, above all, a transformative process. You are accompanying your client on a journey -- and helping them get where they want to go, sharing the adventure.

## Four Signs You Shouldn't Be a Coach

If you like to **tell people exactly how to do things** and get annoyed if they question you or express independent ideas, you probably shouldn't be a coach. If you like to help them discover the confidence and hone the skills to do those things themselves, however, that's a different story.

People who are **too empathetic** often don't make the best coaches. They become enmeshed emotionally with their clients, and tend to "rescue" rather than sitting back and handing over the appropriate tool at the right bend in the journey. These coaches burn out quickly and don't know how to disengage, becoming frustrated or distressed when clients move on.

**People with a huge ego** shouldn't be coaches (it will be all about having acolytes and disciples). People who have a healthy self-worth, on the other hand, can inspire others to develop the same.

If it's all about **how much money you can get out of each client**, you won't. Your clients will become disillusioned the moment they realize it's all about your needs -- not theirs.

The more your clients' needs and success come first, the more money you'll make.

## How to Become the Ultimate "Dream" Coach

As with everything else in business, it all starts with identifying your target market, and making a long-term plan. Ask yourself these four key questions...

1. Who would best benefit from your unique skill set and talent?
2. What could you bring them that would rocket-boost them closer to their own goals?
3. What potential disasters can you steer them safely past (ones they wouldn't be aware of, on their own?)
4. How can you save them time, build their confidence or increase their own expert authority and skills?

Examine various coaching models and decide which one resonates with your personal style, goals and skills most strongly.

That includes:

- How much you'd like to charge
- How many people you'd like to mentor at one time
- What type of coaching "ship" you'd like to run -- the seminar model, membership model, one-on-one model, etc.
- Why you think this particular area is the one most suited to help you excel as a coach
- Where you want to go with this: Where you want to be in five years

Remember, coaching one person for top dollar can be far less work, far less exhausting, than trying to mentor an entire membership site-full.

On the other hand, one-on-one mentorship and coaching carries a higher risk for failure.

In a large group, you'll always have a majority who are virtually silent; a devoted contingent who are vocal and enjoying every minute... and a small minority who drop out or complain.

With one-on-one coaching, if your client is unhappy and he's your only client (paying you \$6,000 every three months) it would be disastrous on more than one level for you to lose him.

TIP: The more qualified and well known you are, the better the one-on-one, high ticket model is likely to work for you. If you are new to your business niche, it will be much harder -- but not impossible -- for you to attract high-end clients willing to invest a lot of money.

In the following section we'll look at some

hard-and-fast secrets to your imminent coaching success...

## Secrets of the Coaching Pros

### What Credentials can do for you

While it's true that it's not necessary to be certified or accredited in all fields, consider joining a professional coaching organization such as the [IAC](#) (International Association of Coaching) even if certification is not required. This independent, global body is focused on maintaining high-quality, universal coaching standards. Also check out the [ICF](#) (International Coach Federation).

The IAC's certification process introduces you to "specific masteries that are the hallmark of the most effective and distinguished coaches", setting "high standards for the coach's ethical, professional, and business behaviors. The purpose of this certification is to provide the clients of coaches a valid measure of assurance that they will receive the best coaching."

Not mentioned is the fact that earning such credentials will **build your confidence** and **sharpen your focus**. It will help you master and own the tools of the coaching trade -- no matter what type of coaching you choose to specialize in.

As with any area of business nowadays (particularly online) industries are evolving at the speed of light, and membership in an organization such as the IAC will help you keep on top of those changes -- something that is absolutely crucial for those who coach others.

## **Quick-Start Coaching Models that Make You Money**

Many of the best coaches will tell you: They got their start while still undergoing the training process themselves. Again, you don't always need to be certified to begin your coaching journey -- particularly if you're sure of your own "mission" in life.

Here are some easy, proven ways to get started, straight away...

### **Method One: Repurposing**

One of the easiest ways to get started with coaching - Re-purposing!

- 1. Take your existing content**
- 2. Create an interactive component around it**

For example, if you've written the definitive guide on "How to Create Your Own Patterns", read through any questions or complaints you've received. These will point you to areas customers typically have difficulty with. Upsell them by offering step-by-step "Professional Pattern Makers" coaching, addressing these points.

Add "how to" videos and diagrams for those who have problems with written instructions but instead are better suited to visual or kinesthetic learning (learning by doing). Give short "assignments" and offer feedback or critiques.

Sweeten the pot with extra content written for the "sticky" bits -- those sections your customers typically have problems with. Break it down into even more basic step-by-step instruction (with clear diagrams, screenshots and charts). Add confidence-building lessons and material.

Let your new coaching student in on your own "secrets". Remember, one day she may be a great Joint Venture partner for you! She'll be successful -- and crediting you with her success!

### **Method Two: PLR or Master Resale Rights-based Coaching**

You can also -- in record time -- create a coaching program around PLR or Master Resale Rights content.

All you need to do is **add interactivity** to the mix, much as described in Method One, above.

One advantage in using PLR material: You can really give that content your own, unique twist as you re-write, branding it with your own style and personality.

One advantage to using Master Resale Rights material: You don't have to alter a thing -- just add your interactive element and launch yourself at a running start.

An easy way to know, when using pre-written content...

- **Where there is no single "right" method.** If a subject is abstract (such as Life Coaching) PLR is the way to go, since it will give you greater room for flexibility and adding your own, personal twist.
- **Where you are teaching a specific skill.** When your coaching is more task-oriented, such as teaching people how to create patterns

that sell, pick a strong Master Resale Rights manual and **show people how to use it.**

### **Method Three: Intern Development**

Another great shortcut in plunging into coaching immediately: Offer internships to your business. If you want to be a Blog Building Business coach, for example, offer exclusive internships while you're still getting your coaching package together -- don't wait until everything is "perfect".

Done properly, the internship model is not exploitive at all and provides huge benefits to **both** parties.

- Your intern gets a focused, one-on-one shortcut to mastering her area of interest, learning "on the job" (often the most effective and lasting way to succeed)
- You gain a devoted protégé (if you've been a great "boss") who will provide you with those all-important, glowing testimonials you need to get you started

Ideally, in a mentoring intern relationship, you trade off your knowledge and expertise while practicing on your intern, developing and refining your coaching skills: She gains from your attention and mentorship, while giving you services in exchange.

Yes, it's a "foot in the door" method, and money you'll make from it is more indirect (e.g. the time saved by your intern, her services provided without cash remuneration you'd otherwise need to outlay)... but it's a viable strategy for beginning coaches and if she's excited by what you've taught, you've got a trained assistant, glowing testimonial -- or both. The key to intern mentorship success is creating a "win-win" situation... for both of you.

### **Method Four: The Coaching "Prize"**

If you're new to coaching, another quick way to plunge in the deep end lies in offering your services, for a limited time, as a prize.

This doesn't have to mean a major commitment of your time for no money. You can keep it really, really simple...

1. **Offer a free, half-hour phone consultation to the first ten people who sign up for your webinar.** You can make it five or fifty -- it doesn't have to necessarily be a particular, set number. Just whatever is comfortable for your own time available.
2. **Offer a free, half-hour consultation to anyone who buys your digital product** during your limited-time, "introductory special".

The beauty of this method: **It automatically positions you as an expert** while adding rich, high end value to your content.

It also creates an added incentive for potential clients to invest in that content. But just make sure you have more coaching options or material to offer them (never during the phone consultation... but later, within the next few days, when you follow up and keep in touch via your autoresponder).

#### **Method Five: "Follow Up" Contact**

This method is more oblique, but if it suits your style, it can increase conversions beautifully for very little extra effort.

Here's how it works:

1. Instigate one of the methods previously described.
2. Include as a "Surprise Bonus" the option of either a **follow-up phone call** or **follow-up email session**.
3. Set this bonus contact for at least six weeks after the start of your previous program. By that time, your new client will have:

- Tried out your methods and put them into practice
  - Have concrete complaints, questions or praise for your material
  - Achieved some measure of success
  - Be even more receptive to your input
4. About a week before your follow up call or email, send them a reminder letting them know you're ready to deliver, and asking whether they'd prefer a phone call, or email/instant messaging exchange
  5. Set a time
  6. Deliver your follow-up session

Even if there are complaints (and there should certainly be at least one question) this further chance to have your personal help aids in creating loyalty and trust -- while providing highly valuable feedback on your material.

### **Method Six: Newsletter Membership Coaching**

One of the easiest models -- the Newsletter membership. (In fact, every online marketer should do this, for an extra stream of income and brand-building!)

1. When people sign up for your freebies or list, let them know they're automatically going to receive your monthly newsletter and give them the option to opt out, if they don't want to do this.
2. Send a short version of your newsletter containing at least one really high-value link, tip or insider secret.

3. Let them know they can download and try out a free sample of your "expanded" newsletter on line. Make sure it contains exceptionally valuable content -- and position it as a coaching newsletter.
4. Offer a subscription to regular editions for a modest price.
5. When your prospect signs up for this simple membership program, delight them with at least three bonus videos providing even more valuable, evergreen content -- content they'll want to access repeatedly and habitually. Alternatives: Provide a handy software program, script or utility that will make life easier for them -- if they access your site often.

This coaching model is so easy almost anyone can succeed with it, providing content is high value and consistent in delivery.

And -- best of all -- it can strategically set up its members for upsell coaching options.

These are all "entry level" tactics. If you already have a following or the appropriate experience or credentials necessary for success, you can start at or follow up with higher-end or slightly more complex options.

## Stepping Up your Services

### **Method Seven: The Coaching Membership**

Top marketers and web celebs quietly make a lot of money with this coaching model, often combining it with multiple alternate options and coaching formats.

1. Offer "**insider coaching**", using the principle of exclusivity to add incentive (e.g. limit it to a certain number or offer your price only as a time-limited Introductory Special).

- 2. Set up a membership site** using a service or script such as Amember, or else deliver your content via a "closed" WordPress blog not available to the general public, releasing content only in increments.
- 3. Use a lesson format** (daily, weekly or monthly -- whatever period feels the most natural to your content flow and your clients' learning pace). Answer questions through the comments, if you're using a blog. Offer feedback (remember to limit the amount, to ensure you can comfortably serve everyone).
- 4. Set either finite end date** on your coaching membership (i.e., "twelve weekly lessons, at the end of which time you'll be able to..."). About three weeks before the end of the coaching program, start upselling the next level or expanded coaching option.
- 5. Alternatively, offer one to three more different levels**, with increased access to your feedback (e.g.: weekly grading for "silver" level; an additional 5 email questions permitted with "gold"; and a half-hour bi-monthly phone session with "platinum").

This model works well because people are able to choose the option that fits in with their pace, lifestyle and budget.

### **Method Eight: One-on-One Coaching**

Whether you call it "mentoring" or "coaching", this is the big prize at the end of the rainbow, when it comes your status and income as a coach.

It's not usually the best model to start with, however... unless you already have professional certifications and/or a strong web presence, with testimonials and products or previous seminars behind you. But it's a great place to end up, since typically one-on-one coaching is where you can easily step into four-figure prices.

Setting the right price is crucial, since this coaching model typically demands a lot of commitment, thought and interaction on your part -- but the high price ticket also does a wonderful job of pre-qualifying clients, since only those who are

focused and serious (and therefore more likely to spectacularly succeed) will invest in this model.

Experience in handling client load is crucial before attempting more than one individual coaching client.

## Controlling your Time

One aspect of coaching that chases people away from the "Membership" coaching model more consistently than any other? The fear that, as a new coach, you will be snowed under by questions and demands on your time, if you offer access to advice, discussion and feedback.

The real truth: You can safely offer access to your services (especially when you're new, and less likely to be well known) because **only a small percentage of your members will help themselves to the opportunity**, in a membership site setting. (Don't be surprised if this stunning lack of contact continues to happen even when you're well known!)

But let's say your worst fears come true, and you actually are bombarded with questions and demands on your time? What then?

The key is to **limit access**... without diminishing service.

1. **Use a virtual assistant.** This is a strategy you should build into your coaching plan for further down the road. Your trusted virtual assistant can answer and deal with day-to-day complaints and questions that don't need your personal attention. She can speak for you when you're taking a "break" or focusing your attention elsewhere; undertake tasks that normally keep you away from what you love to do best; and alert you to potential problems in your coaching program that need to be immediately addressed.

A good virtual assistant who can actually make you more money than you pay out for her services!

2. **Limit access to your time.** Set a restriction on when, how and how often people can interact with you on a one-on-one basis. Make Mondays only the day you'll answer questions via email, for example. Or Monday to Friday.... or weekends only (whatever works for you).

Have a weekly call-in or webinar that's "open question" hour. Charge extra for one-on-one access and/or have an exclusive "inner circle" layer to your membership that people can choose -- and pay extra for. (The ones who will make real use of it will gladly do so ***and*** value your time.)

3. **Provide "self-help" resources.** Having a F.A.Q. section can defuse a lot of common questions -- but only if you provide clients with clear prompts to use this resource. Make sure self-help resources provide the easiest option for your clients to access, and are plainly and visibly presented. Making your resource section as easy as possible to use (as well as satisfying and fun) can take the heat off you and your limited time considerably.

Some examples of self-help resources clients love:

- Templates
- Worksheets
- Simple software helping your client take a "shortcut" or create something that needs to be formulaic
- Graphs, diagrams, "how to" guides
- Resource lists and links (for those willing to put extra effort in)
- Useful scripts, plug ins or widgets
- Graphics or clipart

4. **Tighten up your content.** If you're getting a lot of the same question types, there may be an area of your coaching content that isn't clear. Questions can be cues that something needs clarifying or tightening... or

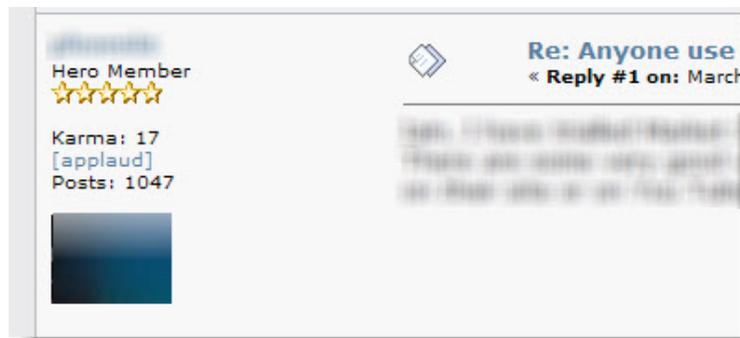
that you're assuming knowledge that isn't there. (Repeated questions can also be your great big clue to possible new, "advanced" coaching modules or new courses or product!)

5. Respond with "closed" answers. Don't be too helpful, when answering questions. Too much information can overload your client and distract his focus.

Answer only what is asked, ending with the opposite of a call to action -- definitive, clear statements, no question marks and no room for confusion.

6. **Offer a "free" forum.** Here's how it works. You set up the forum with guidelines to ensure everyone is respectful of each other. You offer interaction only when necessary... and let your "top" students answer the majority of the questions (which you'll be surprised to learn they often love to do!) Your top students enjoy their enhanced, insider status; the newer students enjoy real, constructive feedback.

You can also ensure that there's a high degree of interaction by making sure your membership site set-up provides incentive for members to help each other. Take this particular [Simple Machines](#) forum, where every answer given can generate "karma", visibly increasing the answering forum member's status and prestige:



People are encouraged to "applaud" a particularly helpful answer. Doing so creates "karma" for the person who answers, generating gold stars and rankings such as "hero member".

This rewards the 10% who constitute not only your biggest fans but who are also consistently action-takers, putting into practice everything you teach (as well as inspiring new members to step up to the plate and join the "hero" ranks). (SimpleMachines offers highly effective yet free forum software you can use to create your own backup forum for your online coaching program.)

Even though your core top students do most of the work for you, the key with making this model work lies in monitoring your forum (or having your trusted VA do it). Stop any infractions cold, set a positive tone, interact on key questions and you'll automatically set your forum up to give high value.

## **Getting Started As a Coach**

If none of the earlier outlined methods appeals to you, offer a simple lesson-based series, including homework assignments and perhaps a weekly email or phone call as your interactive components, and present it to your list.

Of course, this works best when you already have a list and some friends and followers... but if you accurately research and pinpoint the exact potential client who needs it and offer an easy way for them to say "yes", you'll quickly build up the sort of credentials that will get the ball rolling towards the big leagues.

More strategies for getting yourself noticed and building credibility:

- 1. Interview a top expert** and offer it as a free webinar
- 2. Co-coach with a JV partner** (again, target your potential partner's market well, and even web celebs might be interested)
- 3. Answer questions in forums** and mastermind groups you belong to
- 4. Create a product that demonstrates your skill.** Offer it for free, as a bonus for signing up to your list.

## **Gauging your Audience -- and Delivering the Goods**

You can create just about any delivery model or method you're comfortable with. Make sure it's one your target clients prefer too.

- Are your clients all visual? Are you serving graphic designers? Use webinars with an on-screen work area and demonstrations.
- Are you coaching fellow Executives? Have weekly, one-on-one "brainstorming" sessions, keeping the content goal-oriented and focused.
- Are you coaching overweight clients in personal fitness? Add healthy, low fat recipes and a motivational, free forum to your lessons and video offerings.

Refine anything that doesn't work as well as you thought it would. Make even more use of components that exceed expectations.

And above all, listen to your clients!

On the next page, you'll find a worksheet you can use to assess potential clients and their needs. TIP: Use it first **on yourself** -- it will help you clarify your own assets!

When you've completed this sheet, pin it on your bulletin board or fridge, and make a habit of reading it at least once a day.

<b>Self-Assessment Worksheet</b>	
List three <b>unique</b> things about yourself	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
List your <b>favorite physical feature</b> and why it's your favorite	
List <b>five accomplishments or achievements</b> you're particularly proud of (personal)	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
List <b>five accomplishments or achievements</b> you're particularly proud of (professional)	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
List the <b>three best compliments</b> you've ever received (personal or professional)	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
List <b>ten things you can do really well</b> (personal or professional)	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____
List <b>one amazing fact no one else knows</b> about you!	

You also need to know your core values and have strong, well-defined goals, if coaching is a path you're led to follow. And no matter what area of coaching you choose to focus your energies upon, you'll need to be able to help your clients also make sure other areas of their life remain in balance and harmony with their coaching goal, including:

- Family
- Relationships
- Exercise and Fitness
- Physical Health
- Diet and Lifestyle choices
- Financial Health
- Creative Self-Actualization (developing their highest goals)

## **Setting Your Coaching Fees**

One area that many new coaches struggle with is what to charge. Setting fees is a highly individual choice in most cases, based on a number of factors:

- 1. Your reputation, status, accreditation and experience** (the more you have of each, the higher you should charge)
- 2. What your market will bear** (e.g. if you're a Life Coach, what are other Life Coaches with similar skill sets charging? What income bracket does your average client populate?)
- 3. Your coaching successes.** (Do you have detailed, documented testimonials? Clients who have achieved spectacular success?)
- 4. The specific options** you are adding or subtracting to your "package"

One mistake to watch out for: Pricing your services ***too low***. In fact, that's a more common mistake than pricing services too high! But priced too low, and you'll quickly find out about it when you experience the dismal lack of response.

It's better to start out a little low and raise your prices due to demand or expanded services than shoot for the moon, and have to slink back and tell people you've dropped your price down to hilltop-level.

Never, ever lower your fee unless you can cleverly position it as a very special, exclusive offer in some way. ***Coaches by their very nature are perceived as hot-shot experts*** before anyone has even read their shingles -- without delivering a thing!

Dropping your fees as a coach is a way of announcing via loudspeaker that you are ineffective.

If you're still hung up on "the amount", relax. ***Researching your competitors and their clients*** is the simplest and easiest way to find the most accurate baseline. When in doubt, position yourself in the middle end of your market range, taking into account each of the four factors listed above.

Add more money for each extra credential or skill set you can beat out your competitor by; subtract for things like lack of exposure, and you won't be one of those new coaches that everyone ignores -- that phenomenon being a sure signal you're way too high or way too low in your fee structure.

## **Promoting Your Coaching Program**

As with any other facet of online business, promotion can often be a make-or-break part of your new coaching success.

Most of the steps will be more than familiar to you:

- 1. Identify your perfect client**
- 2. Determine whether or not she represents a paying market**

- 3.** Find out her **most overwhelming need** (what she complains about and wishes for)
- 4.** See how you can **fit the "answer" into your sales funnel** through one of the coaching models we've discussed
- 5. Create a website** specifically for your coaching services

Once you've taken these steps, you should move swiftly into the second phase of promotion...

- 1.** Create (or commission) a Facebook page strictly for your coaching services
- 2.** Ensure that people know how to leave comments in the new Facebook page set up (or else include a "Discussion" tab, if that option is still available with all the new Facebook features coming down the pipe!)
- 3.** Ensure you create a presence on LinkedIn and Twitter (and on any other social bookmarking sites your target client frequents).
- 4.** Set up a newsletter
- 5.** Build your newsletter list
- 6.** Create a schedule of online and offline press releases -- the first one announcing your new service and focusing on one stunning benefit it will offer your ideal client
- 7.** Think creatively of other promotion opportunities already built in to the specific delivery models you choose
- 8.** Do write articles for high-ranking directories, driving traffic to your coaching site. After the recent Google Panda algorithm shakeup, lots of directories have slipped in Google's page ranks -- but the best ones are working hard to remedy this... mostly by removing content that Google now flags as spam, such as Acai Berry anything and certain types of dating articles (dating coaches take note!) Your best bet is still to check guidelines for the article directories you're considering, taking note of any new ones -- and do check their page rank and stats in [Alexa](#) and [Quantcast](#) before submitting.

9. Track your promotions! There are lots of different metrics options, including not only your Google Analytics and free Facebook Insights, a powerhouse of different tracking solutions for your coaching business Facebook Pages

But the most important promotional tool of all is one that's not really optional: **"Guest" on blogs, interviews, web radio shows and teleseminars.**

Remember this important principle...

- When **you** treat yourself like a celebrity, nobody listens.
- When **others** treat you as one, your status grows.

### **"But What If I Don't Like People?"**

You'd be surprised how many would-be coaches sheepishly ask this question, so I'm addressing it here...

If you're not comfortable working with people, your motivation for wanting to become a coach is most likely a desire for profit. But it's not a sin to want to maximize your earning potential from your own hard work and content -- and a positive shame to miss out on profit you deserve.

It may reassure you to realize that it may not be a question of "liking" at all: You may simply be saying: "**I'm afraid.**" Your own self-confidence may need more development, or you may simply not have a "people personality" -- but you **do** have a particular skill set that others need, and only you can share.

If this is the case, use a coaching model that minimizes your weakness at first, such as setting up your client interaction as a weekly assignment delivered via email, rather than that nerve-wracking weekly phone session. Formulating a positive critique on virtual "paper" and answering questions via email is often quite comfortable for those who can't bring themselves to answer a phone, or who break out in a cold sweat and stammer, when talking face-to-face.

You can create the illusion of one-on-one intimacy and interactivity by pre-recording a video, Teleseminar or webinar. Removing any real components of interactivity takes away the threat of freezing up or making a mistake. As long as it helps move your client further towards his goal, your webinar or video will be valued and appreciated.

Here's a secret: You can be motivated by a desire to help others without necessarily being a people person.

All you really need is an understanding of what makes your best client tick -- and what she needs to get her to where she wants to go.

How you present those options is up to your personal preference and style... and you may be pleasantly surprised to discover a lot of your inhibitions melting away as you begin to enjoy well-earned success.

## **Get a Coach**

This brings us to another important point... Get a coach!

Ask any top coach what they do, when they feel stuck, can't see the forest for the trees or simply want to move forward and the inevitable answer is: "Consult my coach!"

Having your own coach (even if just for occasional tune ups) is all part of leading that balanced life style we mentioned earlier.

It also helps to understand what it's like to be a client, from a client perspective, and will give you years of saved experience in finding out:

- **Client behaviors** you need to watch out for (including avoidance, procrastination, pessimism, distraction, lack of follow-through and all the other self-sabotaging habits we human beings are prone to)
- **What works and what doesn't** -- if it works on you, chances are you can at least adapt a particular strategy for your own client
- **Top tips and tricks.** Simple observation and your own keen interest in coaching will alert you to your own coach's most effective strategies
- **Where problem areas lie** -- and how to help others get through these potential quagmires

Set the bar high for your clients by setting it high for yourself. As you master and own each area of your life (and skill set necessary to your own practice) your confidence and presence will bloom and grow.

You'll be able to raise your fees -- and have clients thank you for it as your coaching fame grows.