

THE COACH'S RESOURCE KIT

The One-Stop Guide: Grow Your Coaching Practice with Proven Strategies, Tools, and Tips from a proven system that actually works.

BY AWARD-WINNING COACH
DON MARKLAND

Your Undeniable Authority:

The Scaling Coach Business Blueprint

By Don N. Markland

INTRODUCTION

There has never been a better time to be a coach. I know people all over the world who want to be a coach or have felt that “coaching is their calling” or they feel compelled to help other people. I think that’s just brilliant. If that’s you in any way, take this opportunity to go for it. If you have been stuck in your career, if you have been trying to build a life for someone else, coaching is a great opportunity to use your expertise. Use the skills that you have, and help other people grow, change, and live a better life.

Before we go any further, I applaud and honor you for taking the time to not only invest in yourself, but to also invest in your future success. That's one of the things that coaching does so well; it brings together like-minded people invested in their futures. Coaching is a simple business service built to help other people.



Let's begin by taking a moment to explain what coaching is and what coaching isn't. Coaching is not a million-dollar program that you can turn to when you've failed in other areas of your career. Coaching is not a get rich quick scheme. Coaching is not an enterprise that anyone can do (regardless of what you see from Ads on Facebook). These are important distinctions because too many times, the internet is flooded with marketing schemes trying to tell people anyone can be a coach. Let me clarify. Yes, anyone can coach. But building a successful practice is different (I'll talk about that in a second). This doesn't mean anybody can be a successful or multimillion-dollar coach. That takes a different set of skills and practice. Consider what coaching really is in itself. The coaching process is a very simple procedure. In its simplest form, coaching is taking a predetermined set of questions, asking them to a person in order to get them to self-reflect, break down barriers of limiting beliefs, and self-discover answers to think and live differently.

Let's take a moment to define what coaching isn't. Coaching is not therapy or psychiatric work. From my definition, coaching works as a type of bridge between psychiatric and therapeutic work. It is the bridge between diagnosis (psychiatric) and long-term care (therapeutic). Let me restate that because sometimes it gets lost: coaching is the connection point between therapeutic and psychiatric work. Too many coaches want to diagnose or be therapists. Those require extensive schooling and training. Coaching being "the bridge" is why *anybody* can really do it.

If you understand the right questions to ask, if you understand effective listening skills, and learn how to ask the right "next step" questions, *anyone can be a coach*. And to make this point more poignant, this is why in recent years, companies are using AI technology to take on the mantle of coaching and being able to supply it to people at massive scale (for a very low cost).

To further make the point, this is why coaching fees have been getting lower and lower. Major enterprise companies continue to develop coaching as a commodity, and they've pushed the overall pricing down. Does this hurt the industry? Not at all. It simply expands people's interest in coaching as a service. New coaches start every single week all over the world. As the availability of coaches expands, and the barrier of entry is so low, determining coaching value follows basic supply and demand economics. The market's perceived value becomes less and less.

In this book, we will tackle these problems. You'll learn how to not only build your practice, but also how to specialize your practice to charge higher fees, and how to be different in order to scale. We will cover the core factors that you must have to build a highly successful coaching practice (so that people actually want to work with you). Last, if you want to take your practice to a really specific level, or even how to have other coaches work with you, I'm going to teach you the secrets that you need to have. These methods are tactical principles I continue to teach coaches all over the world (on average, I work with 1100+ coaches every year).

Like you, these coaches come from every country and condition imaginable. Rest assured, the methods we walk through are real. These techniques and programs have been taught by me to two of the largest coaching organizations in North America to help them expand. Those two alone have worked with some of the largest companies on earth like Google, Apple, Amazon, Facebook, Tesla and more. In my personal coaching academy, these methods have helped build multiple six-figure coaches (7 six-figure coaches in its first year alone) and can do the same for you here. And last, all the techniques I'm going to walk you through in this book are practical and tactical methods that I use in my own practice personally. Nothing I share with you is hype, theoretical, or guesswork. It all works because I use it every single day.

Coaching is an amazing benefit and an incredible industry. It'll provide you freedom like you've never had before because you are, in many ways, your own boss. With your coaching practice, you can manage your own time and **you can control** your own time. This provides tremendous flexibility in your life. Now, it isn't all roses. At the same time, in coaching you are trading time for money which has its downsides (which we will discuss later) and building a practice can create a lot of stress.

In your practice in order to be successful, as much as you are your own boss, you have to take time to be your own boss. You'll have to at times be the business owner *and* the coach (and don't worry I'll cover how to balance that later). As you go through this journey, if you really want to be a coach, or rather if you really want to be a successful coach, I promise you that this book will be your best friend.

I've designed the book to be your blueprint - your step-by-step guide to building your practice. And I fully expect you will not need any other book to aid in your coaching growth plan. You won't need any other methods, programs, or courses. Here is where the real origination came for this book: I wrote this because I see so many companies attempting to *prey on coaches*.

If your inbox on social media is being filled with people sending you DMs saying, “I’m so-and-so Agency, and I can fill your appointment book with high quality appointments,” or “I can fill your calendar with high ticket appointments”. Learn to run. Those are scams. If you're getting emails saying I can get you countless appointments with qualified leads, all of those are liars and cheats. If you have people calling you to be a guest on their radio network, run. It’s a nasty scam. If you have people asking you to pay them \$3,000 or \$5,000, just to “fill up your calendar with potential appointments”, or “fix your website”, and provide “SEO”. It’s a scam. I'm telling you now to ignore them or if it’s too tempting, I’ll give you the methods of how to screen them properly. Everything in this book will help you find the cheap, easy, and free methods to build your practice.

I built my practice from the ground up. Like you, I’ve been exactly where you are. I'll tell you the story of how I got started, and I promise you if you stay on this journey with me, if you'll go through each step of the process and learn how to get started to build your practice and follow every piece of the blueprint, you'll be successful.

You *can* have a six-figure practice. You *can* have a seven-figure practice (if you want it). I've worked with coaches that didn't. I've worked with coaches that all they wanted was an \$80,000 a year practice with 14 strong clients. They want to live in a cabin in Maine and have a relaxing practice. And that's okay. If that's you, you can get there, you can follow these methods in this book, and you can find your freedom as I say. But even to do that, you have to follow this blueprint. Build your plan and stick to it. Remember, hope is not a strategy. There is no escalator to success. You must put in the work.

Building a coaching practice takes work. You have to grind every day. One of the graduates of our Coaching Academy, Coach T., said, "You have to slog every day. I don't love the slog, but I love the success." In this book, you'll learn exactly what that slog is. And in the last year of our program, his business doubled. Later, that same Coach T. said, "Don, this has been the best year of my entire practice. It's been the hardest work, but it's been the best year I've ever had." That can be you if you'll go through the programs outlined in this book. If you'll put them into place, you'll make it happen.

Now, before we jump into the first chapter, I want you to make a couple of commitments. I want you to really think about this. The first thing is, are you willing to go all in?

I want you to just think for just a second about that concept of *all in*. If you're familiar with the game of poker or more specifically High-Stakes Texas Hold'em poker, you can push all of your chips in and go all in on a bet. Imagine, for a second, if you could go all in on every single bet and never run out of chips. It would make the game a lot more fun, right? You still might lose hands, but it wouldn't matter because you could just have endless chips, and you could always continue on.

That is how you can choose to go in with your energy, with your attitude, with your enthusiasm, with everything. I'm not trying to put on a coaching hat here, I'm not trying to hype you up or motivate you, but I want you to understand that's what I'm going to need from you. As you go through this book, I need you to commit to going "all in."

If you're going to really try to build your practice, say to yourself, commit to yourself right now, *I am going all in*. You're going to push all your chips on the table; every single one. If we're going to outline something in the blueprint and tell you to do a certain thing, do it. Be committed. Don't suggest or say: *that's not going to work for me*, or *I don't want to do that*, or *I don't feel like doing that*, *I'm going to do it my own way*. Because then when you don't see the results you want, you're going to blame the program, or blame it on something else and say it didn't work. You have to go all in. You have to be committed in order to make it work.

So, make the commitment right now.

Say to yourself: *I am going all in*.

Say to yourself right now: *I'm going to do whatever it takes to make my practice successful. I'm not going to just do it half way*.

Halfway in is all the way out. If this is your year to make your practice successful, if this is your time, if you are tired of doing it as a side hustle, if you're tired of watching other people succeed, if you're tired of always feeling like it's failing, then go all in.

Read the book, follow the blueprint, and make this the best year you've ever had. I'll be with you every single step of the way. If you're committed, if you're all in, you can tag me right now on Instagram @executivecoach.don, #allin. I want to see it.

Let's get on this journey together and build your practice.

CHAPTER 1: ORIGIN AND GOALS

I had a long history of business success when I decided to start my coaching practice. Years ago, I was a successful entrepreneur and got the knack in business. In my mid-twenties, I was a vice president of sales and operation for a call center company in Northern Utah, and we did fairly well. We were about 7-million in size and things were going really well for us as a business. I was fairly happy with our success and our growth. From the outside, I was very successful. I had a good six-figure job, great team members, and a good family. I had three children under the age of six, and what I didn't realize was that I was a ticking time bomb. Furthermore, I was roughly 70 pounds heavier than I am now and stressed all the time. Little did I know, I was overwhelmed, overweight, and overworked.

One day, I was in the middle of a long work training session in Rock Falls, Illinois. I can remember I had just finished eating at one of my favorite fine-dining establishments, a restaurant called Taco Bell. I'm not sure if you're familiar with that, but I had just finished eating my favorite food - *a Chalupa* (there was clearly a reason I was overweight). As I sat there finishing that training session, I was depressed, stressed and downtrodden. I can remember thinking this can't be what my life's about. This can't be what I do for the rest of my life where I just grind and grind and grind and have no freedom. I can't travel 25 times a year and just feel miserable all the time. I mean, I can't hold my thousand employees accountable, let alone live up to my own expectations. And I mean, look at myself: I was overweight, I never saw my family. I was a mess. I knew at that time I needed something. I needed a breakthrough. I needed clarity.

Brendon Burchard, in his amazing book *High Performance Habits*, talks about clarity a lot. It's actually Habit 1 of his HP6 - Seek clarity. I didn't learn until many years later, but right there at that moment, I knew I needed clarity. Luckily, clarity came to me with a BANG!

Sitting alone in the break room, I started reading from a small quote book I carried around with me. I read a quote by a wonderful man named Bob Proctor that I had read many times before, but for some reason this time it really spoke to me. Bob said, "*accountability is the glue that ties commitment to results*".

Now, I want you to think about that for a second. *Accountability is the glue that ties commitment to results*. That statement, as I sat in that break room, really started to resonate with me, and I started to think about how I could get a better accountability in my life. So, I chewed on it, on and on and on. And as I did, I realized I needed better accountability in my life. That was going to be the only answer to fixing where my life had somehow gotten off track.

I took out a little notebook and wrote down the origins of my future personal coaching program - The 4Cs of Accountability. The 4Cs as I shaped them were originally for totally selfish reasons. I built it just for Don. Just for Don Markland. I wanted to live my best life, and so I needed a model to follow.

What happened next was mind-boggling. I created my program and I started to live it, and it was like magic! I started to look at my whole life from an accountability perspective. I started to see how I could function at a high level. I started to lose weight. I started to be home more often. I started to run my business better and the results were miraculous. As I was home more with my family, my wife, she liked the thinner me (which was a bonus by the way). It was amazing.

My business, which was about \$7,000,000 at the time, started to grow. We went from 7 million to 12 million to 25 million, and all the way up to 45 million over the next four and a half to five years. I couldn't believe it. And things continued to go my way. After being with that business for a long time, we decided as a family the best move was to get out of a high-travel environment, and go full entrepreneur mode.

I joined a small startup where I was lucky enough to be a part owner and Chief Operating Officer of a small digital marketing and lead generation agency in Salt Lake City, Utah. This time I was super excited because I had the confidence of growing one business, plus the mentality of the 4Cs of Accountability, firmly in my pocket.

There was only one problem. This new company was a very small, struggling startup. We had no budget. We had no money, and we had an even bigger problem - we had a negative cash flow rate. Now, those of you that are familiar with business will know that a negative cash flow is not a business model I would suggest you follow. Things were looking bleak. To make matters worse, after 90 days, somehow I found a way to lose even more money. I was not doing well as an entrepreneur, and I was beginning to doubt if I could even handle this. I was really struggling.

Amidst this struggle, one day on my way home, I called my amazing wife to complain. I whined about how awful my job was, how miserable the work was, everything. I mean, I just whined nonstop. Here were some of the things I said to her: *"I couldn't believe how bad this work is; this job is terrible. I should have never left the other business. I've made a huge mistake."*

Instantly, my wife responded and said *"Don, lucky for you, I didn't marry a loser."*

WHAM! She smacked me across the face. She continued, "You've been complaining about this job for weeks, and I'm sick of it. From now on, only call me when you're going to talk about solutions. Otherwise, maybe you are the problem. From now on, only call me when you're going to talk about the 4Cs." And with that, she hung up the phone. That was exactly how it went (isn't my wife incredible?).

Now why am I telling you this long dumb story? Because it was at that moment I realized the value of having a coach. You see, my wife had many years' experience as a senior executive for an optical company throughout the state of Utah. In fact, she ran 10 of their stores and had helped them grow by millions. She knew how business operated. She knew how numbers worked. Furthermore, she knew how teams should be managed. And I needed somebody with expertise that could push me, challenge me, hold me accountable to what I already knew to be true. I couldn't do it alone. And she was there when I needed her.

Now, I'll be honest. I did not call her every day (mostly because I did not have something good to say to her every single day). But over the coming weeks, I called her every couple of days, I started to have solution oriented ideas, I started to talk to her about the 4Cs and it started to push me into creative solutions.

Miraculously, that business that had a negative cash flow rate bounced back in a real way. Within a year and a half later, we crossed 1.5 million in revenue. A couple years later, we made it to the Inc 5,000. In fact, we did that three years in a row. I was very lucky to win some awards in entrepreneurship for that growth. I'm so thankful for my wife being my coach and teaching me the values of coaching for the first time in my life. It was later that I hired my own coach, but I always hire them with the idea that I wanted to mirror what my wife provided for me.

This story is not just to talk about my own success or my own origins, but it is to share what all of you and all of us have in common. Every one of us has an origin story that introduced us into the world of coaching. And this is important because if you don't know your story, if you don't know what brought you to coaching, it will be difficult to build your coaching practice. Your origin story is fundamental to being able to sell coaching to others. It is a key ingredient in the blueprint.

EXERCISE 1

So, your first exercise is to answer the following questions:

- 1. What is your origin story?**
- 2. What brought you to coaching?**
- 3. What taught you that coaching is valuable?**
- 4. What made you learn that coaching can make a big difference in your life, in your business's life, and in your family's life?**
- 5. What are the emotional benefits to coaching? How has it impacted you emotionally?**
- 6. What are the financial benefits to coaching? How has it benefited you financially?**
- 7. How has it benefited your family? How has it benefited your relationships?**

Now take the time to actually write down these answers.

I'll go ahead and wait.

Now, did you do it? Did you actually fill out those answers, or did you just keep reading? Remember, you committed to go all in. If you're not going all in, and you're just grinding through the book, I promise you, you will not grow your practice. So, I'm going to ask again, did you take the time to write down your origin story? This should be hard. This should be intense. This should be frustrating. If it's not, it's not working.

I remember a time when I did yoga with my amazing wife. We had been on a workout routine called P90X and part of that program was yoga. So that day, halfway through, my wife was dripping with sweat, and I was hardly sweating at all. I said, *"Yoga is easy. This is silly."* And she said to me, *"If it's not making you sweat, you're not low enough, or in other words, you're not making it hard."* All I did was then change how low I went. I chose to make it uncomfortable. All of a sudden, I started to sweat. I promise you, if you're not taking the time to make your origin story, filling out the pages, there's only one person you're cheating - that is yourself. Take the time to create the origin story and answer those questions. So, you have to look into how coaching got introduced to you, how it impacted you emotionally, because it will pay off as we build your program later.

As I started to understand coaching and what it did for me, I knew inside that this was something I was going to launch into later. I knew it because years later after we had that business, we moved to Florida and worked for companies like State Farm, Amazon, and then later a financial services company which we grew from 36 million all the way up to 90 million. We'd seen a lot of different types of successes, even becoming a Forbes contributor. They were kind enough to publish my 4Cs of Accountability program and featured it on their podcast. And as they did, I started to have people reach out to me asking about my 4Cs program, what it was, and how to make it work in their business and their lives.

I found myself at a jumping off point. I knew I wanted to be into coaching, I was having opportunities present themselves from Forbes and others, but I was fearful. The entire process was nerve-wracking because I was still a full-time executive helping run a \$90 million business with close to 200 salespeople, almost 500 employees, a full-time family, coupled with full-time community responsibilities. How was I going to make it all work? How was I going to fit it in?

I know these are questions you have to deal with every single day. So, I'll walk you through the time management struggles if you're a side hustler. I'll walk you through how you can fit it all in and how you don't commit time theft with your employers to build your practice (because I was able to make it work while I built both businesses). Still, I wrestled with everything and I wanted to make sure I was committed and ready to do it. So, as I decided to put my toes in, I made a lot of mistakes, which I'm going to walk through. But before I did, I had to go through the exercise I just went through with you and needed to really believe that I wanted to go all in. Did I want to do this? Was coaching that important to me? Was helping people that important to me? And I went through these last few questions. Here are the last questions of your exercise:

8. What do I really hope to achieve with your practice? What is my ultimate end game? Do I want to generate a million-dollar business, a \$5 million business, a \$20 million business?

9. And if I do, what does that look like? Remember, success always starts with math.

So, if I want to have a \$20 million business, mathematically, how does that work? Am I going to charge clients \$30,000 a month or \$10,000 a month? Or am I going to have an online course? What am I going to do?

Your exercise is to ask yourself right now (fill it out) where, and what is my ultimate end game with my coaching practice? How big do I want it to be? Do I want it to be \$80,000 a year, \$1 million a year, \$5 million a year? What? And then, what math is necessary to make it work? Does that mean I need to have 25 clients every single month at \$500 a month? Do I need to have 10 clients a month at \$3,000 a month so that I have a monthly recurring revenue of \$30,000 a month? That by the way would turn out to be a \$360,000-year practice, mathematically.

You have to do the math - you cannot avoid it. Everything in this life, from a success standpoint, starts with math. I was working with one of our clients in the program just the other day. His name was Jess and he had set a goal. He said, *"all I need to have is an \$80,000 a year practice, and I'm very successful."* So, he did the math, and he realized, *you know what, I've already got 10 clients. My goodness. I'm charging them \$300 a month.* Meaning he's already got a recurring revenue of \$3,000 a month. So, together we did the math. We went through an exercise where he's changing his price to \$400 a month. And now, all he's got to do is add just a few more, and he's there. It always starts with math.

That's your exercise.

Take the time, fill out these pages, and we'll move on to the next chapter.

This is your origin story.

This is your goal.

Take the time, and we'll move on to the next piece.

CHAPTER 2

EARLY BEGINNINGS AND NICHE

The early mistakes.

After I had started my practice, I did probably just about everything wrong you can imagine. Now remember, at the time, I had been a successful entrepreneur and I had already grown one business which was later sold. I had ownership in two other businesses, I had an MBA, and I was a Forbes contributor, I felt like I was extremely knowledgeable in the world of growing a business. I was confident I had the pedigree and background to justify being successful in business. And still I did just about everything wrong. Everything!

The first thing I did when I decided to create the business was going online to Fiverr and paying somebody too much money to design a logo. And for whatever reason, I chose the world's ugliest 1970-ish logo. Second thing I did was I spent way too much money again online having someone design me a website. Not a funnel page, not a lead acquisition page, but a big nasty and ugly website for some ridiculous reason. I still can't believe I thought I was Coca-Cola or General Electric or something like that. Funny, right? I wanted this grandiose website that was flash and terrible. Next, I spent even more money having somebody set up a Facebook page, a business LinkedIn page, and a business Twitter page. All of these things, because I, for some reason, thought I was going to be massively successful within minutes.

Then all of a sudden, I thought it was 1997, and I spent a lot of money having business cards printed up. I mean, who in the world uses business cards? Why did I think I needed business cards, anyway? I don't know, but I spent money that I didn't have on business cards. So, think about this. I'd spent close to \$8,000 on a website, Facebook, LinkedIn, business cards, and logos, and I was yet to even sign a client. With all my business background, and all my training, I still spent money I don't even have. Remember this lesson: *cheap, easy, and free is better than spending money you don't have*. For those of you who are not paying attention, there are groups on Instagram named Bubba page and Jordan Page. I'd follow Jordan Page on Instagram. She has a whole piece *Cheap, Easy, and Free* and a Bubba page, they're all about being an entrepreneur for cheap, easy, and free. Follow them, and you'll get all the free content, all the free entrepreneurial resources. If you send a DM: *Give me some free entrepreneurship resources*. They'll hook you up. It's just a little side note for them. I love them for that stuff.

Now I spent all this \$8,000, and had yet to get signed to a client. Then I got on Upwork and started bidding on jobs. There I found my first client. She was looking for a business coach. I started talking to her. I had my first sales call, which turned out to be a mess. I had no script, no organization, nothing, and somehow I luckily closed it.

This net part, as painful as it is to write it, is 100% true. This is what my first client paid me: \$91 for eight calls a month. So, if you do the math, she paid me \$11.37 cents an hour. Keep in mind that I was an MBA successful entrepreneur, an award-winning entrepreneur, and a multimillion-dollar business owner. She was paying me \$11.37 cents an hour for business coaching eight calls a month. This was not scalable. My 18-year-old college son and my 16-year-old daughter both make more than that hourly now (and they love to remind me of that).

But as my first client, remember this lesson, it's better to get them to say yes, and figure it out when you're trying to build your business, or when you're trying to build your coaching practice. Just say yes, and figure it out. I was not making money on that first client at all, but I learned a lot about coaching. I learned a lot about how to figure it out. I learned a lot about how to do my practice better by going through that. I know my first client got a lot. I know her practice grew. This just got my first testimonial. Lots of things improved from that first client, but cash flow did not.

Now my second client, I charged a thousand dollars a month for four calls because I started to learn a little bit about coaching and how it works. You can see the wide spectrum there. But the challenge was that I didn't have leads. I didn't have any way to get leads. I was going all over the place trying to get leads. I looked at Upwork and Fiverr. I had started my own Facebook Ads campaign and Google Ads campaign. Everything was a mess. I went to resources like Noomii, Coaching.com, Bark, Thumbtack, coach.me and more. I spent a lot. I spent so much money, and bled myself trying to get leads.

After six months, here's what I found. I got a lot of people that would call me or get what's called free coaching sessions or free strategy sessions or complimentary coaching sessions, and none of them could afford me. So, I gave away a lot of coaching sessions for free. And after just about five, almost six months, I only had two paying clients. One of them, \$91 a month. The other, \$1,000 a month. What a mess.

Something was wrong. There had to be a better way. So, I did what I'm sure all of you do. I got on Google. I started to just Google like crazy and look for how to build your coaching practice, and there were so many blogs and articles, it was overwhelming. There were so many people out there saying this and that is what they did to build their practice. So, I started to research all these people on how they're building their coaching practice, and what I was shocked about was that most of the people didn't have a big practice. They actually had very small practices. I was shocked at that. I would get on the phone with these people, I would do these complimentary sessions with them, and then I would ask them about the size of their practice. Surprisingly, it was tiny. I found countless people who weren't successful trying to teach coaches how to be successful.

These were the same people who wrote about how to grow big practices and how to scale them. They were the ones giving advice and yet, they had tiny practices. Well, I thought that didn't make sense. Something's wrong with the entire system.

So, I continued to read, and continued to study. I read a study by Harvard Business Review where they had gone through all the coaching businesses. Therein, it was stated that the #1 mistake that coaches make in building their practice is that they continue to coach on what they want to coach on, and not the problem that customers or prospects need. Or in other words, they fail to have a niche.

At that time, I prided myself as a business coach and I wrestled with that idea over and over. And I thought, *business coach... business coach*. That's not really niched because everything is a business and I mean everything. Hospitals, dance studios, coaches... Everything's a business. So, if I'm just calling myself a business coach, I'm a coach to everybody. And I was reminded of my very first business years ago when we used to tell people *if you can help everybody, you can help nobody* because you're not niche. It doesn't make any sense. And I started to realize I was falling into that trap. If I can help everybody, then I can help nobody. I was also reminded of a quote from Russell Brunson. He's the CEO of ClickFunnels (I use them for their web services after I had wasted all that money with my first website). Russell Brunson says there are riches in the niches. He says that in his first book *DotCom Secrets*. I started to really think about this concept of niching and the phrase "business coach".

Right there and then, I realized I have to narrow my niche down. I have to get really specific. So, I started to talk to other coaches. I was connected to Noomii with a number of coaches. I started talking to them and I saw that they were called leadership coaches, entrepreneurship coaches, and small business coaches. So, I asked them how they niche. None of them did. They're all just high-level, *oh, I'm an executive coach, I'm a mindset coach*, but none of them did and all of them struggled. And then every once in a while, there'd be somebody who had a kind of a bigger practice, but most of them were just lower, mid-tier, maybe six figures a year, but not very high. And I realized this is a problem that needs to be solved. No one gets it, no one understands how to niche.

FIRST EXERCISE

I want you to ask yourself these questions:

1. Have you really found your niche?
2. Do you know what niching means?
3. Do you know how to niche your practice?

And if you don't, that's okay because we're going to talk about it right now. I've solved it for myself, and I've taught it for a thousand other coaches. But if you don't know what it means, you have to keep reading. And if you're thinking, well, I don't know if I need a niche, you have to keep reading because here's what I learned with coaching (and this is where my whole practice started to change):

Being a successful coach has nothing to do with who you can coach. It has to do with who you can sell coaching to.

And I'm going to say this again. I want to make sure you understand it. If you're reading this book, and you like to draw on your books or write on them, I'd underline this. If you're on Kindle, I'd highlight it.

Building your coaching practice has nothing to do with who you can coach. It has to do with who you can sell coaching to.

That's the secret.

One of our coaches, Coach L., was named among the top 20 coaches in Vancouver while she was a member of our program. She's still a member of our program, and she's thriving. She hit her first six-figure year working with us right after she hit her first milestone. Not only that, but she said, "I've realized the better marketer I've become, the more successful a coach I've been." Just remember that. Building your practice is about who you can sell your coaching to.

Niching is about marketing yourself better, being the biggest fish in the smallest pond. That's the difference. As you're the biggest fish in the smallest pond, they will be attracted to you. You don't need more leads. That's what I realized. You need better leads in a smaller pond. And we're going to talk about how to do that very shortly, but you need to wrap your brain around the idea of why it's so important.

This is where many coaches get lost, because I know you believe as a coach you can coach anyone. And I also believe that is true. Any of you reading this book are great coaches. You are awesome coaches. You have changed lives, and you continue to change lives. That is not what will make you a great coach, because remember what I said in the introduction that coaching in itself is an easy job. It is a fixed set of questions, helping somebody self-reflect and self-discover limiting beliefs to make themselves better.

I'm not trying to disrespect the art of coaching, but you need to start reminding yourself that it has nothing to do with you or at least little to do with you and more to do with the method. Growing your practice is about the marketing and salesmanship of coaching more than the actual act of coaching itself. And this has to do with the paradigm shift of acting like a coach and acting like a business owner.

You see, after my first few months when I was grinding out building a small practice, I was struggling because I only had those two clients. I had a self-awakening moment. I realized I was acting like a coach and not a business owner. This required me to literally take off that coaching hat and put on the business owner hat in order to be successful. That's what I'm going to ask you to do right now. When you are a coach, when you're on the phone with somebody acting like a coach, I want you to be in full coach mode. I want you to ask thought-provoking questions. I want you to tell engaging stories. I want you to invoke emotion. I want you to be the best coach you can. Now, the minute you're done with that coaching session, I want you to clock out. I want you to take that punch card, clock out, and you are no longer an employee of the business. Now, it is necessary that you act like a business owner. Remember, business owners make tough decisions. Business owners sell the business. Business owners make financial decisions. Business owners are gritty. Business owners think of the big picture all the time. They do not act like employees. That is your commitment.

So, the next exercise right now is to write down this sentence in the blank space: **I am the owner of this business, not an employee.**

That's what you write. *I am the owner of this business, not an employee.* When you coach, you're an employee of the business, but outside of that, you are the owner of the business. Not an employee anymore, and owners make decisions.

I had to have this paradigm shift, and when I had it, I started to think about the business differently. I started to think about why it's so important to niche, and I started to make decisions about how to niche. What I discovered next changed my business, and thousands of other coaching businesses, forever. I discovered the concept of what I call *undeniable authority*.

UNDENIABLE AUTHORITY

We're going to go through this exercise in the next chapter about how undeniable authority works and how to build undeniable authority. But before we do, here is your next exercise. I want you to go through and list business owners that you know, business owners that you've been in contact with. Some you might know personally, others you might only know through either social media or through books that you've read. But list business owners that you're familiar with. List 10 of them.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

What are the traits or behaviors that they embody? I want you to write all of them down right on the first column who the business owners are. Then the second column, the two or three behaviors. Those are the behaviors you should be embodying as a business owner. And remember, I don't want behaviors that are high-level-like "they embody leadership," or "they embody inspiration." You are a solopreneur. You are a team of one. So, act like it. Own your business. Be the business owner. And then the next chapter, we're going to find your niche together and start building this business.

CHAPTER 3: MINDSET AND THE GREAT PARADIGM SHIFT (PART I)

I had to start changing the way I thought about the business. As I discussed previously, I needed to start thinking like a business owner and stop thinking like a coach. I had to have what's called a paradigm shift. Those who are coaches (or those who are venturing into coaching) will know a lot about paradigm shifts. After the early mistakes and beginning the coaching practice, that was when I had my paradigm shift. I'm going to talk a little bit about it here to make sure we're all on the same page and define it in a straightforward way for everybody.

In his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey discussed that a paradigm has a Greek root from the word *paradigm* or *paradigma*. A paradigm shift occurs when our paradigms change, allowing us to see the world differently. Sometimes this happens suddenly because of a dramatic change, some trauma, or something, and sometimes this happens very gradually. In the simplest form, a paradigm change is when everything shifts, so you can look at the way you work or the way you think differently.

How vital are paradigms? Now, I don't mean to go down a rabbit hole with a big, long history lesson, but let me explain how essential paradigms and mindsets are with a little story about Robert Rosenthal. Robert Rosenthal was a psychology professor from the 1960s. He had a long history of being what you might call radical when compared to his peers. He worked at a small college in the 1960s named Harvard University (you might've heard of it). When I say his ideas were radical, let's say that his counterparts thought he was straight-up bananas. One idea he was passionate about was the belief in the power of the mind and how it had more to do with people's performance than almost anything else. From his passion, Rosenthal set about testing that theory.

He went to an elementary school in California. He wanted to put together a test to assess "blooming intelligence," or rather the ability to reasonably predict future academic success. Now, Rosenthal claimed that based on his little difficulty, he would forecast which students would be able to have a fantastic breakout year in the upcoming year, regardless of previous results.

Simply, based on his Rosenthal tests, you would know with pinpoint accuracy if a student was going to become an A student and be eligible for future scholarships? Can you imagine how impactful that would be for a student or a parent? It was awesome.

Rosenthal found his test subjects school and was ready to get started. He had students go through his assessment, and soon after the kids took the test, he brought all the teachers in and planned to read off the names of the students who did well.

There was a slight problem, however. Rosenthal had left out a critical piece of information.

He'd made the entire thing up.

Yup. You read them correctly. He made it all up on purpose. He wasn't testing whether or not his "blooming intelligence" test was working. He was testing how people responded to a change in paradigm regarding personal expectations.

His little test that was to identify "*blooming intelligence*" didn't predict a single thing. He randomly chose students. He faked every single score. It was all a farce. He expected the students that were going to be successful, and he fabricated the ones that were going to be smarter than they were. Now in modern times, I'm sure with regulatory things or maybe sensitivities of different organizations, if we did that today, there might be a more considerable uproar. But in the 1960s, days and times were different.

Regardless, he sent all of these names out, and the kids got to hear from their teachers, parents, and from Rosenthal that somebody told them they were going to be a future superstar. *You are going to be amazing. You, based on this test, are going to have the best year of your life.*

After they heard the news, everything went back to normal, except for one thing - people's mindset. The teachers went back to what they always do. They taught, but now with a mindset that the particular students were outstanding. The students went back to normal and worked, but with the mindset of, *I am outstanding*. Everybody went back to being who they usually were, with the exception of their mindset, and their potential was different. They had had a paradigm shift.

A year later, Rosenthal returned and wanted to review all the test scores of those students from a year ago. What they found was shocking. Those students that had been randomly selected, their scores had been fabricated initially to show that they had *potential*, and their numbers had risen to the top of the class.

So, I ask you, is this a coincidence? Is this just luck, or is it real? Now you're all coaches by design. You are all in this game for a reason. And one of the things you'll hear me talk about a lot in our programs is that coaches are fantastic at what they do. You are excellent at what you do for other people, BUT you have a significant flaw. You are terrible at following your own coaching. I would tell you, "physician heal thyself." Try to remember how important it is to coach yourself on your own mindset. I had to do the same thing. I needed a paradigm shift to look at my business differently, act like a business owner, and change the way I thought about my business.

As I adopted the significant paradigm shift and started to look at the business as a business owner, I began to really hone in on this concept of niching and wrestling down with what niching really mean? Many of you have gone through different courses and exercises, trying to figure out how to niche, and you struggle with it because you are committed to the principle that "you can coach any person." I mentioned previously that *coaching is not about whom you can coach. It is about whom you can sell.* So, how do you find whom to sell to? It is based on the principle of your ***undeniable authority***.

Now I'm a big fan of definitions and defining words specifically because, firstly, I have a background in literature. I minored in British literature in college, and I find that defining terms can change their meaning for you and create power in them. Secondly, there's a beauty in the human language that I think is romantic. It is powerful and emotional. With that, let's start with defining the term "undeniable authority" and why that matters so much.

What is undeniable authority?

First, the word *undeniable* is an adjective. It can mean *plainly, true, unquestionably, excellent or genuine*.

Please think about it for a second. *Plainly*, means simply, *without the flair or any additives; unquestionably*. What does that mean to you? No one can argue it. Now think about the terms together, the adverb *unquestionably*, and then *excellent*. In other words, without any argument, something is excellent. Also, consider the last one: *genuine*. If you were watching one of my favorite shows, which is *Antiques Roadshow*, and something is genuine, something is authentic. What does that mean? It means the worth is considerably more.

One of my favorite possessions is an autographed baseball of Nolan Ryan that my father got me when I was 14 years old. I love this not only because of the nostalgia of a father and a son, but in addition because Nolan Ryan is my favorite baseball player. I know its authenticity because I have with it a certificate of authenticity. So, I know it's genuine. If I found out later, it was fake. It would hurt. But the certification isn't what gives it all the authenticity. I also know it's genuine because of the transaction between my father and me. It's real. It's authentic. It's undeniable. There is power in the undeniability of that. Think of all of those things that go with the word *undeniable*.

Now let's look at the second word *authority*. What does authority mean? It's a noun. *Power to influence or command thought or opinion, or power to demonstrate the behavior*. It also means *cited as an expert*. Think about those definitions for a second. What does the power to influence mean? Power to influence means you've been given the power to influence other people, or your opinion and ways on other people, because of who you are. It could also be because of your behaviors; you are cited as an expert in a particular field or industry.

Now we're going to marry these two words together. *Undeniable Authority*. If I can have a little bit of literary license here, it might mean you are unquestionably cited as an influence or unquestionably cited as an expert in a particular field, industry, or area. That is undeniable authority.

When you are trying to begin your coaching practice, and you're trying to focus on your niche, I want you to start here. Answer this question:

What is my undeniable authority? Where is my history, and in my life do I have undeniable authority better than anyone else in the world?

This understanding creates a simpler sales process. I've said this now almost five times, but I'll say it a sixth time: Coaching is not about whom you can coach. Of course, you can coach anybody on planet earth. Coaching is about whom you can sell to, and your easiest pathway to sales is through finding your undeniable authority. That is the easiest path.

Let's take this through a simple exercise. I want you to list now 15 areas where you have undeniable authority. We'll start with the easiest one.

List for me the businesses in your life where you've worked.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Next, move to industries.

List the five industries that you've worked in. This could be software, IT, finance, banking, you name it. List the high things, really high level.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now we'll go to titles and functions.

List specific jobs and titles that you've had. You could be the senior director. You could be a project manager. You could be a telemarketer. You could be the managing director. You could be vice-president. You name it. List that next.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now I want you to list roles that you've had in your life. List five of them—Father, mother, sister, son, daughter, widow, retiree, cancer-survivor, divorcee, etc.

List the roles that you've had.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Now you see, all these things you've done could be an undeniable authority. We're going to talk later about how to sell that undeniable authority, but all of those build your undeniable authority as you pivot down and pinch on that specific area.

Now I know what you're probably thinking. You're thinking that so many people go into coaching because they are saying, *"Don, I don't want to be in this world pr industry anymore. I'm becoming a coach, so I can leave so-and-so industry. I really just want to work with entrepreneurs."*

Let me say a couple of things about that statement. First, coaching is not an escape from your life. You cannot launch a coaching business because you are failing in other areas. You have to launch a coaching business because you are successful, and you are coaching and teaching how you are successful to other people. Success doesn't mean a millionaire, but it does mean you've figured a few things out (which if you did the exercise above, you will have). When you are selling coaching, you are selling you. You are the product that they want to buy.

Second, when you are selling coaching, how you start is not how you end up. Just because you start with this undeniable authority does not mean that's where you will be in 5 years or ten years, or 20 years.

Let me tell you about a friend and client, Cary. She originally started a practice almost ten years ago. She is amazing, impactful, and incredible. When she originally started her practice, she started (I'm sure like many of you) where she felt like she could coach anybody all over the world because she had been certified and learned how to coach. And as she did that, she struggled to find clients.

Now in her background, she'd been a trauma nurse, and she had gone through a very painful divorce, but she really wanted to coach entrepreneurs. The problem was that she had no undeniable authority in coaching entrepreneurs. She'd never run a business. She'd never grown a business. She had never launched a business. She'd never answered payroll. So, it would be difficult for her to sell to a small business owner or an entrepreneur why she was a good fit for coaching entrepreneurs.

Still, it was her passion. She had a love for entrepreneurship, but it would have been not easy to sell that.

My feedback to her was: *I don't know if you should be coaching entrepreneurs yet. Why don't you focus on your undeniable authority, which is trauma, or which has divorced women?*

She listened and started to narrow her niche down. She focused on her undeniable authority, and she said, *"Don, I don't want to do that. I want to coach entrepreneurs."* And I said, *"you're not there yet. You don't have the undeniable authority. Focus here first."* As she did, she focused on women that had been through painful divorces. They were going through trauma and her coaching helped them immensely. In the beginning, she started to coach only them. And she soon got about ten clients, almost 15 clients. And sure enough, 7 of those women were also entrepreneurs.

Now she was coaching her undeniable authority AND coaching entrepreneurs. As she coached those women through their trauma and through their divorce, she also started to coach them on their business. And sure enough, they started to see results. Cary started to expand her undeniable authority to not only coach women who had gone through traumatic situations and painful scenarios and divorce (which was her main undeniable authority) but now she had expanded her undeniable authority to coach entrepreneurs, which allowed her to have the permission to sell to a new market. *Undeniable authority is the marketable permission to sell to particular prospects.* That's how important it is. It doesn't mean you won't find clients. If you don't have undeniable authority, it doesn't mean you can't coach those other people. It just makes it really hard to sell to them. Why would you make things harder than they need to be?0

How important is undeniable authority? I'm going to give you a simple metaphor and then a serious example. I want you to think of three tools. Think of a hammer, a screwdriver, and a chainsaw. These are three tools that you would find in any common garage. If I'm in my backyard and I want to cut down a tree, and I say to my son, *"go grab me a tool from the garage. I need to cut down this tree."* Keep in mind that he knows nothing about tools. So, he just went into the garage, and he grabbed a hammer (which is a tool) and came back and gave it to me. He might say, *"here you go, dad. Cut down the tree."* Well, I'm going to have a heck of a time trying to cut down the tree, even though he grabbed me a tool. I need a very specific tool to cut down this tree. It has to be the chainsaw.

In a similar scenario, if I'm trying to screw in a screw and I say to him, *"go get me a tool. I need to screw in the screw"*, and he goes and gets me the chainsaw, I'm going to have the same problem. Undeniable authority is that important. And I'm telling you now. This is how many of you are going to market. Right now, you are going to market telling all of your clients, *"I'm a life coach. I can do everything. I can coach you on every problem. I can coach you on anxiety, on stress, on if you're dealing with problems, on transitions, on your career, on everything."* And they go there, and they're saying, *"I don't need somebody who can coach me on everything. I have a tree in my backyard. I need a chainsaw."*

When I started my business and struggled to find a niche, I decided to change my mindset and change the way I looked at my business and realized I was not acting as a business owner. I was acting like a coach, and coaches are employees. Coaches only function in a coaching role. Business owners make decisions. So, I made a decision: I am going to use my undeniable authority and focus on what I know; my background. I have a 22-year history in sales and marketing, particularly in digital marketing and sales, and I've been very successful in both areas. I had built and sold a business in one. I had ownership of two other businesses. Forbes was using me as a contributor in the business development and sales areas. I knew I was one of the best sales and marketing thought leaders in the world. So, I was going to no longer call myself a business coach. I was going to be a coach for small businesses under \$10 million that had sales and marketing problems.

That was it. I was going to focus specifically on that area. And I also knew this simple statement: just because you niche, it doesn't mean, no. If somebody comes to you with a different problem, you can still say yes. You can still find a yes for anybody. But niching down is how you go to market based on your undeniable authority.

Now I told you earlier that I was going to give you a silly example like I did with the tools. Now, let me give you a serious example that'll make this crystal clear. My wife is a cancer survivor. When she was diagnosed, we did not go to just your general practitioner for help. We went to a very specific oncologist who was trained and who had a specialty in her type of cancer. We did this on purpose because her life was very serious to us, and we wanted the best medical care possible. I want all of you to understand the seriousness of your role and your seriousness of coaching.

You might feel that coaching is not serious because anybody can do it. Or you might feel that it's not real because you can get a "certification" for \$97 all the way to \$25,000 on a weekend Bootcamp or through board certification. Regardless, I'm here to tell you that coaching is an extremely serious and powerful tool that changes thousands of lives all over the world.

When somebody reaches out for help with coaching, that takes all the courage in the world to do that because they're acknowledging that they need help. And that is extremely difficult to do, especially in Western civilization. We are such an ego-driven society for people to acknowledge that they need help. That is so difficult and so hard. Honor them for reaching out and needing help by using your undeniable authority by being the authority, showing them that you are the best at what you do. Show them you're not vanilla, not a Swiss army knife, not a Jack of all trades, but specifically there to help them with their specific problem.

As I honed down on my undeniable authority, as I was specific to that problem, my business changed, and it started to grow. From there, my two itty bitty clients quickly grew to 10. I couldn't believe it. Everything changed when I understood my undeniable authority and how valuable that was.

Your exercise is to go through the undeniable authority and then niche down. Go through the 15 lists and start to create your niche for your business.

Please do it now!

CHAPTER 4: WHAT'S IN A NAME? EVERYTHING

So, after I started to have the paradigm shift, I realized I needed to have the right name for my business. William Shakespeare, so wisely, stated: *What's in a name that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.* He was so true, and he was also full of crap. Names absolutely matter. Words absolutely matter.

With my background in marketing, I'm going to spend a little time talking about a little bit of marketing tactics and a marketing strategy for you coaches and help you understand the value of the name of your business, and some of the necessary things to go through.

I am shocked at the amount of times I have worked with thousands of coaches all over the world and see over and over again your coaching practice named your name.com or your name international, or your name advisors, or your name partnerships. The first rule in naming your coaching practice is this: remember the name of your business is a marketing asset.

What is a marketing asset? The role of marketing is to attract potential customers to make a buying decision or make a transactional decision. That's what marketing is doing. So, every time you have an opportunity to influence somebody to make a buying or transactional decision, you want to take advantage of it. I want you to think about how many coaches there are in the world, or how many marketing efforts there are in the world. If you are a coach, and you are marketing, or you are trying to influence people to buy your product or services, you aren't competing against other coaches.

Sure, you might be a little bit. But what you're really competing with is Netflix or Hulu or NFL or the NBA or the bar or workaholics, etc. That's your real competition. So, your marketing, you're getting them to buy from you is about getting them to realize they have a problem, and have to choose you. They have to stop and pay attention to you. And so, if your business is called your name, that is missing out on a really important opportunity.

I don't mean to be offensive to anybody reading this book, but outside your significant other (if you have one) or your mother (if you have one), your name is meaningless. So, to make it very clear, if you've named your coaching practice after your name, just tell yourself the truth: this coaching business is a vanity project. That's it. You've built your coaching practice as a vanity project to yourself. In my coaching practice (sure with you), we practice brutal honesty to try to help people face the truth and eliminate limiting beliefs. So, if you were a coaching client, we would be practicing that. If you were adamant about naming your coaching practice after yourself, we would have some hard truth right now where we would say this is now a vanity project and that's okay, but you need to own the truth. You are now naming it after yourself, because you want to see your name in lights. You want to see yourself on a stage. You want to see yourself and your name out there, and that's okay. Just own your truth, and also own that it will be harder to grow your business.

I'm sure you're thinking, "But Don, Tony Robbins. His business is called Tony Robbins and Rachel Hollis, her business is called Rachel Hollis." And you can go down the list. My response to that is, you are correct, and you are also not Tony Robbins or Rachel Hollis. If you were, you wouldn't be reading this book, you would be writing their book. Stop with the vanity project, take advantage of every marketing asset that you can. Stop thinking like a coach, think like a business owner. Business owners make decisions. Business owners make hard decisions and take advantage of every opportunity that they can.

As you're naming your business, one of the most important things to do is to avoid a concept that I call word traps. What is a word trap? A word trap is a high-level concept, word, or phrase that only the coach understands and that the potential client must ask to define. This is where it becomes a trap. The word trap tricks the coach into thinking they're communicating about their business, but it traps the potential client into never understanding what your business is about and what you actually do. It can be very confusing, because you are trying to communicate, but all you're doing is trapping yourself deeper and deeper and deeper. Let me explain by listing out some of the most common word traps that I see in coaching business names all the time. And I'm sure as you read this, some of you are going to see this in your current business name.

First and foremost, if you are calling yourself a life coach, that is a word trap. It is an absolute word trap because what is a life coach? If you have to define it afterward, if somebody has to ask you, well, what does that mean? No, right there, you've stepped in a word trap. If you call yourself a transitions coach, that is a word trap because tell me what person is not in some sort of state of transition. Everyone defines it differently. So, you would always have to go forward and try to define it for them. The next three are perfect examples of word traps: a success coach, a mindset coach or accountability coach. What are those? Have you ever met a coach on planet earth that wasn't a success coach, a mindset coach, or an accountability coach? I've never met one. Every single coach is trying to coach for some sort of success or some sort of mindset or some sort of accountability. I've never met a coach that didn't have accountability as part of their process. So, you saying you're an accountability coach doesn't separate you in any way. You saying you're a mindset coach doesn't separate you in any way. Saying you're a success coach doesn't make you unique at all. That just blends you into everybody else. Here are other examples: a wellness coach or a growth coach. What coach on planet earth doesn't focus on some sort of wellness or some sort of growth? Have you seen a coach that was a badness coach or an anti-growth coach? Of course not.

That would be ridiculous.

Naming your business makes an enormous difference because it brings them into you and brings them closer. I'll give you a perfect example. Take where I live in Florida as an instance. We have one of the biggest organizations in the world called Walt Disney World. Think of the name: Walt Disney World. Is there any question about what occurs at Walt Disney World? Any questions at all? It's Disney World. Now take the counterpart in California, Disneyland. Any question where it occurs there? It's Disneyland, right? It's the Disneyland; land of Disney. That's very simple. That is the best example of naming and explaining exactly what you do in the name. Now from a marketing perspective, you can go the other route which is called obscure. You make a name so obscure that it becomes memorable. Xerox or Kleenex are perfect examples of this. When those names came out in the 1960s and 1970s, they were so obscure, but they dominated the market that it became the name of the product. So now when we go and make a copy, we call it a Xerox. "Go use the Xerox machine." Or when we blow our nose, we say, "give me a Kleenex", even though it's called tissue paper. Now, if you want to try the obscure route, and you feel that you can go and own the entire coaching market, and you have the funds and the ability to beat Rachel Hollis and beat Tony Robbins and own that entire industry, go and do it. Take the ambition and I champion you and believe in you. Or focus like Walt Disney World, who by the way is bigger than both of those companies I just cited, and explain exactly what you do. My coaching business is called Accountability Now. I'm not an accountability coach. I am a sales and marketing coach, but I call my business Accountability Now. Is there any question about what we're going to focus on in my sales and marketing? What are we going to focus on? It's accountability. When? Now. My program, which we'll talk about later, is about daily sales, coaching, and daily marketing coaching every single day, because we use accountability. When? Now. It's very simple.

As you're naming your business, it matters. Don't miss this step. We're going to come back to this as we go through your program, but it's important because every opportunity you have to present your business from a marketing perspective makes a difference. Your exercise is to find 10 businesses that use proper naming techniques to describe exactly what they do. 2 examples for you to chew on: FedEx, and Walt Disney World. Those describe exactly what they do, and you might not even have realized it. Now go find 10 more and use that to brainstorm the name of your business, so you can have it for yourself. Describe exactly the pain that you've seen that you're going to solve.

If you've done all the previous exercises, by this point, you should have niched down, you should have your goals and your big ambitions and your clarity and your why. Now, you're ready to get the strong name of your business. You're already on the right path.

CHAPTER 5: SELL PROGRAMS NOT COACHING

When I was a young man and teenager in the 1990s, and earlier when I was a young boy in the 1980s, cinema and pop culture was my life. I loved watching Saturday morning cartoons like *Animaniacs*, or television series like *Saved by the bell*. I must have watched every single episode of *Zach and Kelly*, watching them get together and split up. It was my private soap opera. I also was very engaged with probably most of Steven Spielberg and George Lucas's filmography.

In the 1980s, I loved the *Back to the Future* trilogy and Steven Spielberg's *Indiana Jones* trilogy. Much of my young life thinking that I was going to either choose a future career traveling back in time for a living or being an archeologist, only if it included an amazing fedora and a whip. But trumping all of these was science fiction and my love of the two great science fiction genres, science fiction stories and mythologies of Star Wars and Star Trek. I'll talk more about the latter in future chapters and how it works in coaching. But Star Wars has a remarkable connection to coaching, unlike any other film, drama, any other cinematic or television, or pop culture reference. And it took me a long time to understand it.

After I had built my coaching practice, and given it a name as we discussed in the previous chapters, I still struggled to sell coaching for a lot of different reasons. But there were two that stuck out more than anything. First and foremost was because selling coaching was difficult, and I'm going to explain why in a moment. But secondly, people were embarrassed to buy coaching. In my professional career, but before becoming a full-time coach, I spent years in the financial services industry, particularly in areas regarding personal debt. So, I knew firsthand how difficult it was for people to address privacy issues like debt that might be embarrassing. Even though it was a pressing concern, even though it was a problem, they would still have a hard time seeking help. And one of the businesses that I worked in, we helped people that had just received a letter from the IRS threatening to levy their bank account, garnish their wages, or sometimes seize their property. You can't have a more urgent need than losing your goods or hard-earned money. Even then, they would have a difficult time seeking help because, for whatever reason in Western civilization, we have built up such an ego that asking for help is some sort of a sign of weakness. And this is not a male or female thing, both genders do it equally. I would probably need to say both genders and non-binary. All do with the same seeking for help is somehow regarded as some sign of weakness, and coaching and selling coaching is saying to a person *I know that you're asking for help*.

I had been trained in sales formally, having gone through multiple Dale Carnegie workshops and courses. I had been a certified master at Cardone University, and I had also achieved certification from Jeb Blunt's organization. So, to say that I knew sales was simple. I was considered extremely qualified in how to sell. I had run sales teams as large as 3000 and generated hundreds of millions of dollars in sales in my career, and yet I struggled to sell coaching initially. It was because it was difficult to sell because of the embarrassment factor from the prospect. I had to understand how to get past that, and that's when I learned I had to stop selling coaching and start selling a program. When I turned coaching into a tangible program, a tangible product that they could be proud of, something they could share with a spouse or a friend or anyone. All of a sudden, the embarrassment that they might have felt started to go away when they could get off the phone with me and pull up an email that I sent them and show their spouse or show their friend or show their business partner and say, *"no, I'm not paying for a coach. I'm enrolled in this program."* Their shoulders were back, their chin was up, and they were excited to be a part of this life change. They really felt like it was an investment as opposed to seeking help to solve a problem.

Let me explain it in a metaphor using *Star Wars* as I was relating to at the beginning of the chapter. When we watch the movie, *Empire strikes back*. Luke Skywalker is introduced as a brand-new character. He goes to the planet, *Dagobah*, and there he meets Yoda for the first time. For those of you that have not seen *Star Wars*, *Empire strikes back*. Be warned, spoilers ahead. Now the movies are well over 30 years old. So, I hope I'm not spoiling anything too much by the time you read or listen to this. Luke is told to go to *Dagobah* but to meet Yoda, but he's never met Yoda. He doesn't know. All he knows is he is a Jedi master with the secrets he needs to be the best Jedi he could ever possibly be. And Luke is well aware that he's not a Jedi. Luke is well aware that he has this problem. Luke is well aware that in each, training to become the best version of himself. So, he arrives at *Dagobah*, desperately seeking help to look for someone named Yoda. In the movie, this short, bald ancient little man or alien appears and starts to greet Luke. And it's very confusing at first. Eventually Luke starts to befriend this young puppet and through a series of events, he learns that it's Yoda, and he's frustrated, but he agrees to learn from Yoda. He agrees to take a chance, but he is not willing.

In the second act of the movie, Luke is fighting against Yoda's teachings. If you study Christian theology, there's a phrase that's used in the New Testament a few times called kicking against the pricks. *Kicking against the pricks* refers to when you're trying to break in a horse, and you kick it with the spur and the horse kicks back and will not be molded, or be broken in to follow commands. Lucas is kicking against the pricks. He will not listen to Yoda. He wants to do it his way. Furthermore, he doesn't want to change, but Yoda continues. It seems confusing to Luke. He doesn't understand, but Yoda continues to guide and demonstrate what he can do for him. Then a very pivotal moment occurs in the movie when Yoda lifts Luke's ship and X wing out of the water using his mystical power, and does something that Luke couldn't do himself. And that mystical power, which I'm sure many of you have known all along, is called the force. It's at that moment, that pivotal moment, when Luke becomes a fanatical follower and will do anything that Yoda says. He trusts him from then on through the rest of his life.

That model which I call the Yoda model follows 3 simple Es. It follows the E of Engage, the E of Emotion and the E of Entitle. The E of engage means you serve. You often do that for free, that's your free strategy session or your free consultation or whatever you call it. Next is emotion. You generate a strong emotional connection and emotional value, a quick win in that first engagement. *Lift the X wing out of the water*. You give a really strong emotional connection. And last you give this process, this emotional engagement, this connection, you give it a name. Yoda called it *the force*. You can call it whatever you want. You call it force plus, which is always very trendy. But giving your program a name changes it from being some abstract Jackson Pollock asks a weird conceptual thing that no one understands what it is, and turns it into something they can see, touch, feel, hold, embrace, share, and love.

I took my original concepts, the four Cs of accountability, and turned them into my program. Now, I have already created the four Cs for myself. It was something that I could use for myself to help me be the best version of myself. I never intended to share with other people. I never intended to use it on clients. And I, for sure, never intended to use it as a way to help sell coaching. But the moment that I did, the moment that I took selling coaching and took it out of some abstract mystical thing that no one could understand and turned it into an actual product, all of my sales doubled almost overnight because they finally understood what they were buying.

This allows you to do a lot of things. It allows you to create marketing material. It allows you to create social content posts, which we'll talk about later. It allows you to have things that you can speak about regularly that you pivot from. Having a program is very beneficial, and the name matters. We talked about this in the previous chapter, but the name is very important. I'm going to give you some tips on how to make your name really valuable. But above everything, the most important factor about your name is to make it memorable. The force, like Yoda used, is memorable. If you're very familiar with Star Wars mythology, you'll know the force is driven by *midi-chlorians*, which are tiny little cells that connect to your blood cells. Now that was all from the first episode of Star Wars, *The Phantom Menace*, and it's widely criticized by Star Wars fans. But regardless, we learned that is where the force comes from, and that is a person's *midi-chlorians* count. It is super nerdy and super detailed, and it is also not memorable. When I call it the force, that is memorable; that evokes emotion, that evokes excitement, that evokes some sort of mysticism and wonder. George Lucas, the writer, producer and creator of the Star Wars mythology was brilliant to call it *the force*.

Here are three things to remember when creating the name of your program. I call this the RIP toolbox. If you're familiar with RIP, the funeral perspective stands for "rest in peace". That is not what this stands for regarding naming strategies, but it makes it easy for me to remember. So, I always picture RIP on a tombstone, and it helps me remember how to name things. I look at the R, which stands for *Repetition*. Getting somebody to repeat the same letter or sound over and over will always help them remember it in their head. *Imagery*. If I can ever get them to say a phrase that evokes an image or a thought very clearly in their mind, that will make it more memorable. Or P which is a *Pattern*. If they follow a consistent pattern, like it rhymes, that will be memorable. I want you to think in your head for just a little bit about brands that have gotten names or slogans or programs that use repetition, imagery or patterns, and how easy it is to remember them.

I'll first speak about my own. It is called the four Cs of accountability: critique success, correct failure, celebrate growth, crush mediocrity. By the way, you can check this out on Forbes, as well as on the Forbes podcasts or get my book on Amazon.

Notice how I talked about the four Cs: Critiques, Correct, Celebrate, Crush, as repetition. It's easy to remember four Cs and the more I make that about the Cs, the easier it is to remember. I'll give you a separate example. One of my clients is a coach named Sam. When he started his practice, he was a speech pathologist and worked in schools all around his state. I remember Sam telling me over and over that he hated his job and he felt like his job was very similar to the Stephen King film, *Shawshank Redemption*, where he was stuck in a prison unfairly and had no way out. That movie was his favorite movie, and every time he watched it, he felt like he just had to chip away at the hole in the wall until he could break free.

One day, Sam received a call that he was not prepared for. He was laid off from his job. He was a private contractor with the school and he was so shockingly laid off early that he didn't see it coming. When that occurred, he decided to go all-in on being a coach. He followed the program, as we've talked about through this whole book. And in his first year, he hit six figures. In his second year, he was very close to \$200,000. His business is called *The Accent Code*, and that's his program as well. I want you to understand the imagery around the *Accent*. His niche market is focusing on people of Chinese or Asian descent that are hindered because of their accent. They lack confidence. They lack the ability to present ideas, or maybe they're lacking in their entrepreneurship dream because their accent is holding them back. He is much more than an accent coach; he takes the starting point of their accent and builds it into an entire mindset change. But its program is called *the accent code* because the imagery of *code* proves everything is hackable, everything is solvable, everything can be completed. That simple idea of the accent having a hack, having a solvable nature to it helped launch his business. And in his first year, he hit six figures. If you remember in the introduction, I talked about how 70 percent of coaches will never get to 10 paying clients. He beat the averages and the statistics in his first year alone.

The last one has to do with patterns, getting them to follow a pattern so that it's more memorable. The easiest way is rhyming. Somebody's might sound silly. I want you to think about how easy it is to remember these. They are all product names. The first one is *Laffy Taffy*. The second one is *Reese's Pieces*, and the third one is *Mellow Yellow*. Now, I know those are all food products, but they are extremely memorable because you are rhyming. Your brain is telling itself: *remember this*. Turning your coaching practice into a product eliminates the embarrassment factor, or at least minimizes it considerably, so that your prospects will be proud to enroll in your family. They will be proud to be a part of you and associated with you. It's at this point, you're going to have the opportunity to create your movement or create your tribe, and you associate it with your product and your product ties into the name of your business. You notice how we covered both of those back-to-back and as they connect, you create this new identity of who you are.

I'm going to cite Russell Brunson again; he's the CEO of Click Funnels, and he talks brilliantly about the concept of tribes, and he champions a phrase for his business: *I'm a funnel hacker*. That phrase of *I'm a funnel hacker*, anybody that uses his software to build their websites and build their funnels understand *I am a funnel hacker*, and they wear that proudly. And as you create your program and as you create your business name and tie them together, you'll be able to have your tribe and have your movement that they can adapt to. There is a concept of a manifesto that people will want to follow. They've always wanted to follow the manifesto or the flag or the title of Liberty.

When you study history in the ancient Americas, Captain Moroni took an army and led them into a war that was impossible for them to win. Similar to how you would read Henry the fifth and how he led the British army into a war that they couldn't win. And as they were about to approach their battle, they had countless members of the army flee and desert, knowing that the odds were too great. Just like any leader has faced when they see people without doubt, just like George Washington faced and just like Henry the fifth faced. Captain Moroni knew he had to do something to get his army and his people reunited and excited and motivated to stay and be a part of the future and a part of the winning cause. Alma 46:12, the text shows exactly what Alma did. He took his coat, probably one of his most prized possessions, because in those times in ancient America, a coat was one of the most important things you use every single day. He took it and tore it and created a makeshift flag of some sort. And there, he wrote in his hand the words: *In memory of our God, our religion and freedom and our peace, our wives and children*. He took this piecemeal flag that was thrown together with his hand or his stitch and put it at the end of some pole that he found somewhere, and he called this his own title of Liberty. And as he went around to rally the troops, it went with him everywhere he went. And I am confident, as he did that, he rallied them behind it. It was always a part of every discussion that he had. People, I'm sure, began to know Captain Moroni as the title of Liberty guy. And it became a part of his movement, his manifesto. Sure enough, people rallied behind it. Just like they rallied behind Henry the fifth in Shakespeare, just like they rallied behind every great leader in probably every great war movie that delivers an emotional speech to his troops.

You have this opportunity to do the same thing. Maybe not as glorious as saving a country, but creating the name of your business and creating your program and tying those names together allows you to create your movement and your tribe, and it connects them to you.

One of my favorite stories is with an entrepreneur and a gifted leader named Sam. She has not only been an influencer in local governments, but she built a business called *Beat the Tank* and later rebranded as a *Creation Nation*. She helped and continues to help thousands of entrepreneurs every single year, develop their products, take them through the very challenging patent process in the United States, work with manufacturers all over the world and take them to market. Not only has she developed her multi \$7 million business, but she's also helped countless others to do the same. The reason I tell her story is that as she rebranded her business and called it *Creation Nation*, and everything she talked about became about *Creation Nation*. It was talked about that we are a nation of entrepreneurs, we are a nation of creators, and we are a nation of idea makers. People began to continue and rally behind her. People started to champion her cause more, investors started to bang down her window and say, "*I want to do more with you.*"

You can do the same thing in your coaching practice. Like in the last chapter, start by creating your coaching business name. Second, fix your program. Create a memorable program that emotionally connects so that you can follow the Yoda model, that you can engage, that you can use emotion, that you have a brilliant name, that you follow that, and you are moving in the right direction for your coaching process.

Here's your exercise. I want you to start to work on your program name. First of all, choose. Do you want to use repetition, imagery or pattern? Find five brands in each section. Five under repetition, five under imagery, five under patterns. And what are some examples of what they do? One of the best stimulants for brainstorming is to find examples of another people's work. As you do that, you'll be able to build your program name.

Get to work!

CHAPTER 6: THE PROBLEM WITH COACHING SCHOOLS

If you're following along and doing all the exercises which you should be doing, you would have taken the time to understand your undeniable authority. You would have taken the time to map out your company name or your coaching practice name, as well as your program name. Make sure that they are tied together and create a memorable product so that your potential prospects have a better understanding of what you'll do and how it will emotionally impact them.

The point of this chapter is to not take a total left turn, to discuss what it takes to unlearn what you have learned and look at it differently. In earlier chapters, I talked about having to stop thinking like a coach and start thinking like a business owner. This is always going to be true, and it's always going to be a challenge. But where did this come from? How many people go and attend coaching certification school? Here are some brutal facts about coaching that I hope you all understand. There are 650+ coaching schools all over the world. And that number is growing. They offer all types of certification programs, where you can get a life coach certification for as little as ninety-seven dollars on a weekend retreat. Or you can spend as high as twenty-five thousand dollars to get some sort of "board-certified coaching."

Now, understand there is no regulatory body for coaching. So, let's take per second and discuss the history of coaching, where it comes from and how it compares to other types of certifications, and what does that all mean for you? If you go on your little ring and go back in time, coaching all starts with one person back in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Even before that, the concept of coaching in general has ties to nearly every type of recreational activity from academic coaching to music or private instrumental coaching to vocal coaching, singing coaching to sports coaching of every type of possible support. When the concept turns from athletic or creative art coaching, which is very skill-based, into life coaching or generalized coaching, it can be a little more difficult to understand.

Thomas Leonard was a financial planner here in the United States, and most would argue he was the founder and father of the modern "life coaching" industry. Thomas was a financial planner who worked regularly with clients, I'm sure across the kitchen table, helping them plan out insurance financial management. As he was building his financial practice, he started to learn and understand that many of the people he was working with struggled emotionally, physically, and spiritually, which impacted their ability to work with him from a financial planning standpoint. They needed help organizing, structuring, and building their entire life in addition to financial planning. As he continued to see all of these areas with his clients, Thomas decided to pivot away from being a pure financial planner and move into a new industry altogether. Thomas created what he called *Life Planning*. With that, he honed over some time into specific techniques and methodology, which eventually became the foundations of life coaching as we know it today. Over the next few years, he was coaching more often than he was in financial planning. He was starting to have to train other people in those specific techniques and methods of coaching that he had mastered. He realized these techniques were different from your typical therapist or psychiatrist, and they were more involved in helping the people solve problems.

Thomas wrote a book about this whole journey called *The Portable Coach*. He did not only tell his story, but also provided insights into the history of coaching and how valuable it's been throughout the world. From there, Thomas took his small rolling practice and created the first ever coaching certification program, which he called *Coach You*. *Coach You* helped them learn how to engage with clients and teach them the specifics of how to better their lives.

Now, back then, there was no Zoom or Skype. Everything was always done in person or through conference calls. You can imagine it was a very good time. After founding *Coach You* and his practice, Thomas also got involved with the International Coach Federation or ICF. Many of you reading this book will have to receive your certification from ICF. ICF influences and trains coaches all over the world.

Now, this little history lesson. Hopefully, I did not bore you too much, but in it, I want to be generous to end the rich and incredible history of coaching. There's one point that I want to drive home, that everyone should read carefully. Coaching as a profession, whether life coaching, business coaching or anything, is not licensed or regulated in most parts of the world. I want you to read again, coaching is not licensed or regulated in most parts of the world. Compare this to medicine in the United States. All physicians must obtain medical licensing to be able to practice. Here's a basic understanding of what they have to do to get that licensing. If you want to become a licensed and certified physician, you have to demonstrate first that you've received undergraduate and graduate education requirements.

You must have a medical doctorate from the US or an internationally accredited medical school. You must have a certification of completion of medical residency training, and accreditation for graduation in a medical education accredited program. Further, physicians are required to obtain on their own various unrestricted medical license for the state in which they choose to practice. Because state regulations change often, this requires physicians to maintain continued education and stay up to date on their local licensure requirements, including medical practices, examinations, testing, training, fees, and more. The board certification process that a physician has to go through is where a physician will demonstrate their expertise in a specific specialty through one of 24 members of the American Board of Medical Specialties.

Hopefully, you can see the level of intensity to be a physician in the United States and to receive that type of certification. That certification weighs very differently than a coaching certification. So why does this all matter? It matters because your certifications, whatever they may be, whether it be from an ACC, Vienna, International Coaching (ICF) or from a private institution like Brendan Richard's high-performance coaching, or Donald Miller's, the story brand coaching, or wherever you got your certification. Just remember, certification may help you become a better coach. It may give you the skills and talents to be a better coach, but it will not generate more clients for you. It will not help you win more business. A certification is only as valuable as the marketplaces value on it. If your potential clientele doesn't know what the ACC is, or what the ICF is, or what high-performance coaching is, then your certification is meaningless. You might as well put made-up alphabets after your name. But if they do put the value as some organizations, especially large Fortune 100 organizations do, there can be value in the accreditation.

In the book, *Getting Started in Personal and Executive Coaching* by Stephen G Fairly and Chrissy Stout, they highlight the seven secrets of highly successful coaches. Their second secret is super important, and it applies to this chapter. They talked about highly successful coaches that don't sell coaching, and that might feel bizarre or counterintuitive or confusing. But like we spoke in previous chapters about the concept of a word trap, coaching is the ultimate word trap of them all. And the more you talk about coaching and what coaching is, the less you're talking about how you can help someone, how you can change their lives or their business. The reason you might continue to do that is because you go get certifications, all your certifications do is turn you into a better coach or a better executive coach or a better business coach. They don't talk to you about growing your actual practice. So, the trouble with business schools or the trouble with coaching schools is that they re-emphasize the wrong thing, and they teach you to believe in the coaching model as the way to grow your practice (which is not true). The coaching model is a product, but the only way to grow your coaching practice is through proper sales and marketing techniques that have worked for hundreds, if not thousands of years, just in different industries and different degrees. These are the same techniques used by Amazon, McDonald's, Walt Disney World, Tony Robbins, Russell Brunson. I used them to grow my practice, and you're going to use it for yours. Grow yours. Stop selling coaching, stop selling an abstract idea and sell a product. Sell a name. So, your problem that you're solving, your accreditation is not a key component that you have to have.

CHAPTER 7: FIND YOUR MENTOR

In Gino Whickman's book, *Entrepreneurial Leap*, he does a brilliant job in highlighting the steps that someone needs to take to launch themselves into entrepreneurship. Let me be clear, starting your coaching practice does not make you an entrepreneur. Being a coach on your own does not make you an entrepreneur. You are, at best, a solopreneur, which stated another way is *this is a really expensive job*.

An entrepreneur is when you have put considerable risk on the line, when you have payroll to answer products to sell, and it's an all-or-nothing gamble. Now, that might not be the most technical definition of entrepreneurship, and I'm sure there are plenty of scholars out there that would argue with me about what it is. But I see too many times, coaches that are starting their practice calling themselves entrepreneurs. But, as I will quote, Gary Vee says, you cannot talk your way into being an entrepreneur. Think your way into being an entrepreneur, or believe your way into being an entrepreneur. You can only act your way into being an entrepreneur, that's it. And being an entrepreneur, all has to do with risk. So many of you are doing your coaching practice as a side hustle, as I did.

When I first started my coaching practice, I was doing it from 4 in the morning till 6:30am every single morning. And then, again, at night from 7 pm until 9:30 or sometimes 10:30 pm. When I had international clients, like my first groups were based in Germany, Jerusalem, and India, I was often making calls at 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning, just to be in their time zone. Even then, I was not an entrepreneur. It was a side hustle. My risk was minimal because I had a full-time job. I didn't become an entrepreneur in this sense until I had left all full-time responsibilities and relied completely on my coaching practice for the livelihood of my family, and for the livelihood of my future. I had three employees, and their families relied on my ability to close deals with clients and to build a thriving practice. And I learned early on that to be very successful as an entrepreneur, it is very difficult to do it alone.

In the first business that I had ownership in, I've talked about it before, it was a company called Launch Lee out of Salt Lake City, Utah. I worked hand-in-hand with the CEO named Bubba. Bubba and I were good friends, and we still are to this day. He was a serial entrepreneur, which means he tended to always want to start new businesses and surround himself with people that are trying to join his new ventures and his new ideas. He was a brilliant salesperson, and he was the best networker I've ever met in my life. I learned so much from him, and as we built that business, he taught me over and over: Don't, there is an enormous value in finding and having your own mentors. And so, I did. As I was a full entrepreneur at that time, we had 15 employees, and I was answering payroll. I had to find mentors.

I had to find people that I could talk to on a regular basis that would give me guidance, that would give me help, that would give me real tactical advice on when to turn left, and when to turn right, and to point out what mistakes to avoid altogether. I had very close mentors in my life, from my friend John and my friend Greg who challenged the way I thought, challenged the way I approached the business, and challenged the way that I sold and marketed. I continue to rely on these people to this day, but I will never forget the value of having that mentor because of what it provided me as I tried to grow.

As Gino Wickman discusses in his book, he says if you want to be a successful entrepreneur and build a 10-million dollar software development company, imagine how you would increase your odds of success and speed up your path if the founder of a 10 million software development company was willing to be your trusted guide. Or maybe said another way, if you were going to hike in a jungle that you would never be in, imagine how much more successful and enjoyable the trip would be if you had a guide who had been through that same hike many times before. That's what the role of a mentor is. That's what the role of a mentor does. Now, too many times I see coaches go and hire a business coach, and this business coach is there to help give them best practices on how to grow their practice. But if we would spend a little time talking with his business coach, they would learn that this coach probably doesn't have a very big or thriving practice. This business coach doesn't have their methods or techniques, or strategies that they use to grow the practice. Oftentimes if you're trying to work with a business coach to help grow your practice, and you both agree to exchange coaching for free, that is not a risk. There is no risk involved, and I promise you, one of you is going to benefit a lot more than the other. And it is probably not going to be you.

Now, I am not suggesting that there isn't value in some of these relationships that you have. But when I was building my small practice, I started to reach out and connect with mentors. I started to find people that had built successful coaching practices and talk to them regularly. I reached out and connected with the head of the largest coach referral company in the world, and he and I developed a relationship where he would give me guidance on my practice and guidance on ways I brought on clients and what I would do. I talk to other people that have built consulting practices or different things on their own, and I gathered all of their ideas. I regularly get them updated as to what I was doing, and as I built this network of mentors around me, I had multiple people pushing me, challenging me, and guiding me to be better. It helped me avoid some of the most painful mistakes that I see coaches make all the time. For example, in their DM box on social media, coaches will typically be flooded with scammers telling them *"I can guarantee you 500 appointments a month or 300 appointments a month"*, or *"I will fill your calendar with high-quality, high ticket appointments... learn here"*. And they take them to some sales funnel with a bunch of testimonials on the site, and it's two thousand dollars or three thousand dollars.

Initially, when I was a coach, these offers seemed unbelievable, and they seemed so well-timed. Because here I was, as an early coach, struggling to get appointments, struggling to get leads, and I was frustrated. I was desperate and willing to do anything, and sure enough, these snakes would show up with their offer. Before I would sign the dotted line, I would check with my mentors what they thought about it. Is this something I should do? Should I sign up for this? And without fail, every one of the mentors said: *run, don't do it*. And I would ask why. I'd show them the offer, I'd show them the funnel page. I'd show them the testimonials. They would say: *this is a scam. You're too emotionally invested in your product and your service. And when you're so emotionally invested, you'll do anything to succeed, which is a very dangerous place to be, and a marketer knows that*.

That's where one of my mentors taught me a very simple trick. And if any of you are getting hit up with these same messages from scammers trying to take advantage of you, I would go as far as to say, if anyone is trying to get you to buy an offer for your coaching practice, you should follow this technique. First thing is, you tell them: *I'd love to work with you. I just have one question. I'd like to speak with three people that are currently using your service in my niche. If I can speak with three people that are currently using your service and that are in my niche, then I'll be able to sign.* They'll come back to you always with: *Well, we have testimonials on our website, or hey, due to restrictions, we can't divulge who our clients are.* All those things may be fine, but any reputable business can have happy clients who are more than willing to have you talk to them without fail. So, when you say that, you'd be surprised at how little moves forward. In fact, ever since I've adopted the three referral techniques, I have yet to have a single one of these groups, not just get me three referrals, I've never had a single company get me one person I could speak to. It's a technique that I use even to this day.

If you're tempted to use their service, or want to look at their course, or their appointment setting site, Facebook ad strategy, funnel-building techniques, coaching software, always ask: *can I speak to three coaches in my niche that are using your service right now? I want to talk to them and see their experiences.* If they can get you three, and you can verify that those three are very happy with how they use the service, then by all means, you should use it. Because this is a secret sauce that's going to take you to the next level. If it doesn't, it's going to help you blow money that you don't have. All of this comes from getting a mentor. I learned that having mentors as I built my coaching practice, that even though mistakes are okay, they can be costly. Having the right mentors around me allowed me to manage and guard against catastrophic problems that could have occurred, and I was able to build my business more successfully. I'm thankful to the mentors that I've had in my life, and I continue to have them in my life because they allow me to shape the way I think.

One last note on mentors. You should typically have a love-hate relationship with your mentors. I'm going to speak about one here. His name is Bill. He lives in Chicago. He is one of the toughest men I've ever met. He is also very kind. When you meet him, he's got very tattooed arms, and you would think he just broke out of San Quentin. He's a very intense man. Bill is one of the most successful executives I've ever seen. He's never had a coaching practice per se, but he's been involved in executive leadership and management consulting for the better part of 30 years. Bill has a very different background than I have. He thinks about things differently, and he's much more aggressive than I am. Yet he has been one of the most influential mentors in my life, because, as I've made decisions for my business or my practice, or my Forbes articles, he's always helped tell me the absolute truth regardless of my personal feelings about it. He's even called me at times when he knew I was doing something out of vanity versus something that would help my practice grow. That's what a mentor does. Is Bill one of my great friends? Absolutely. But has he been more of a mentor than anything else? Absolutely. If you're serious about building your practice, it is time for you to get a couple of mentors that you can regularly go to build up your confidence and avoid the greatest pitfalls that you could run into.

Here's your exercise. Go through your history from 12 years old till now, and find 10 people that could be a mentor. Now, it's important when you talk to them, you're not going to say: *will you be my mentor?* You're just going to generate an authentic, caring relationship, and then ask him a couple of questions about your business. A mentor relationship does not have to be formal. It can be as informal as anything. But it must be there, nurtured, and taken care of. That's your exercise. Jump to it, and let's keep cracking.

CHAPTER 8: SALES SOLVES ALL SINS – UNDERSTANDING SALES

As I started to now understand how my practice works, and I'm starting to understand how I was able to use my undeniable authority to stand out from other coaching practices and be attractive to new potential clients. It was time to master the sales game. This is an important aspect, and it will cover some comments that I've made in previous chapters. But this portion of the book, in fact the next few chapters, are going to make the biggest difference to your coaching practice more than anything. And that's why I start with the concept of understanding sales, and what sales is in general.

I, fortunately, have spent the past nearly 25 years in some sort of sales and marketing role where I was able to do a lot of different types of sales, consultant sales, and for lack of a better term, aggressive sales on different channels, industries, and products. All of that being said, none of it prepared me for what it was going to be, like selling coaching. My first big boy job coming out of high school was working for a telemarketing agency when I was 18 years old and had to cold call people all over the country. Yes, I was one of those people that would interrupt you during your dinner and try to sell you membership clubs or upgrades on your credit card, and I had a countless amount of angry people. Angry parents, frustrated individuals upset that I was interrupting their lives. At the same time, I was pretty good over the phone. I'll still never forget my first day on the phone working for the call center company that I was working for. We were doing cold call outbound calling, trying to upgrade people's credit cards to include a new membership program that would give them access to discounts at stores like Red Lobster, Home Depot, Olive Garden, and more, while also subscribing them to the Burpee Seed membership club so that they would get the most select choice Burpee Seeds every single month to build the garden of their dreams. And yes, as I'm writing in this chapter, I can hear myself saying the script over and over and over again.

On my first day on the phone, I was nervous. I was overwhelmed. I was stressed. I had never been in a sales environment before. I've never spoken to anybody over the phone before in a sales fashion. My manager, Dan Yates, gave me a goal of 4 sales on the first night. Lucky for me, I was able to get 9 sales.

I knew I was in the right vein at that point. I remember walking to my car that night, thinking I could do this for a long time. And 25 years later, I have. I stayed in sales, in some fashion, my entire career. In addition, one of my earliest mentors, John Porter, when I was vice president of operations and sales for a call center company in Northern Utah, he taught me this statement: *As long as you can sell, you'll always eat*. Even later, when I was working at a financial services company, another mentor of mine, Tom Bottomland, taught me this phrase that I continue to use to this day: *Sales solves all sins*.

Now, why have I spent the last little bit discussing my history, and how important is sales? It's because for you to grow your coaching practice like I've done mine, and for you to grasp how to scale it, you have to make your mind right with sales, and you have to make your mind right with what sales and selling is.

If you read Daniel Pink's book *To Sell is Human*, you'll hear him state very early in the book that everyone is a salesperson. I love that he said this because so many times we try to approach sales, and we struggle with that concept. I've worked with over 2000 coaches and watched them struggle with this understanding, saying things like: *I don't like sales. I don't like putting myself out there like that. I feel pushy. I feel skeezy and gross*. And if that's where your mind is by the time you start this chapter, I want to counsel you that those are limiting beliefs.

Now, if you don't know what a limiting belief is, I'm sure I can contact over 2000 coaches who would be happy to teach you what a limiting belief is. If you went through practitioner school, you will understand that a limiting belief is the stories and tapes that we play in our head that convinces us that something is true, even when that truth is unfounded. Sales is one of those. Many of you are believing right now, as you're reading this chapter, that you can't sell, you don't have a natural "gift of gab", and that you are not comfortable putting yourself out there like that. You feel dishonest, you feel unethical. You have to eliminate them right away from your psyche and your mindset, because sales are the heartbeat of an economy. Everything in your life, from your car that you drive to the house that you own to the clothes that you wear, came to you because of a salesperson. Now, you might not have been directly involved with a salesperson to buy those clothes, but I guarantee you a salesperson was involved in the textile and manufacturing arenas that helped produce those clothes for sale, and at massive scale. Sales and effective sales people are in every industry, every aspect of every business, including the ones that you think wouldn't be, like nonprofits or Healthcare. It is important that you get your mind around the concept that *I am in sales, and that's okay. In fact, I am proud to sell what I do.*

What are sales more than simply influencing other people to make good decisions? Let me explain to you what sales is not. Right now, in your mind if you're thinking about sales, sometimes you'd think sales is somebody dressed in a plaid suit trying to jam a used car down your throat. They're being unethical or being dishonest or shading the truth, and more deceptive practices. That is not sales, that is screwing people over, and that is a different job. I'm not going to talk to you about screwing people over or doing that job. I'm going to talk to you about what sales is in its most simple form. Sales is asking thought-provoking questions, sales are telling compelling and inspiring stories, and thirdly, sales are getting people to eliminate limiting beliefs to find new truth. I want you to reread that. Go through it slowly, and look at what I just said. Sales are asking thought-provoking questions, telling compelling and inspiring stories, and helping people eliminate limiting beliefs to find a new truth. If I replace the word *selling* with *coaching*, it would read like this: coaching is asking thought-provoking questions, telling compelling and inspiring stories, and eliminating limiting beliefs to find a new truth.

Do you notice something? Both selling and coaching the same thing? So, for all of you coaches reading this book and trying to scale your practice, your first frustration is *I can't sell, I don't want to sell. It makes me feel gross*, you sell every day, when you're coaching. I'm going to teach you how to apply the same techniques you use when you're coaching to when you're selling. There is no difference other than when you're selling, you're doing it deliberately to lead towards a transaction. And when you're coaching, you're doing it deliberately to lead towards personal growth. That's it. You can't get to personal growth without the transaction. That's what sales is, and the sooner you rectify that in your mind and correct your thinking to understand what and how important sales is in your practice, the sooner you'll start to succeed as a coach.

Many coaches never get past this point. They find themselves susceptible to online marketing programs, suggesting: *Build your course. You don't need to sell anything, get hot leads.* And you end up spending thousands and thousands of dollars for these *agencies* who can fill up your calendar, or get you to have a digital course, so you never have to sell, or any other scam that they prey on coaches. Don't listen to any of that information. Avoid it and run from it. There is no escalator to success. There is no elevator to success. The only way for you to build your coaching practice and be successful is to wrestle with this first concept and understand how important it is to this overall success of what we're trying to do. You cannot and will not achieve your coaching dreams if you avoid selling.

I recognize that some people are going to be more gifted at sales than others. I recognize that much of sales has to do with your ability to build relationships and connect with people. That being said, I have seen and trained extremely introverted people to be master salespersons by simply following this model. The model I'll teach to you in the next few chapters. I structured it in a way that it mirrors your coaching effort.

Now, one final concept before we finish this chapter up. Many of you believe that sales are only for certain people and that if you are introverted, or you don't like talking to people, or you don't like putting yourself out there, it simply means sales is not for you. Remember the concept that Mel Robbins so brilliantly coined: *Confidence is a skill*. Confidence is something you develop through practice. So, if you are struggling to make phone calls, or you're struggling to outreach and put yourself on video, it is not because you're introverted, and it is not because you are extroverted or anything in between. It has to do with your lack of practice. Introvert, as many of you know, simply means you have no emotional output when you talk to people and connect with them socially. That's it. It doesn't mean you can't do it. It doesn't mean you're ineffective at doing it, it just means you don't have an emotional turn-on when you speak to people. Extrovert means when you speak to people, or you work with them personally, you have an emotional engagement reactor in the brain. Neither of those is telling you can't sell. That is the story that you tell yourself.

So, here's your practical exercise. Start right now and tell yourself: *I'm in sales*. Tell yourself right now: *I sell coaching*. Every day, tell yourself: *I am the best salesperson at what I do. No one can sell my coaching better than me*. As you tell yourself, looking right in the mirror every single day, you will start to get around it. I'd look at myself in the mirror every day and remind myself I'm the best salesperson on planet Earth. The first rule of all sales agents is to sell yourself every single day as to why you're doing it. Remind yourself why you are coaching for Microsoft, why you're trying to do this practice and the goals that you have, remind yourself of the vision and dreams and hopes that you have. And then the only way to get there is through sales. It is through selling your program, because it is better than you've ever sold before.

That's your practical exercise, and now let's jump into the actual practice of some vision.

CHAPTER 9: FINDING LEAD SOURCES

Now that you are getting your mind right around what sales is. And that's where I was before I even got into scripting, before I even got into the following procedures, and all the things that are necessary to make a client come on board with you. You have to have somebody to sell to. You have to have what's called potential leads. But before I go through the lead discussion, we're going to have a very short overview of what's called a *sales funnel*.

A sales funnel looks exactly like a cone funnel, with a very wide opening at the very top and a small opening at the very bottom. In essence, why it's called the funnel is because you grab a lot of leads at the very top, or contacts turn into leads. And then through each stage of the funnel, the number gets smaller and smaller through different qualification processes and different steps. The very top of your funnel is called your contacts or your leads, depending upon how you want to define it.

The next stage of your funnel are people that you've contacted, people that have shown some sort of interest in your coaching services. This would be your lead funnel, and that number is going to be smaller than your overall contacts. The third step is going to be your appointments. These are people that have booked free coaching calls with you, or a free strategy session (however you want to call it) and they've shown up to the meeting. This is important because a lot of times when you're trying to own your data and segment it and understand each of the different levels, you classify people as an appointment stage of the funnel, but they never actually attended the appointment. They just merely booked it. Don't move them to a new stage of the funnel unless they have attended the meeting.

The next stage of the funnel is proposals sent to people regarding your coaching services. Then the last stage is cash in, closed deal, closed client, whatever you want to call it. But in the easiest term, it's called *a sale*. Do not classify people as *a sale* if they've signed the proposal, but money hasn't hit the bank. A sale only counts when you get paid.

Now, the reason I go through this overview of sales funnels is that you are a master salesperson. Do you remember the last chapter how we had you talking to yourself about that, and reminding yourself how great you are in sales? To be a master salesperson, you have to understand the way the sales funnel works, and how you influence each stage. It's important to get many contacts at the very top that you can whittle down into leads, then you can whittle down into appointments, then proposals, and then into actual closed clients. You need to understand each step of the process and all of your ability to impact it.

In this chapter, we're going to be talking a lot about contacts and leads. It is because regardless of how good you are at sales, how good you are as a coach, unless you have people to speak to, unless you have contacts that you can get in front of, it's going to be hard to sell.

So, the big question, and this is one of the top Google questions for coaches: How do I find leads? Before I answer that, and before I talk about what's called *filling your funnel* or *putting contacts in the very top*, I want to explain what a *contact is* and what a *lead* is not. Many times, when you're trying to go through efforts to fill the top of your funnel, and you're Googling how to find leads, you will only want to get the hottest and ready-to-buy prospects. Many times, coaches get frustrated when they go to a lead or marketing source or a referral network, and they get potential customers sent to them, but those people don't answer the phone. Those people might avoid them, or are just not ready to buy right now. There is a difference between getting contacts and leads: people that are possibly interested in your services and getting people that are ready to buy now. Very rarely will a marketing source of any kind provide you with people that are always ready to buy now. If you are wanting to get people that are ready to buy now, and that's all that you're willing to accept, the cost for that individual lead or individual contact could be astronomical. This is because there's going to be a lot of qualification and weeding out to get that person, which adds more cost to the nurturing and taking care of that contact and lead. It is a much more cost-effective way to get contacts and leads out on a wide scale at the top of the funnel. Then through your efforts, you whittle them down through each stage, turning them into someone ready to buy.

So, enough about the general overview of sales. You can always revisit this chapter and learn more about it. Let's talk about filling your funnel. I want you to take a moment and understand your ideal customer. We've talked about these in previous chapters. We've talked about who they are and how they operate in a simple exercise. I want you to write down and describe this ideal customer, and I want you to do it in great detail like an actor preparing for a role. Who is your ideal customer? What is their age? Are they male or female? What do they have as a family? Are they married with kids? What do they do for work? How much money do they make per year? Where do they hang out on the weekends? What television programs do they watch? What Facebook groups are they a part of? What people do they follow on social media? What podcasts are they listening to regularly? This is just a sampling of some of the questions you need to answer about your ideal customer. Now, I want you to review the exercise you did and the work that you wrote there. You cannot skip this step. If you did all this work and you go back and review it, I want you to look to see. Did you say things that were too general? If, when I asked about where they work, would you say things like, *"oh, they're professionals"*, or *"they're an executive or they're senior manager?"* Those are way too broad statements. If you've done your work for undeniable authority, you will know you can't work with every professional. You can't sell to every professional or every executive. It needs to be specific in accordance with your undeniable authority. So, go back, redo it, and focus on the specific areas that you can do to make it niched for your ideal customer rather than executive. You might say, *"I work with vice presidents and chief level executives in the financial services sector."* That's important.

As you list that out, that's where you're going to try an inch down. All of these things matter, because as you drive your ideal customer or persona or avatar, we're going to now discuss their congregation points. I want you to list out their congregation points, and where these particular customers or prospects spend their time. If you want to take this seriously, you'll consider where they spend their time regularly. What Facebook groups are they a part of regularly? What Instagram hashtags would they be following? What YouTube shows would they be watching regularly? What podcasts would they listen to? And if you're struggling with that exercise, this next one will help you. All prospects are either moving towards a new type of pleasure (their desired point), or they're moving away and running away from a certain type of pain. I'd love to say that I coined those two concepts, but I got it from Tony Robbins that all individuals have their motivation centered on the concept. We're either moving towards pleasure or moving away from pain. That is our decision point. So, as you decide to describe your persona and your avatar that you're going after, what pain are they moving away from? What are things that they would say at the dinner table with their spouse? *"I'm frustrated because my boss always does this. I'm frustrated because my industry has this type of pressure. I'm upset because my bonus checks are never equal to what is expected in this industry"*, really describe what words they say sitting across the dinner table from their spouse.

In the same vein, I want you to fill out their desired targets. What are they moving towards? What are their hopes and dreams? What are the types of things that they would say again to their spouse about what they want in their life, where they want to be? Are they saying things like: *One day, I can't wait for us to have our own boat...? One day, I can't wait to travel to Europe? I want to do this... I want to have this car... I want to have this life... I want to have a white picket fence.* What is it? Don't use generalities. Be as specific as you can, because it will help shape the congregation points that you're going to target.

As you've done these exercises, now we're going to go through a list of ways to get in front of those customers. I want you to think about this list and add to it on your own. I want you to, in this little exercise, take five minutes and write down every single way that you can get in front of a customer to give you a little tip. Don't say social media. Be specific. YouTube videos, TikTok videos, Snapchat videos, Instagram videos, Facebook videos, Facebook posts, Facebook comments on other people's posts, LinkedIn videos, LinkedIn comments on other people's posts, LinkedIn direct messaging, YouTube comments on other people's videos, and lots more. That just covers social media. You can also say things like writing on media and getting published, writing for other online articles or verticals, writing for other people's blogs, Email, texting, phone calls, handwritten letters, handwritten notes, door knocking, face-to-face, attending an online webinar or online event, holding an online event, holding a training webinar, being a panel on a webinar, being a guest on a podcast, having your podcast, blogging, and so many more.

Review the list that we just talked about. Go through it. All of these pieces are just a fraction of what you can do regularly to get in front of your audience. Now, this is why many of you are looking at that list and saying, *"Don, I've done that. It didn't work."* If you haven't done the work at the beginning regarding undeniable authority, your niche, and having a program where you can really answer questions and communicate effectively, of course, all of these things aren't going to work. Every one of them is going to fail because you're out in the market selling vanilla. You are in the market saying, *"I can help everybody and every possible way"*, and it will not attract the people. You have to do the foundational work first to attract the right audience.

Second point regarding whether this works or not. Social media, digital marketing, email marketing, and all the things that we have listed do not work instantaneously. They are not a microwave for a fast dinner. All of them are like slow cooker ovens that take a long time to generate repeatable, consistent traffic. But as you stay consistent, your lead flow and contact flow begin to take shape. Do not start these initiatives with a thought that perhaps if you do this for 30 days, you'll have a six-figure practice. It is over time as you do the myriad of them that you begin to succeed.

In a future chapter, when we talk about follow-up, we're going to talk about the concept of *combo prospecting*. I would love to say that I coined the phrase *combo prospecting*, but I didn't. I actually used it from Tyler Hughes from his book of the same name. The *combo prospecting* talks about the idea that no one person becomes a customer because of a single event, because you sent a great email or sent a great text. It's through the combination of all of your efforts that you bring people on board. The same could be said about social media and your digital marketing efforts because you did a YouTube video and a Facebook video and an Instagram video and an email and a text and a phone call and an online event, you become omnipresent in the mind and eyes of your potential customers. That omnipresence is what helps them eventually decide to get into your sphere of influence and decide to work with you as you are a coach. It is a combination of all the efforts that makes it work.

Now, there is a wonderful concept that Gary Vaynerchuk talks about a lot in his literature about *pillering*. It is when you take one video or one podcast, and through a repurposing effort, you use it in different social spheres. For example, you would film yourself recording a podcast, and then take that video, transcribe it, and that becomes the elements of a blog. It could also take the video and cut it up into different sections and use some of it for Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn. On this concept of *pillering*, I do believe in it and do believe that it works and do believe that it will save time. But don't cheat the process. Content that is digested on YouTube is going to be very different from content that is digested on Facebook. People are there with different intentions. So, don't just assume you can copy your videos and paste them to every platform, and they'll all work equally. They won't. You have to understand each vertical and speak to how that audience wants to receive their content.

As you do these efforts regularly, you'll begin to expand your undeniable authority and generate conversations with people around what you do. That's why undeniable authority is so important because it backs up what you say and what you do.

The last point on filling this funnel is, many times people ask this question: *I don't know what to post. I don't know what to put on there. I am just overwhelmed.* Always start with solving problems, always start with the idea and make a list of problems that you're solving.

Here's your next exercise, and this is your social media content exercise for the next month. I want you to take the five most commonly heard problems that occur when you're trying to talk to a potential client. So, for example, if you are a relationship coach that deals with people working through the challenges of adopting a child, the first thing that might come up all the time is: *how do I manage all of the expenses associated with adopting?* And now you're going to list 20 to 30 different scenarios of how you would answer that question. You might say, for example, this is one approach to managing the finances and preparing for it like... *one of my clients*, and then you tell the story. Then the next one, you give another example and tell another story and the next one, and you go through and list all the ways that you're going to answer this one problem. And now, one day, with good lighting and good audio, I want you to record your responses in a really simple way. Don't be too close to the camera. Smile. Maybe do a couple of takes. You started really simply... *Hi. My name is so-and-so, and I'm with Accountability Now.*

I get asked all the time in my coaching practice about certain problems. This is what I tell them: *tell me an answer and then tell your story. Hey, please follow me for more content, or you can reach out to me on my website here, and I'll talk to you more.* No one should have these problems that they can't solve. And you go through a spectacular day, in an hour you could record 20 or 30 videos. They're all very simple, already clear, and address real problems. Now you will simply schedule out how to release them. The number one reason people fail to have a social media strategy and fail to get social media out is that they're overwhelmed by what to post, and now I've just simplified it. If you make a list of the problems, you'll make a list of the scenarios of how to answer them and simply record your answers to them. You will have a social media calendar that you could fill up for six months. And what happens at the end of six months, once you've reached it all, you repeat. You repeat with new stories and additional ideas. You should be posting on every one of these social media platforms regularly and demonstrating undeniable authority to fill your bottle.

Now, how else should you do this? I would be on the podcast and online events. I would hold online events like webinars, training, master classes, and I would do all of these things for free. The more events that you can do, even if it only gets 10 or 15 people, are wide successes. Too many times, you as a coach and coaches all over the world struggle because when they hold a webinar, they only get 5 people or 10 people. In your mind, you believe, even though you have no practice, even though you have no name or authority, that the minute you put up a webinar, you should get 1000 or 2000 people to register.

The very first webinar I held, we were going to coach Indian-based entrepreneurs and teach them models of success. We paid for advertising and submitted it to multiple influencers in India. And I woke up at 2 in the morning, excited to hold my very first webinar. We had over 150 registrants, and I knew this was going to be an enormous success. We had zero attendees, not a single person showed up. I was shocked. So, I decided to move forward with it anyway. We recorded the content. Eventually, at about 22 minutes, one person joined the webinar, and he stayed on for about four minutes before he left. Now, if I'd been deterred, and if I took that data and quit right then and thought *webinars don't work or webinars are a failure*, I would have never built future webinars. Now, to this day, I have five evergreen webinars that are producing closed clients nearly every single week with no effort on my own. All of this came because I went down the path, just like I'm telling you all to do. Create your online event, build it around your undeniable authority in your niche, and don't be discouraged if you only have one attendee. Don't be discouraged if you have zero. Do it anyway. Record it, it's valuable content. Get the practice and build it a step at a time.

In this chapter, we've talked about so many channels that you should be posting, videoing, and commenting regularly. And that doesn't even count. Call people. Talk about what you do as many times as you can. If you aren't proud of what you do as a coach, and you're not willing to talk about it with your friends, neighbors, cousins, and uncles, then you are not a business owner. You are simply an employee of the business, embarrassed by what you do. You have to love the work that you do and be willing to share and talk about it. And that doesn't just mean you do a little post or comment once in a while. It means you stay out there, omnipresent, as much as you can. Being out there expressing your thoughts, having your videos, having your content, being on podcasts, being on webinars, holding your webinars, and more overtime will win. As I'll say, later on when we discuss follow-ups, persistence always wins when it's the water versus the rock. The rock will always lose because the water keeps going. To quote Babe Ruth, he said you can never beat somebody who simply won't give up. That's how you fill your funnel. You don't do it through one effort that gives you a thousand leads. You don't do it through one ad campaign that gives you 100 people. You do it from multiple sources. They give you all a little bit at a time. You sign up with groups like NuMi and coach.me and Thumbtack. You don't use any of them where they get you thousands and thousands of leads, you get a couple of contacts from every one of them regularly. Your patience and persistence will pay off as you understand the concept of the funnel and understand the concept of lead sources.

There have been several exercises throughout this chapter. If you're just reading this chapter and just moving through and not stopping, you will not change your coaching practice, and you will not achieve your ideal success. Take the time and go back through and really complete these exercises. Make it painful, make it hurt. And as you do, you'll be ready to move to the next stage of your practice growth.

CHAPTER 10: GETTING APPOINTMENTS

After we discussed the concept of sales in general, and also finding the appropriate lead sources, now it's time to talk about how you sell coaching. To sell coaching, you have to get them on the phone and conduct a free coaching session, or free strategy session, consultation, whatever you want to call it.

Now before I go any further, oftentimes I would talk to coaches who have said they don't like to offer a free coaching session upfront because they feel it devalues their service. If this is the frame of thinking that you're running into, I want to strongly encourage you to not think that way. One of the smartest pieces of advice I ever got when I was starting my first business was from a mentor who said: *if you're willing to do it for money, then you have to be willing to do it for free*. And that's important. You have to have the mindset that just because you offer a free session, it doesn't devalue what you do. So many times, coaches especially get into the mindset that their work and their service are of such high value that every time somebody asks a question or wants to have a coaching conversation, there should be a transaction involved. This is not to confuse the concept that without some sort of transaction, there won't be lasting change. I still truly believe that, I think every type of lasting change needs a transaction of money, a transaction of time, and a transaction of energy. I've talked about this in previous chapters. That is the key to getting change, but it doesn't change the business model of needing to get them on the phone first. You cannot sell coaching without letting them participate in your coaching in some way. Or set a different way, you can't sell the honeycomb unless you let them taste some of the honey. That's essential.

So, once you have found the appropriate lead sources or you've gone to podcasts or every piece where you have people booking appointments, you're ready to talk about what to do on the appointment. Another word on technology. Booking appointments can be very difficult. Remember the concept that it takes all of a person's courage to go on Google and search for a coach or search for help. In Western civilization and probably all over the world, there is a mindset naturally amongst people that you should be able to do it on your own, and you do not need help. This is drilled into us even as we are little kids. So, you can imagine by the time you're an adult, how much worse it gets.

So, when somebody Googles: *I need a coach*, or *life coach near me*, or any of those things, it is already taking all of their courage. It is already taking every ounce of courage that they have to overcome that embarrassment and acknowledge that: *I need help. I need someone to work with me to make me better.*

You start to seek them, hunt them, find them and get that first appointment. That is honoring their courage. So, the first thing I want you to use is smart technology. There are services that you can use which will allow you to automate the appointment setting process, and more importantly, automate the follow-up process to secure the appointment. It's a basic appointment or scheduling software. Two of the most famous are *Acuity* and *Calendly*. You can refer to them, sign up on them. Both are very strong. In essence, what they do is sync up to your calendar or calendars and allow the person to find the time that fits their schedule best. And then it also allows you to put in custom workflows so that people get a steady set of reminders before the appointment. This is important because so many times, people book appointments and get busy, or they lose their courage, and they don't show up. Remember again, it is so difficult to acknowledge you need help. It is so difficult to acknowledge you need somebody to work with you to make yourself better, and they don't show up many times because they lose their courage. That doesn't mean you let them go. I'll speak more about that in a little bit. The goal here is to do everything you can do to get on the appointment, so they can participate in a small fashion of what your coaching is like and start to grab a connection for it.

When I have somebody book an appointment and I use one of this software, like Calendly, I have built in three specific workflows that I would encourage you to do. When somebody books the appointment, the first thing is, they receive a text message telling them "thank you" and how excited I am to work with them.

The second text comes out 24 hours before the appointment, and it says something like this: *Hi, name. I'm excited for us to meet tomorrow. Here are a couple of things I want you to prepare before our session. Number one, write down your short and long-term goals. Number two, write down why those goals are so important to you. We'll be reviewing this when we have our call.* That small text of an invitation for them to pre-engage in the coaching process increases conversions by almost 26%.

Then one more follow-up is a text message 15 minutes before the appointment coming from me saying: *name, I'm so excited to talk to you in 15 minutes, I'll call you on your cell.* In addition to those texts, they usually get emails as well. All of these are automated, and have increased my attendance rate by almost 35%.

Other things you should do to secure the appointment. Remember, everything matters to get the appointment. Everything. So, when you have a lead, whether it's from a referral source like NuMi or Thumbtack or direct from your site, I would encourage you to throw the entire kitchen sink to get the appointment. I would encourage you to throw the neighbor's kitchen sink if you had the opportunity. What this means is you're going to follow a *combo prospecting* initiative to get the appointment. This includes calling, texting, emailing, messaging via social media and more. When I have people that I'm trying to get appointments with, I follow this very specific cadence that you can see below. In that cadence, I have found I've put a lot of attention in the beginning because that's when they are the freshest and most likely to answer, and it starts to tail out towards 14 days. At the end of 14 days, I moved them into a nurture campaign because I have found a diminishing set of returns when I call aggressively after 14 days.

A couple of tips on calling. Many of you will read this and think *there's no way I'm going to make a phone call. There's no way I'm going to call somebody.* And I would encourage you to not think that way. Calling matters. Calling honors their courage, and calling honors who they are. You have to get on their agenda. And it isn't necessarily the calling that gets through, it's because you texted and emailed and contacted them on social media. Then, when you call, you eventually get through. Don't let your story or your lack of practice on calling influence you from making a phone call. You are not bothering them. You are not harassing them.

So many times, one of the biggest deterrents for a coach is they will say I don't want to call somebody because I feel like I'm bothering them or harassing them. This is an important concept in all of prospecting or generating your appointments or calling people in general. Don't assume the feelings that your customers or clients share. Always let the data tell you the truth. If you have no data that tells you the amount that you're calling or the amount that you're texting, or the amount that your email is upsetting your customers or potential customers, then there is no reason to assume that is the truth. This is not a problem with just coaches, this is a problem with executives, salespeople, and individuals everywhere. We tend to tell ourselves a story and assume that it's true, but it's only based on our own biased and limiting beliefs. You all as coaches, will understand the concept of limiting belief. A limiting belief is a truth that you've told yourself that hinders difficult activity or changes activity. Don't subscribe to the limiting belief that calling people is a bother or that texting them means we're chasing them.

Years ago, I was running our academy coaching round table, and I had a coach that was in the class. This coach had been coaching for 14 years. She had three different certifications, but she had yet to get her practice to a level where she was financially able to do it full-time. In her best year, at most, she made almost \$40,000. Once you've paid your taxes, you'll understand that is not very much money at all. She had a very good niche. She specialized in ADHD, coaching and helping people suffering from ADHD manage and work through regular life, and being successful.

When I started to talk to her about getting appointments, making phone calls and getting a hold of people, she was adamant. She said, *"Don, absolutely not. I will send them one email asking them to book an appointment with me. But if they don't book the appointment, then I don't want them because they're not showing that they're serious enough to work with a coach."* I walked her through the statistics around calling and texting, and that the personal courage of a person to fill out a form was everything that they had. Even after walking through all of this, she responded, *"Don, I don't care. I only want to speak to people that are ready to buy right now."* If that is your mentality, if you only want to speak to people that are ready to swipe a credit card and sign up by just getting on the phone with you, you will never scale your practice.

The vast majority of people are just putting their toes in the water for coaching. The vast majority of people are struggling with real problems, real anxieties, real frustrations, and they're looking for answers. Your job as a salesperson is to convince them why talking to you and working with you is the best solution for the answer. They have many solutions that they could work through. They have many things that they could use to better their life, and your job is to convince them you're the best fit. You cannot do that if you don't get the appointment. On average, it takes 21 touchpoints to get an appointment.

What is a touchpoint? A touchpoint is a phone call, an email, a text, a voicemail, an instant message, a like on their posts online, and more. When you combine all of those consistently, you will find that on average, it takes 21 different touchpoints to get them on the phone.

One last piece of advice for getting appointments. Variety always wins. When you call the same time or text the same way or email the same way over and over again, people become calloused and numb to your tips. When I was a young boy growing up in central Utah, we were a very small town, and it was very common for us to walk outside or walk across town. The town was only about a mile and a half long. Many of us, when we were very young, walked around without shoes on. And yes, I can see how this is very old-fashioned. But that was the town that I grew up in, which had a population of under 4,000. We all knew each other. It was very safe.

As we walked around with our bare feet over time, our feet became calloused and the skin became so thick that it didn't hurt to walk on rocks or different sized stones or anything. That's the beauty of the body. The human body will become callous to things that make it uncomfortable. You'll get used to it just like I'm telling you to get used to making phone calls.

Understand that you need to use variety and how you reach out to your prospects because they will become calloused to the ways that you tried to get a hold of them. Once they see that phone number from you one or two times, it's easy for them to ignore it and just know that it's just you calling them. Use variety and creativity to get on the phone. Show your personality, leave funny voicemails, text a funny GIF. All those things will help you get them on the phone, so you can sell to them.

CHAPTER 11: USE A HOOK

One of the most important things you can use as a coach is to get an appointment, and also the beginning of the appointment is what's called a hook. Many of you are going to be familiar with the practice of fishing. Fishing is where you cast a line into some sort of open water where fish are dormant, and on the line at the very end is a fishhook, and it is typically lined with some sort of bait.

I remember when I was a young boy with my father, he would take his fly-fishing and we would spend hours. My father and my grandfather personally spent hours tying flies or researching flies or buying the most intricate flies because they knew the fly as a hook would attract the fish when they were hungry. The intricacy and effectiveness of the fly caught more fish. So, if I apply that metaphor to coaching, your hook is the fly. The better the hook, the more attractive it is, the better you will get them on the phone and hook them into talking with you.

Hooks do not have to be extravagant, enormous things. Hooks can be very simple. For example, if I'm a relationship coach, my hook might be a 10-question assessment on a healthier relationship. I'm sure as a coach, you could come up with one. Or if I'm a leadership coach, in general, I work with senior leaders in the software industry, I might say, *"Hey, I have a 10-question assessment about the hit, the psychological health of your team."*

Sometimes hooks can take the form of e-books where you might have the 10 steps for building psychological safety in your organization. The hooks come in many forms, and I encourage you to build and write four or five different hooks and test them, so you know which ones are most attractive to your demographic?

Just like my father and grandfather would spend hours tying a fly fish and getting it just perfect, you're going to do the same thing with your book. I have seen too many times' people not use a hook and think just offering the free coaching session was enough. Truth be told, at least 25% of the time, it will be just enough. But why wouldn't you use a hook in order to increase the likelihood of you getting an appointment.

Back to the fish metaphor. My father always told me the fishes are smart, and they know when a hook is fake. They know when a fly isn't real. If you don't get it just right, the same thing can be said about you. If it isn't genuine, if it isn't good content, if it isn't good quality and if it doesn't address one of their real needs, they will know that it's fake. They will know that all you're trying to do is lure them onto the phone. Take time to develop a strong hook.

Let me give you a couple of other components that are important about hooks and what makes them strong. First is the value of a number. The next time you're in the grocery store or going through a checkout aisle, I want you to pay attention to the fashion magazines all along the rack. As you're checking out, you'll notice these fashion magazines are filled with headlines, and then on the side, there are little snippets of information about what's inside. Those little snippets of what's inside are hooks to get you to buy the magazine. If you pay attention to the sides and look at those titles, you will see, almost universally, they all include a number. Sometimes the number is three ways to use keto to lose weight. The one thing I did to lose a hundred pounds in two years. Three cooking tips from Martha Stewart, and on and on and on. This is not just in fashion magazines, you'll see the same book strategies in sports magazines, business magazines, and lots more.

Hooks always have a number because in our mind, it has simplified our ability to digest the content. When we see a number, our brain begins to quantify the value of the hook. So, as you're creating your hook, always include a number. The three steps to do this, the tense question analysis on the health of your relationship, the five steps you need to do today to feel better about your life. My three-step goal-setting system, whatever you want to do, the most important thing is you include a number to simplify the understanding of your hook, which will make it more attractive.

The second important thing about hooks is making sure you address a real pain point of your prospects. If you're not hitting on something important to them, your hook will be meaningless. You might think it's valuable. You might think that this is great content, but what you think is not the most important aspect. The only thing that matters is does it help you generate more appointments, and do people use it?

So, as you've developed your three or four hooks, I would do the first part of market research testing. I would go to some of my current clients and ask their opinion about the assessment or the guide. Give it to them for free and let them give you feedback on the validity of addressing problems that they have.

In my early days of coaching, I was working with a client in Texas, and he was developing his business coaching practice and hired me to help him get it started. Part of that process was we were talking about getting a hook. He didn't have the expertise to generate a hook and at the time, truth be told, I didn't have a hook. So, I told him I would create a hook that I thought would work for his business, and I created a very long e-book that he could use to get people in the door. As I did that, we didn't do any testing, we didn't do analysis on whether it would fit the demographic. I just thought it was fantastic content. We put it on his website and made it as an offer to join a free coaching session. It didn't work at all. It didn't increase anything. The reason why was because I realized that my whole work, all the effort that I had done, wasn't addressing the problem of his demographic. I was too broad; I was too general. All of my efforts were wasted. Don't make that same mistake as you're about to create your hook, take the time to understand your demographic and what their biggest pain point is. Understand the things that are frustrating them. Not things like "I have anxiety" or "I'm stressed out" or "I'm overweight", go deeper. What's causing it and really speak to those issues. And as you do, your hook becomes stronger, and your ability to generate appointments and keep them on increases. As I said in the previous chapter, nothing is more important than generating appointments. Nothing. You cannot sell the whole box of cereal if they don't get to taste a couple of crumbs first. Get them on the phone by using a hook and improve your likelihood of growing your business. As you do this, statistically, you should shoot for one to two or maybe three appointments every week. As you do that, if you follow the next steps around how to sell coaching and your follow-up cadence, you will have a six-figure practice usually within seven months.

Now, your practical exercise is to write down five titles of potential hooks. The first piece is to write down what problem you're going to address. The second piece is to write down the number of the steps you're going to take in order to address that. And then your last step is to write the title. Once you've written the title, you can create the content easily. You might deliver the content in a lot of different ways, whether it's an e-guide, e-book assessment, audio clip, or something.

That's your exercise. I want five titles of potential hooks that you're going to be able to use within one month's time.

Let's get to work!

CHAPTER 12: THE SECRET TO SELLING COACHING

Now that you've created a niche, and you've maximized your undeniable authority; you've shifted your mindset in your paradigm about being a business owner. You've created a powerful coaching name, and you have a program to sell. I'm confident you're off to the races. We've talked about understanding how sales works, finding your mentor, finding lead sources, and getting those first appointments. You're ready to start selling coaching. I've referenced some of these concepts in this chapter and previous chapters, but now I'm going to go into them in more depth, so you can understand how selling coaching works.

I've spent the last 25 years in sales, and I, at times, sold things from financial services to insurance to call center services to debt programs to weddings, and everything in between. And I have learned that selling, for the most part, follows some simple rules that we'll talk about. As you follow those rules, you will be more successful. You do need to make adjustments to the industry. You do need to make adjustments to the demographics. But for the most part, all the rules follow the same.

The first rule is always to sell yourself every day. I talked about this in a previous chapter, but it's important to re-emphasize here that if you're going to do this job, and you're going to do this job well, and you're going to build your coaching practice, you have to remind yourself every single day why you're great at this, why you're successful and why you're the best choice to help people through your coaching program. That's important. Sell yourself every single day. As I mentioned before, all yeses live in the land of the noes, and that means you're going to face plenty of rejection in selling coaching. Even for somebody like myself who is well-trained and well versed in selling coaching, I have rejections all the time. You have to be used to that, you have to feel comfortable with that and move forward.

The second secret to selling coaching is that all sales are based on emotion. You've heard this mentioned throughout the book, and now we're going to dive into that. Every decision you've made is based on an emotional decision. You might think it was logic. You might think you used maths or understanding creating that decision, but it never was. The maths or the data or the logic you used simply justified the emotions that you were already feeling and gave you a sense of security, which is another emotion to make a good decision. And motions make decisions. So, the second secret is, your job in the entire sales process is to generate as much emotion as you can. Now think about for a second what are emotions. Emotions are internal feelings, oftentimes expressed externally of what you're feeling inside.

List out a couple of emotions with me: anger, fear, joy, happiness, overwhelmed, anxiety, and more. Your job is to get your potential customers to feel many of these emotions, if not all of them, while you talk to them. That's because the more emotion that they feel, the higher likelihood they are going to be to buy your program.

As I walk through all of our steps together and how to structure your sales process, we will continue to come back to the point of generating emotion. Almost every word that you say, almost every phrase that you use, and every technique that I teach you in this book is designed to generate an emotional response from your prospect. And with that, it's important to use and follow a script. Many of you might wonder, *why am I going to follow a script?* I've worked with over 1000 coaches and heard the vast majority say things like: *I don't like to use a script. My selling style is just more organic. I like to just feel it out because things are so different.* And this is where I want to counsel you.

So, I want you to do an exercise with me for a second. Think in your life, what would be your favorite movie? I'm talking about a movie that if you flip through the channels, which I know nobody does anymore, but if you did, you would always stop. Can you think of that movie? For some people it might be a romantic comedy like *You've Got Mail*, or *When Harry Met Sally*, or *Moulin Rouge*, and for others, it might be an action movie like *Mission Impossible* or *007*, and all. It might be a musical for some, and for others it might be an old classic from the early days of cinema. Whatever it is, I want you to picture that movie. One of my clients' names, Sam, his favorite movie is *Shawshank Redemption*. And as he says, he watches it three or four times a year, and I'm going to use *Shawshank Redemption* as a reference point for this next piece. If you've seen that movie, you'll know *Shawshank Redemption* is the story of Andy Dufresne and how he was unlawfully imprisoned, his journey through that prison Shawshank, and eventual escape with the assistance of his good friend and mentor, Red.

There are, if you've seen the movie, times when there are consistent emotional responses. I know I've seen *Shawshank Redemption* many times, and there are parts of the movie that I always laugh at. There are parts I always get exhilarated about. And when Andy Dufresne finally breaks out (sorry, spoiler alert), I always get excited. The same thing could be done with countless other movies. As a committed *Star Trek* fan, there are times when I watch *Star Trek: Through the Wrath of Khan*, and I see Shatner scream the word, *Khan*, and I still love that moment. I even, in writing this, get excited about sharing that moment. For those of you that are picturing your movie, I want you to picture those two or three moments that you love every single time. Maybe it's when they get back together, or when the person dies or something resolves. Whatever it is, you can feel the real emotion even in remembering. This is an important thing to remember because your brain cannot tell the difference between imagined emotion or actual emotion. Meaning, if you're imagining something to be true, your brain will respond just like you're picturing that movie. Picturing that scene, your brain is going to respond like it's there, like it's real.

I'll give you another exercise to demonstrate how this is true. If you'll take a moment and just imagine your favorite dessert, whatever it is. That might be ice cream, cookie dough ice cream, sundaes, and warm apple pie. I want you to imagine that you can see that dessert right in front of you, that you can smell it, that it looks exactly how you want it to look, that you're holding your fork, and that you've taken your fork into the dessert, and you're bringing it closer to your mouth. You can smell how good it is. You can feel it if it's warm. All these things are impacting you. If you've done this exercise correctly, your mouth should have started to water. Your brain cannot tell whether something is real or imagined, and you're going to use that during your sales process.

Go back to the movies. If you pictured that movie that I was telling you to picture, how does that movie consistently generate an emotional response from you, even after 20 times watching it? How does that movie generate that same emotional response for millions of other people all over the world every time they watch it? The reason why is because that movie wasn't just organic, and they didn't just figure it out as they went. That movie used scripts. Everything was scripted, from the words that they say, to the tones that they used, to the props that they used, to the clothes that they wore, to the sets that were designed. Everything was mapped out precisely to make you feel an emotional response at a particular moment. That's what the movie industry does, and they've mastered it over 100 years. Why do you think you should do it differently? Take a clip out of Tony Robbins' *Psychology*, where he refers to modeling those that are successful. If you know the movie industry is doing something right, model it. Use a script so that it helps you generate the right emotion at the right time in order to consistently generate sales.

One further piece on scripting is that scripting should be written out word for word. But I understand the need for flexibility in that script. There are times when a call gets left or right or changed around, and you have to be able to have some give in your process. Of course, you do. So, I look at scripting like I look at aviation. Airline pilots have one of the most difficult jobs in the world, not because the workload or activity might be particularly hard, but their level of responsibility in their lives. Every single day, they hold hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands of lives in their hands. That is real pressure. How do they manage that pressure? How do they ensure that they are consistently safe and successful, at least in the high 99 percentile? That's because they have a checklist and a script. When they get on the plane, they cannot take off until they've done a series of things like logging their flight plan, checking all engine protocol, and safety procedures. Everything. They have a long checklist that they use in every airline in every airport throughout the world. The next thing they have to do in their flight plan is to document their script. Now, the script or the flight plan will say: *you need to go from point A to point B. I'm flying from Jacksonville, Florida to Boston, Massachusetts.* In that flight plan, it is very scripted where they're going to go. But there is a give and flexibility that if storms come, things change. They can maneuver within certain guardrails. That is scripting. Create yourself the flexibility to move in between guardrails as long as you stand script.

As you'll see as a resource in this book, at the very back, is the actual script I use for selling coaching. I would encourage you to go through it, to understand it, to make it your own.

I had one client named Jen who took my script and used it word-for-word. And as she did, she got 4 sales in a row when previously, she had yet to sell anything for six months. I'm not saying that the script is everything. You have to learn how to present it. Sales are very much not what you say, but how you say it, and the script is no different. I would encourage you all to take this script and make it your own and apply it to the way you think you operate and how you want to maximize your selling opportunities. Those are the secrets of selling coaching.

In the next four chapters, we're going to go through each section of the script, how to use and master it, and how to deal with rebuttals. Take the exercise seriously. Go through and read the script right now, and let's get started into the script of selling coaching.

CHAPTER 13: SCENE I – ROCK AND GEM

Over the next four chapters, we're going to be discussing the actual sales process and the sales script you'll find at the end of this book in the appendix and resources. It is the actual script that I use, and I will be covering portions of it in each chapter.

The first part of the entire sales process that I want to talk about is how it's broken down. I have a background in musical theater. There was a time in college when I fully believed I was going to go to Broadway and be a musical theater star. The problem was I was no good and could not compete with people with real talent. I was fortunate enough to go to college. Even at a small state school with two people that went all the way to Broadway. One of them starred as the lead Frankie Valli in Jersey Boys for a very long time. I knew they had the talent. But regardless of that little tangent, what I learned from the theater was powerful, and I learned that we as a human race are storytelling people. We love the idea and the concept of stories. They put us in new situations. They help us experience life differently. This script is taught in a story form, meaning that's how the structure goes. I would encourage you, as you make the script your own, to include your own personal stories as often as you can.

Think about it, in every civilization in human history, they almost always begin telling stories. They would tell him your memorization, and then later document them on walls or scrolls or papaya. Later, we tell stories for a living through television, film, podcasts, and books. This is why I know all of you will be great at sales because you're simply telling stories with intent.

The structure for the entire script follows my theater background, and I teach it in four scenes. I use the scenes similar to how a play or a musical would set up climactic action before you start to have resolution and ask for their transaction.

The first scene which will be covered in this chapter is called *rock and gem*. As I talked about *rock and gem*, you might get lost in the symbolism, and I'll explain what that is. But many of you do a very similar beginning scene. In fact, they teach this in most practitioners' schools. They call it the discovery section or the investigation section, or the diagnostic section, where you're simply asking a client a series of questions to understand if they're the right fit for your service, as well as to build rapport. Now, I have listened to many sales calls from different coaches and heard them do discovery sessions like this. They have their openings like: *"Hi. I'm so-and-so this is coach Don Markland. And before we get started today, I just wanted to ask you a few questions to understand your situation. What made you look at coaching?"* That's typically how they begin, and then they will go through a series of additional questions like: *What are your goals? What's your budget? What concerns you? What are you stressed about?* And all those different things.

The way I'm going to teach the discovery about what I call *rock and gem* is very different. As I've talked about in previous chapters, all sales are based on emotion. All sales are based on the prospect, having so much emotion and you tying that emotion to your product or service.

Scene one is all about the emotion. And *rock* and *gem* are the vehicles that I use to elicit that emotion out of the prospect. What is *rock*? *Rock* is not the reason why they got on the phone. That's where people typically get followed off. *Rock* is the emotional connection behind the reason they got on the phone with you today. Remember, in coaching every person that ever speaks to you, or agrees to have a free consultation, or a free strategy session, has a trigger moment or a trigger event before your meeting, that influences them to agree to meet with you. I'll give you some examples. If you're a career coach and somebody agrees to meet with you, some moments prior to the agreement of the meeting triggered them to meet you. Maybe they got in a fight with your boss, or their company just announced layoffs, or they aren't making enough money, or got in a fight with their spouse. Something at all. There was an emotional event that triggered why they got on the phone with you in the first place, and *rock* is about uncovering that emotional event and digging into it.

Why do I call this *rock*? Well, when I was a young boy, my parents used to make us participate in a miserable activity for about two to three weeks every single summer. They would take us camping up to Gooseberry Campground in Central Southern Utah. Now, camping is miserable, but I know some of you love camping. But to me, it was the most awful, terrible activity ever. Staying outside with the bugs for an entire two to three-week period and constantly fishing was awful, and I hated every second of it. Part of the event of camping was that my father would take my boys and I, and have us huddle around a campfire pit. He would instruct us how to make fire. We would take small pieces of wood kindling and other flammable material, and pilot it in the center. He would give us a piece of flint and rock, and let us know if we hit them against each other, it would create a spark. And if we did that close enough to the kindling and then provide oxygen, that small spark could ignite a flame under the kindling which through proper nurture and care could create a fire and ultimately a bonfire if we wanted to. Now, little did he know that the minute he walked away, my brothers and I would just take gasoline and a match and accomplish the same task because we were all about efficiency.

Regardless, years later, I've understood and appreciated the lesson he was trying to teach. Not only was he trying to teach me self-sufficiency and how things work, but also there was a principle there that applied to the rest of my career, that everything begins with a spark. Everything, every activity, every emotion begins with a very small inciting incident. And if you take hold of that inciting incident with proper nurture and care, you can create intense emotion from it. So that's why it's called *rock*. This is the initial emotional event that triggered them to get on the phone with you, and it is your goal in scene one to identify the *rock*.

I'm going to go through a portion of the script right now and discuss the actual *rock* questions that I cover, and a couple of other things to note in the coaching script that you'll be able to review later on.

We have a section right before scene one where we're just building rapport with the customer. That's important because without the ability to build rapport, there will be no trust. And without trust, it is difficult to have any level of the transaction. So, without further ado, let's jump into the script.

Opening:

Thank you, (their first name) for taking this call with me today. This is coach Don Markland. How's your day going so far?

I wait for their response.

Hey, great. I think that's fantastic. Now, before we get started, I first wanted to just thank you and honor you for taking the time to meet with me today. I'm sure you've heard of Tony Robbins, and he said 98% of people never dare to focus on self-development. I think that's an important statistic, and it demonstrates who you are and your level of commitment to being your best self. You're in that upper two percent of the world. That's pretty cool. Secondly, during our session today, I'm going to ask you some questions to make sure you fully understand what coaching is and how it works. But most importantly, you understand some things about yourself. How does that sound?

And I wait for a "yes".

Great. Now Mr. so-and-so, everyone has a reason or something that triggered this. What's it with you? I take these calls multiple times a week throughout the year, and without fail, there's always been something. What made you want to get on the phone with me today?

I'm going to time out from the script. Notice, I'm going right for the *rock*. I'm asking him very specifically what triggered him to get on the phone today, because I know without the *rock*, it'll be difficult to sell. Here are some follow-up questions I'll ask as he starts to respond:

Tell me more about that event. Wow, that sounds very frustrating and very difficult. How did you feel at the time? How did you handle it? Did you talk to your family about it? Man, I'm so sorry. I'm so glad we're on the phone today.

Notice, all of those questions are about increasing the emotion that they felt during the event. I want them re-feeling and re-picturing the event over and over. As I've said previously, your brain cannot tell the difference between something imagined and something real. So, if I can get them to reimagine the event crystal clear, then I know they're going to feel that emotion genuinely and start to be in a position to transact. Without emotion, I cannot sell. I will stay on the *rock* as long as I can, hoping that they feel intense emotion, even negative emotion, and frustration. Hopefully, at one point, they start to wonder, *"Who is this guy? Why is he asking me these questions and making me relive this terrible event?"* I want them to feel like they almost regret being on the phone with me. This is because the triggered emotion, the *rock*, is the most important emotion to get. It is the freshest emotion, and it will help you lead to transactions much more effectively. Without fail, as I have met with coaches all over the world and discussed their sales process, this single point (the rock) is missed more than any other. And sadly, it is the number one contributor to getting sales. You have to identify the *rock*.

Next is the *gem*. What is the *gem*? Often, I've heard coaches in their sales process ask: *what do you hope to get out of coaching?* That's a great goal-setting question. But that is not the *gem*. The *gem*, similar to the *rock*, is the emotional connection behind the goal. So, asking them about their goal from coaching will generate pretty straightforward answers. *I want to lose weight. I want to feel better. I want my marriage to work. I want a raise. I want to improve my career.* All of those pieces. But now I'm asking you to ask about the emotional connection behind it.

So, when somebody says, "*I want to lose weight*", your job would be to ask why it is so important. *What happens if you don't lose weight? Can you picture yourself after you've lost weight? What does that feel like? Can you picture yourself when you're looking your best and feeling your best, tell me how you feel? Tell me what you're doing when you've lost all that weight. What are you doing? You are swimming in the Bahamas? Do you own a boat? What are you doing?*

Then I'm going to continue to ask questions regarding their *gem* over and over until they can absolutely visualize and feel it.

One of my favorite questions to ask when I'm trying to get to the *gem* is this one. I will say: *Mr. so-and-so, I want you to imagine for a second we found a way to work together. It was a year from now, and we were going to celebrate this being the best year of your life. So, I fly out to your location. We ate some noodles together. Tell me what has to happen in that year for this to be the best year you've ever had.*

Then I'm going to let them speak and talk about it. I'm going to encourage them, and rev it up and get them excited. Notice the contrast in the first section of *rock*, it was all about trigger emotion, negative emotion, frustration. In the second section about *gem*, it's about positive emotion, uplifting, excitement, and progress. I'm taking them through a roller coaster of emotions, but both are vital to have them feel so much emotion that I can now connect it to my coaching services.

In my history, when I have lost sales, I have almost always been able to identify that I didn't take the time to generate emotion. I didn't take the time to connect them to what I did. I rushed it. I moved past it. Slow down and generate real emotion. Slow down and get them connected to you emotionally. If you're doing scene one correctly, it should take you between 17 and 23 minutes.

How do I know that time works? It's for two reasons. First of all, I have personally timed it many times to identify the length of time. Secondly, I know it works from this simple metaphor. I have three teenagers, and they are the most incredible kids ever. But like most teenagers, they don't like cleaning their room. They can't stand it and oftentimes I will tell them, *"Hey, you need to clean your room before you can play games"*, or *"You need to clean your room before you can go out"*. And my teenage son is the worst at this. I'd have checked his room and seen it is a pigsty, and he'd want to go play video games with his friends. Then I'd tell him, *"you have to go clean your room before you can do that"*, and he'd walk into his room and shut the door. Within four or five minutes, he'd come out and he would say his room was clean. Those of you that are parents will relate to this and know what he was representing wasn't even close to true. You just know it. You know that if he was in that messy room and cleaned it for only five minutes, there's no way it could be cleaned to the level that you expect. He clearly cut corners. He stuffed clothes under the bed, or in the closet, or hid everything to just get by. I know if my son or any of my kids don't spend at least 45 minutes cleaning their room, they didn't do a good enough job. The same could be said about scene one *rock* and *gem*. If you're not spending at least 17 to 23 minutes, I'd know you didn't get enough emotion out of the prospect.

Now, many coaches have said to me, "*But Don, what do I do with people that are super introverted and super private? And they don't want to open up.*" Two things: number one, if they're not willing to open up now, they're not going to open up later when you try to coach. So, you have to slow down and get the emotion out. Some people will be very reserved and cautious and not want to share their feelings over the phone. So, when that occurs, you need to slow down and back up and build trust with them. Ask them safer questions. Ask them about their job, their family, their life. Slowly warm them up before you ask bigger questions. All the trust in a sales conversation is built on what's called *the trust ladder*. When you're in the bottom rung, you can't really ask very many sensitive questions because they have no trusting relationship with you. But the higher up you go, you can ask anything, including credit card or social security number, which I wouldn't advise you to do anyway. Your job is to move up that trust ladder, a rung at a time, so that you can ask more intensive questions.

The goal is always to tell the scene. You should not move on to the next scene until you've acquired a very strong *rock* and a very strong *gem*. That's vital. As you practice this script in front of a mirror, or with friends and family, always take your longest time to generate strong emotion. Without emotion, you simply won't sell.

CHAPTER 14: SCENE II – LISTENING

Now we're going to take a look at the next scene, which wasn't always there when I originally developed my script.

I'm lucky enough to have been married for about 20 years, and I get asked all the time what the secret to a long marriage is. There are many answers, and some people say joking things like they learned to say "I'm sorry" or forgive things easily. Talking it over with my amazing wife, she said the secret to having a successful and long marriage is listening, or at least that's what I think she said.

The reason I set up that little scenario is that scene two is all about listening. Not just the practice of listening, but demonstrating to the prospect that you're listening to them. Remember, 90% of people that want to sign up with coaching nearly are doing that because they feel like they are not being heard. That's why this scene is so important. It's because you are in a very obvious and clear way demonstrating to the prospect that you're listening to them or hearing them or understanding them. That is one of our most compelling human needs: to be heard and understood. And now you're going to provide it in a very clear and direct way.

After I finish scene one, and I've identified the *rock* and the *gem*, I'm going to transition and move into scene two, which goes as follows:

Mr. so-and-so, thank you for the last few minutes, telling me about your story and your situation. I think I have everything that I need, but I just want to recap it to you to make sure I've heard and understood you.

Notice how I'm being very clear and direct with my intentions. I'm telling the prospect I want them to acknowledge I'm hearing and understanding them. Or in other words, I'm wanting them to acknowledge that I am fulfilling one of their most important emotional needs twenty-five minutes into this call. The latter part of the scene is about recapping what you heard them say. But doing it in a very specific way, I would begin with:

Mr. so-and-so, this all occurred because (and then I insert the exact words that they used to describe the rock).

Also, I make sure to emphasize any emotional words that they use when they describe their feelings. For example, I might say something like this:

Mr. so-and-so, this all began for you when, two months ago, your boss blew up at you for something that you didn't do. This event has occurred numerous times over your career, but this last one was the final straw. As you said, you felt humiliated, you felt embarrassed. You felt alone.

Now, here is a technique I want to teach you. It's very important that you all learn to master it. This is called *The Mirror Technique*. You're all very familiar with the mirror and when you look at it, it shows you a direct reflection of who you are or what's being shown to it. *The mirror technique* is the same thing. There are some salespeople like Jordan Belfort, and others that teach mirroring from a tonality perspective, which is so manipulative that I don't necessarily subscribe to it. The portion of mirroring that I think is important is using their exact language. We as a human society have our vernaculars and how we speak. The words that we use are a combination of how we have raised our friends, our current network, and our environment. So, you need to mirror their exact language. And this way, the person feels more understood because you're using their words, as well as they feel a stronger connection to you because you speak the way they do. There's a power in that acknowledgment, and in that language coming out.

Years ago, when I was traveling in Hong Kong for work, I remember I was going through the city trying to not only do a tour, but also meet the business partner that I was scheduled to meet. And while in Hong Kong, I felt very alone and isolated, because I could not find anyone that spoke English. When I eventually even met with my business partner, he did not speak very much. His English is extremely broken. One afternoon, I went to a local market to pick up some things for my kids. While I was there, I was overwhelmed and lost at the size of the market and the bustling activity when all of a sudden, a person came up to me who looked like they were from Hong Kong. He spoke perfect English. He said, *"Are you lost? Do you need me to tell you where to go?"* With that, there was such a comfort in hearing him speak my language. For three days, I had yet to encounter anybody that could speak to me or understand me, and as an extrovert, not speaking for three days is grueling. Regardless of being extroverted or introverted, there was such an emotional power when I met this person in the market, and they spoke my language. I felt like we were friends. I felt like we had known each other for years. That is what *Mirror Technique* does. It produces that same dopamine effect in the brain and connects them to you. So, as you restate their *rock*, you do it using their words.

This is very different from the technique called *empathetic listening*. And I recognize many coaches, especially in practitioner school, teach you empathetic listening. Empathetic listening is where you will recap what you understand about what they said.

Stephen Covey talks a lot about this in his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, where he references your ability to understand somebody first before you seek to be understood. And that method goes as follows if the person has described their previous scenario where they had a boss blow up at them, and it was the straw that broke the camel's back, and they were humiliated and left alone. If I was using empathetic listening, I would say, *"Hey, Mr. so-and-so, I understand this all started because your boss had an altercation with you. And through that altercation, you had very strong emotional feelings, and those strong emotional feelings are what brought you on the phone with me today."*

I'm still demonstrating that I'm listening, but there is not nearly as much power as there is when you use mirror language. After I finish the *rock* section, I'm going to move to the *gem* section and do the same repeat. So, I would say, *"And now your goals from coaching are this... You want to (I'm going to insert their exact words)."* Then I tie it all together with: *"Mr. Jones, is there anything that I left out?"* If you've done your job correctly with a very strong scene one and a very strong scene two, they will say to you at this point, *"No, I think you got it."*

Now here's a true story. I have had three clients purchase from me at this point in the script. I have yet to talk about what I do, I've yet to talk about my prices, and I've yet to talk about really anything about me. It's always been about them. But I've had three people at this point say, *"Oh, my goodness! I just want to work with you. How do I sign up?"* Why is that the case? As I stated earlier, 90% of people that sign up for coaching do it merely because they feel like no one is hearing them and understanding them. And now I am demonstrating clearly that I am and can do that. That is fulfilling one of the most essential and emotional needs. That's why it's so important.

As I finish that and ask them if I left anything out, I move to the final closing statement of scene two. I say in a very clear, confident voice, *"Mr. so-and-so, I am so glad we are on the phone today because everything you talked about is exactly what I do. Let me tell you more about that."*

Notice what I've done. I've planted a very strong seed in their mind that all their biggest fears and worries are exactly what I do. They are in the right place. To be clear, this is why it's so important to have undeniable authority. This is why it's so important to attract the right people because as you do that, and you go through scene one and scene two, people will be so eager to work with you. You won't believe it.

Your practical exercise is to practice listening using the *mirror technique*. Next week, on all your sales calls in your conversations with people, repeat back to them what they said. This is what I heard you say, and say exactly their words. Don't use *empathetic listening* and try to interpret it. Just mirror it. It's a hard technique to get down, especially if you've been through practitioner school, but as you get it down, you'll be extremely effective.

If you've done your work correctly, by this point, you will have done a brilliant scene one, capturing the *rock* and the *gem*. Again, as a reminder, that's the emotional connection behind where they got on the phone is the *rock*. And the emotional connection behind their long-term goals with coaching is the *gem*.

CHAPTER 15

SCENE III – THE HERO’S JOURNEY

Next, you would have demonstrated that you listened by recapping, using the *mirror technique*. So far, you have connected with the prospect emotionally and supplied one of their most important needs, which is that you listened, validated and understood them. Now, it's time to talk about you as the coach.

A little side note is that I see so many coaches that always want to list their benefits and accomplishments and certifications. I see this over and over again. When you get to a point in the script where you want to talk about yourself, coaches will just start to list off: *I'm this certified... I've done this...* And they go on and on to make a big laundry list, and throw them up all over the prospect.

I'm going to teach you how to tell your resume as well as present your skill set, but in a story form. The story form is fairly common, and I'm going to teach it to you by talking a little bit about movies. You see, when we have gone to the movies or read books or seen plays, they almost always follow a very similar structure. You have an origin point where there is a commonality between the hero and yourself or other people. That hero has an inciting incident or something that occurs to them which forces them to think, act and behave differently. It changes them in some way. Now, they have what's called rising action, where they're developing what they learned from that inciting incident. Gradually, they're becoming this new version of themselves. As they live that new life as this new version, they accomplish amazing things; things including saving. If it's a male, a hero. A female, a heroine.

The male protagonist's basic outline is called the hero's journey. Let me put it into a little more context that you see in Marvel movies over and over, and you see in storybooks. I'll use an example of Spider-Man. If you don't know, Spider-man is a 1969 hero created by Stan Lee in Marvel Comics. He's been told through books, television, and multiple movies from the actor, Tobey Maguire, Andrew Garfield, and most recently, Tom Holland. And in the Markland home, we are big fans of Tom Holland and his portrayal of Spider-Man. But I don't want to open up that debate too large.

The spider-man story goes like this. At the very beginning, when we meet Spider-Man, he is a teenage boy and struggles with all the things that teenagers struggle with. He struggles with popularity. He struggles with meeting members of the opposite sex. He struggles with acne. He struggles with confidence. And if you've had teenagers, you will know every teenager struggle with these same things. This young teenager named Peter Parker is dealing with these struggles. Something happens. A radioactive spider bit him, which changes Peter Parker forever. From that radioactive spider, Spider-man started to become a new type of person. As he becomes this new person, he develops skills, and he develops them over time, or at least learns how to use them over time. Those skills were like Spidey senses, sensing danger, or super strength, or speed, or the ability to (depending upon the version) shoot webs from his wrist, or scientifically build them. He became smarter, a stronger leader, and more confident. All of these superpowers were built from that inciting incident of the radioactive spider biting him. From there, he slowly matures and becomes not just Peter Parker, but Spider-Man. And as he's become Spider-Man, he goes around the city of New York saving people that are struggling and helping other people. And by the time we catch up with him, we realize he's there to save Mary Jane. In essence, that is the Spider-Man story.

Now, if you're still not convinced, let me tell the story again. But instead of Spider-Man, I'll tell you about Superman. Superman was a teenager like every other teenager and struggled with the same things that every teenager struggle with: confidence, finding people of the opposite sex, finding a way to fit in. These are common feelings that every teenager struggle with. Then something happens. He finds out the secret lineage of his birth, and he learns he was not the son Clark Kent of Ma and Pa Kent, but instead the son Kal-El of his father, Jor-El, and mother from the Planet Krypton. And because he was of the secret lineage, he was endowed with special superpowers. He started to learn how to do and control those powers, like the power of flight, the power of lasers from his eyes, super strength, speed and hearing. As he developed much of these powers, he no longer became Clark Kent, but instead became the superhero commonly known as Superman. And he went around saving people and helping others. In the end, we finally catch up to him when he's there to save Lois Lane.

Hopefully, you can see the parallels between Spider-Man and Superman, not to mention, they're both wearing red and blue. And Spider-Man saves Mary Jane and works for a newspaper. And so, does Superman, except it's Lois Lane. It's very similar.

One last attempt to help this stick in. If you take the character, Captain America. Captain America was not a teenager, but he was a young man. Late teens or early 20s (somewhere in that range). He struggled with the same things that every young man struggles with: identity, confidence, being a part of a group like the military, wanting to fit in. Now that worked, but he tried, and he tried and continued to fail like all of us do until something happened. He was selected for a super-soldier program and was given super serum. The serum gave him amazing abilities like strength, speed, intelligence. As he developed those things and matured, he became more confident, and he stopped being the captain Rogers that he was, but instead became Captain America, a superhero that went around stopping the enemy and fighting crime. When we finally catch up to him, he's there to meet agent Jones. Those are three examples and I could go on. I could go through Hulk, Wonder Woman, Batman, and more.

The reason we all know these stories and the reason they follow that model is because those are the stories, we've connected with throughout all of humanity. When you study Greek mythology and learn about Hercules or other mythical heroes, they followed an almost identical origin story. It is innate in our humanity to connect with the hero's journey and want to make ourselves a part of it. And that's how you're going to tell your story to your prospects. You will tell it in a hero's journey version that helps them see you with your superpowers and how you're there to help them. It is important to follow the structure because one, it is very relatable, and two, it reiterates the point that even though you're selling coaching, you're selling a product (as we talked about in earlier chapters). You, as an individual, are very much the product. They are buying your persona, your aura, your energy, your excitement, your enthusiasm, your physical appearance, and more. You have to present yourself in a way that you're a superhero, that you can make all the difference in the world. I recognize this can feel narcissistic, and this can feel very off-putting, and I'm not asking anybody to be uncomfortable or to be over the top of this. But confidence is infectious. Attitude is infectious. Positivity is infectious. Telling the story in this fashion will help you do that.

I'm now going to tell you my hero's journey. So, you get an understanding of exactly how this works. I'm going to talk about how I was a person just like the prospect I'm talking to. Then I'd tell a longer session about how something occurred and how I started to develop those superpowers from what happened, and how I go around saving the world. I'm here to save you. Here's my hero's journey.

I will just transition from scene two, and I'll say to the prospect:

I think I have everything I have. I'm so glad that we're on the phone today because what you're worried about is exactly what I do. If it's okay, I want to tell you my story and how I got into coaching in the first place.

If he said, "okay", I'll get them to say "yes".

Now I'm moving to my hero's journey:

Back in my mid-20s, I was struggling with a lot of the same things that you mentioned. I was struggling with (insert their struggle; their struggle that relates to mind). You see, at the time; I was a mid-20s executive. I had been named vice president of sales and operations of a small call center business in Northern Utah, and we were steadily growing. We had roughly 1000 employees. And for the most part, it looked like I was super successful. I had a healthy six-figure salary. I had my beautiful wife and three children.

On the outside, I'm sure many people would think I'm really doing well, especially for my young age. What I didn't realize at the time was, I was overwhelmed, overworked, and Over stressed. I weighed roughly 70 pounds heavier than I weigh now. I was a ticking time bomb, and I had no clue that I was about to explode.

I was just finishing a training session in Rock Falls, Illinois of close to 300 people and afterward, I was sitting in the break room exhausted. I remember I was just finishing off a Chalupa from my favorite restaurant, Taco Bell. I mean, there was the reason I was 70 pounds overweight, right? And as I sat there, I felt overwhelmed about my life, and its "progress". I started to realize that I wasn't living the life I wanted to live and that the people I thought I was working with and helping, I could barely get them to hold themselves accountable and make any movement. I had my breaking point. What I needed was clarity to change. If you don't know what clarity is, it is when you can see something so clearly that it changes from a shoot or a want to a must. It will occur now because I see the direction and know what to do. Everything became clear. And as I sat in that training room, I realized I liked the clarity in my own life.

I carried around me at the time a little notebook that had positive quotes and inspirational thoughts in it. As I opened that up to look at it, I saw a quote from a man named Bob Proctor, who said that accountability is the glue that ties commitment to results. As I read that quote, it struck me in a very different way. I realized what I was missing in my life was accountability. I had to be more accountable. I had to do it.

So, as I sat there on this little book, I etched out my program; my personal mantra program. And it's only for me, to hold myself more accountable and be the best version of myself. This program is called the four Cs of accountability. As I created the program and I started to live it, miraculous things started to happen. I started to lose weight, which was fantastic. I started to spend more time at home. At the time, I'd been traveling 24 times a year, and now I was spending more time with my family. My wife even liked the thinner me, which was a big bonus. The business I was working on started to be more effective. I applied the four Cs of accountability into my mindset, and how I work with marketing and sales. I was working with operations, and everything started to improve. I taught the four Cs of accountability to many of my employees, and as they started to live it, their lives improved. Their marriage has improved. They lost weight, and everything started to improve. This business that was 7 million in size grew to 12 million, then 25 million, all the way up to 43 million dollars in about three years. And I started to think very highly of myself, thinking I'm the greatest executive that's ever lived. I have a program. I have a good team. I can't be stopped.

But then, as the world works and as God works, we are always reminded of how frail life can be. My wife at that time was suddenly diagnosed with thyroid cancer. We had our beautiful three kids under the age of 6 and this came as a shock. You can imagine that I was pretty upset in general. I don't smoke. I don't swear. And my wife has cancer? That doesn't seem very fair. But regardless, we got through. The next two years were tough as we managed different surgeries and radiation. But as we did, everything worked out, and I'll never forget talking to my wife and telling her, you know, the only thing that got us through the last two years was accountability and doing what we'd say we're going to do. And I told her further, I wouldn't wish these two years on my worst enemy. At the same time, I wish everybody could have it, because coming out of this, I'm realizing I'm a better executive, a better leader, a better manager, a better son, a better husband, a better father.

Everything is better because we went through this. During those hard two years, I also completed my MBA while also growing a business. I was working constantly, but I was rewarded plaintively for all the lessons that I learned. And it was shortly after our battle with her cancer that the company I was with started to make some different decisions. The CEO was going to be moving away and doing some philanthropic work, and he had told me he was into some discussions about moving me to president. Here were all my dreams to possibly be a 30-year-old president of a 50-million-dollar company before the age of 30. But I don't know if you've ever been faced with a choice where your brain said do one thing, but your heart said do something else. But we knew that company was not the fit for me anymore, and so we made a tough decision and left that business. Even though all the opportunities were in front of me. As we left, we decided to make a different focus, our approach, and how we worked as a family, always keeping in mind the purpose and goal. I joined a start-up as the Chief Operating Officer and an owner. They had five employees at the time, and we were losing money every hour that we were open. But I wasn't worried because I'm the savior, right? I could fix any company, as I'm the greatest executive ever. Well, after 90 days, I'd made it worse. The business was struggling more than it ever had been. We were spending more money than we ever had, and I was starting to doubt. Could I make this work?

One day, on my way home from work, I called my amazing wife and talked to her. I complained about everything. This job is awful. The team is awful. We have no clients. I should have never left that other business when I had a budget and travel budget and a big salary. I made a huge mistake. And my beautiful wife, being the partner that she has, responded. She said, "Are you done complaining? Because I'm sick of it. Lucky for you, I didn't marry a loser. You've been complaining about this job for weeks, and I'm starting to wonder if you are the problem. From now on, only call me when you're going to talk about the solutions. Only call me when you're going to talk about the four Cs." Then she hung up the phone. That is my amazing wife. She reminded me of what I already knew. She reminded me of the journey I had already been on, and I could do so much more.

Shortly after that, I changed. I worked again, and I started to use her as a coach and confidant and have her help me see things differently to grow the business. I started to focus on the four Cs every single day. And as I did, miraculous things happen once again. That business that was losing money every hour we were open, a year and a half later, we crossed 15 million, later we would be on the Inc 5000 twice. All of that because of that phone call with my wife and her reminding me of what I already knew. I was fortunate enough, because of our growth, to win some awards and recognition for entrepreneurship.

The world started to be open with different opportunities. My wife, because of her health, we knew we didn't want to stay in Utah, where it was very cold in the winters, so we found an opportunity to join a company in Florida. And our time in Florida has been amazing. For the last roughly eight years, we have spent time working and running call centers for big companies like State Farm and Allstate. I ran 3000 see call centers in Jamaica, South Africa, and Guatemala as I ran the Amazon account. Later, I joined a financial services company in Jacksonville, Florida, where I was the owner and chief revenue officer. I remember when I joined, we were 36 million in size with the goal of getting to 50 million in three years, which we missed because we were able to get 90 million in three years. The reason for the accelerated growth is that I knew what I was doing. I stepped right in, and I put the four Cs of accountability on the wall. I got everybody to learn and remember every day. As we focused on the four Cs, miraculous things happened again. And it was during that time that Forbes had reached out to me and brought me on as a contributor. They even put the four Cs of accountability on their podcast and published it. As they did those things, people started to reach out to me and say, "Don, how can I work with you? How can I do what you've done with your career and your businesses?"

And that's when my amazing wife, who is the hero of this whole story, told me to start my own business and start working with people and coaches, and executives all over the country and the world. That we did. We started the business Accountability Now, and since 2018, we have had over 36 clients in seven different countries. We've worked with over 1100 clients in that time. Now, my favorite thing to do is to wake up in the morning and work with (insert customers' names).

That is my hero's journey. I made little edits here and there as I imagine I'm on a call with a person as I try to relate it to them. But you can see how it follows a very similar structure to the origin story. As you share that story and nothing more, don't list out or break out this big, long list of accomplishments. Tell it in a narrative form in order to bring them along. As you do that, people will want to connect with you because they will see themselves in the journey. They will see themselves in your shorts. That's the key to this scene.

Your practical guide is to take the templates above and write out your origin story. You should be able to have this part memorized word for word. You should know your origin story, frontwards and backwards, like a script. Just like we referenced in other chapters. Know your story, connect with your people and bring them in.

CHAPTER 16

SCENE IV – THE OFFER AND CLOSE

At this point in the script, you should have generated enough emotion from the potential prospect. You should have understood their emotional trigger or their *rock* to get them on the phone. You should have a grasp of their emotional connection to their hopes and dreams, and ultimately what they want to get out of coaching. You should have fulfilled one of their primary needs by clearly demonstrating listening. And now you should have evoked more emotion by sharing with them your hero's journey/origin story so that they can see themselves in your adventure. If you've done all of these things, you are now ready to make an offer and close your transaction.

So, congratulations on getting this far. This is typically where coaches fall off the map because you're going to describe your program, create your offer, and ask for the service. This is where you get a little shaky because you start to talk about money. So many coaches come from a mindset where they believe that they don't want to talk about money. *Money's awkward, money's hard, money's difficult.* And they, in some ways, have a hard time justifying their fees or their cost of service.

To help you with that, before we even go into the script, I want you to go through a simple exercise with me. I want you to imagine one of the clients that you typically help. This goes back to the earlier exercises around understanding your demographic and where they congregate, and your undeniable authority. If you've considered the person that you helped, I want you to think in your head and even just write down what you've typically helped them with. So, let's take for instance you are a career coach, an example of somebody that you've helped build their self-esteem through different coaching exercises as well as helped them establish good habits that build their career. As you've done that over six months, and they're very confident, and they feel very focused in their time management skills, now they're in a position to make more money. Now, they're in a position to be kinder to their family. Now they're in a position to feel better about themselves and do more work in their community, and in their church. If somebody through your work got a raise, let's say, maybe 10%, what would that produce over the lifetime of their service? If they got a 10% raise, maybe from \$80,000 to \$90,000 which is a little more than ten percent, and they had that raise for the next 30 years. Is it worth that they spend \$5000 on you versus the \$300,000 extra that they made? What about spending more time at home, or with their family? They're more present, and the better relationship they have with their child made for a positive improvement in the child's life. That is because their parents are invested in them. Is that type of change worth the five or six thousand dollars that you might charge? Absolutely, it is.

If you're struggling to justify the value or the money that you charge, I want you to take time to read your positive testimonials or take time to put a value on what it takes to be a good parent or raise good children, or reaching your potential in your career. What is that worth? It's amazing what it's worth. It's incredible, and your fees are just for finding it.

As we say in our coaching academy all the time, you should raise your fees. You should raise your fees! I know people hear that and they freak out. But if you would simply raise your fees, it helps you sell better and work harder as a coach. When you don't charge very much for your coaching services, when your calls sell at bottom-of-the-barrel prices, your ability to perform great work in your focus goes down. I know some of you believe differently and believe that you coach great, regardless if you're charging high or not, but the data would show otherwise.

Now let's jump into the script and talk about exactly how to position your coaching program and your offer. In the script, I transitioned from the hero's journey to offer and close. It goes like this:

Mr. Jones, that's my story. If you don't have any questions, I'd love to talk to you now about how easy it is to invest and get started with my program. How does that sound?

I'm going to get a yes or no. That yes or no is a small level of permission that they're giving you to move on. It also shows that they're listening and that they're ready. That's why you can't miss these little transition statements. Your offer and your close work in a simple way. The first part is, I want you to describe your program and the way that it works with the prices. Then you'll bring out your offer and you're close.

A little note on programs and hourly buckets. If you attend any renowned or certified practitioners' school, they will teach you to sell packages of sessions. So, sell to some customers. You can buy 10 sessions or 5 sessions or just 1 session. Then people will buy those sessions, and then you get paid per session, or you might build them for all 10. Now it's on for them to fill all 10 sessions or 5 or 1.

Let me explain to you the downside of that method. When you do that, firstly, you'd be making a lot of assumptions that in 10 sessions, you will be able to solve any problem. Secondly, it puts all the accountability for booking time on your client, and regularly, they will book the first 3 or 4 or 5 sessions. Then they will slowly start to disappear as it starts to work or not.

Now you're spent trying to find somebody for those final 5 sessions before you can go after a renewal. And by the way, that's also the third problem of these buckets. It creates a sense of 'I have to get a renewal'. You're in an end date and that will force your efforts, build up stress, and keep you on the treadmill.

I subscribe to *the retainer model*. This is what I teach regularly to thousands of coaches all over the world. When you talk about your programs, it's not numbers per session. It's numbers per week; number of visits per week, or per month. And that just changes the price, but you're going to build them a flat amount every four weeks regardless. Some of you might ask and have caught that it said 4 weeks. Why 4 weeks? This is a simple financial maths problem. If I build once a month, and I subscribe them into my program once a month, I know there are only 12 billing periods a year. If I subscribe to them every four weeks, I know there are 13 4-week periods in a year. So, if I'm coaching someone every week, I might as well get paid for it. If I'm coaching somebody every other week, I might as well get paid for it. Where this doesn't apply is on the once every month package that you might have. That would go to 12 billing cycles. You will now make one extra 4-week period a year for all of your clients when signing them up. That is thinking like a business owner if I'm going to quote earlier chapters.

Now let's talk about your program and your offer. As we've talked about earlier, you should come into this call equipped with a program that you're enrolling them into. Don't talk about coaching and don't fall into that word trap. Speak generally about what coaching is and what you're going to do. I want you to simplify it to a three-step program the best that you can. This is called using the *Weight Watchers model*.

The *Weight Watchers*, if you're familiar with it, is one of the world's largest and longest successful weight loss programs. They have been around; I believe since the 1980s. Their method has changed over the years through a point system and accountability. But what I'm referring to is the way that they market. You also see this a lot on television with different fitness programs, diet pills, etc. The Weight Watchers model shows a before picture, which will typically have a person not at their best, and always overweight. The pictures as well are usually grainy and dark. It looks very scary. Then you will see the after picture. The after picture has them very thin and attractive, always smiling, and the lighting is so much better. That's what we'll say is before and after, and sometimes it might show the number of pounds that they lost. You're going to do a similar technique in your coaching program, but you're going to mirror off of what you're told in the *rock* and *gem* scene.

So, your program will be start off like:

My program is called (you name your program; mine's called 'The Four Cs of Accountability'). In that program, we typically work with people just like yourself who are experiencing this rock, this rock, this rock. Then I speak to all that. Then, depending upon how often we want to meet and how fast you want to see results, I will take you through a series of exercises and sessions where we progressively build tools and structures to combat (insert rock). That's step two where we diagnose and understand your problem and we build a blueprint per success. Then step three, after six months or a year, you will come out the other side, and this is what we typically see (insert gem, insert testimonial, insert gem, insert testimonial). And that's what I see for you. Mr. Jones, being in this coaching industry for as long as I have, this is the one program I would recommend you to be in. Well, I want to help out and figure out how often we want to meet."

Now, a little time out from the script. This is where I'm going to talk about the different packages or programs that they can enroll into. And this next statement is very important, I will say:

And this is my favorite part to talk about. Because of the way my program works, I can work with almost any budget.

As an important statement, because if you've done a great job for *rock* and *gem*, and scene one or listening well, and fulfilled that need. Then moved on to do well with scene two, and created a great emotional connection through your hero's journey and scene three, the person will start to have a little bit of doubt that they can afford this service. There are three issues of doubt that people have. They will doubt that this program won't work for them, that they're probably too different. They could doubt the trustworthiness of the program and the results. Or that the program is too expensive, and they can't afford it. Right here is where you're going to knock all three of those issues down. So, when you say you can work with almost any budget, that is you knocking down that concern that they can't afford your coaching services.

Now, I moved back into the script. I have 3 different ways that I work with people, and it all depends upon how much they want to invest and how fast they want to see results. From the scripting, you'll notice how I'm putting the power of choice onto the prospect. I want them to feel empowered, to choose their adventure and their pathway forward.

Now, back to the script: *My first program...* This is where I'm going to describe my program. I'm going to demonstrate how I describe my program, but you can customize it for yourself.

My first program is my most intensive, highest rate of return program. I typically only work with business owners and CEOs, and we will meet every single week. For example, every Friday at 2:00. With that, this is the type of interaction you get. You get heavy focus on your goals, lots of accountability. We're going to check in all the time, and because of that, we see dramatic results. I'll give you an example (insert story about a positive testimonial that you have of somebody in that program)

Now, I'm going to engage in a technique called *the takeaway*, which helps generate higher attractiveness from your prospects. So, at the end of presenting that first program, I would say, *"Mr. Jones, this program, I love it. It's my most popular, but I'll be honest, I don't think it's for you. After everything you said to me in the beginning, I don't think you should choose this program. So, I take it off the table."*

Continuing, I'll talk about my next program. *"I have another program, which is for people that are brand new to coaching. They're still wondering, you know, is this even going to work for me? I don't want to make that big of a financial commitment. But I want to figure out if coaching works, this one is a fantastic program. And I have numerous clients that are in this. Let me tell you about (insert the testimony of somebody in that program). And now, Mr. Jones, after talking to you about this program, and after everything that you said, I'll be honest, I don't think that program is for you either. Let me tell you about my last program. I have a program where I meet with clients every other week, and you'd be surprised how fast that comes around. And through that meeting, we discussed only goals and targets. But we'd really fine-tune their blueprint of success so that you can (insert gem). This program, people mostly choose. For example, (I'm going to tell them a story about somebody in that program and the testimony of the results) That's the program. And after everything you said, Mr. Jones, talking about your history and where you want to go, I got to be honest, in my years in the business, I want to recommend this program. That's the one I know you should do to achieve (insert gem). I'll be honest, I'm really not in the coaching industry, I'm in the (insert gem) industry. That's what I do to help people."*

Now coming out from the script. I've just gone through the programs and the prices. Each one of those will have a price, and I've taken two away and centered on the one I want them to do. Feel free to customize your positioning of those three programs. Sometimes you do the premium one first, sometimes you do it last. All that genuinely based upon which one fits their needs the most.

As you wrap up that pitch. Now, you're going to go for the close. *"Mr. Jones, thank you for letting me talk to you about these programs. I believe this program is the one that works for you. Let me make it a little easier for you to make this decision."*

This is where you're going to introduce what's called an OTO or one-time offer. What makes it special to act now? I would say, *"Mr. Jones, what I'm trying to do is because I believe in so much of what I do. But I also really connected with what you said, and I feel like we could work well together. If you just started with this middle package for 6 months, I would be able to..."* And then you figure out your discount. You figure out your way to get them to act now. That's how you finish the sales call.

Now, before we move off of this offer and close, the top three responses that will come at that point are not 'I'm ready to sign'. That's not a way that works. Remember, these people are making a 5 to 7 thousand-dollar purchase over the phone. People don't just do that over the phone. I don't care how good you are at sales. They will most often say, "I need to think about it... I need to talk to my spouse about it." Those are the top two responses. When they do, don't combat this objection. This isn't even an objection; it's a stall. Don't fight it, lean into it, and say to them: *"Hey, that's great. I think you should talk to your spouse", or "Hey, I think that's great. You should think about it."*

The last thing I want you to do is to make a snap decision right now. Now I continue and say, *"What questions can I answer for you to help it be easier? What can I do to help you understand this better? Or what questions can I answer for you before you go talk to your spouse?"*

And the last piece is to never get off the phone without the next call scheduled. If they have to go, if they're ready to leave and say, *"No, I'm going to think about it, but this is great."* I will then make sure I have another follow-up call scheduled. I will say, *"Well, what if we meet again on Tuesday at 1:00? I'll just give you a quick call to check in."* And if they say yes, I will send them the calendar invite right then and have it booked on their calendar.

When you don't have a calendar invite at the end of the call, all you're doing is chasing them now. That is so much of a business owner and salesperson's work. They chase. Don't do that to yourself. Has it booked, have it scheduled, so you go from appointment to appointment?

We're going to talk more about this in the next chapter, but it's important to emphasize now. That it is offering and selling coaching. As you get that down and as you master that, you will have the entire scripting process completed.

Here's your exercise. Write down the three versions of your program. What are the monthly costs? What are the benefits, and what are the stories and testimonials with each program? This is so you can have it ready when you start to close.

CHAPTER 17

OBJECTIONS AND FOLLOW UP

If you've done every part of the script to this point, you will have set yourself up for the most success possible. As I finished the last chapter, I talked about this, but it's important to reiterate that most people will not be in a position to buy right now over the phone.

Your coaching program on an annualized basis could cost anywhere between 8 to 15 thousand dollars, and perhaps more. So, for someone to be able to make an 8 to 15 thousand-dollar purchase after one conversation is very rare. If you think of many cars available today, that price would be similar. Do people buy a car over the phone? Of course, you know, first and foremost, that people are going to need to think about it, and need to talk about it with a spouse, and need to get their finances in order. As I've mentioned in previous chapters, most people have no idea what coaching is, let alone how much coaching costs. They might have a predisposed understanding that coaching costs very cheap, maybe a hundred dollars a month. And they would be shocked at the cost that the services can provide, especially when they don't believe they're getting a therapist who's been certified.

I've talked at the very beginning about the difference of certifications between coaching in the practitioner sense and people in the medical field, and the low barriers of entry. For this reason and many others, people believe coaching should be much lower cost than it is. That's why most people will have to think about it before they can sign the dotted line and give you a credit card. So, as the person says, 'I need to think about it', you should be expecting that objection, handle it correctly (like we talked about previously), and then move into what's called your *follow-up cadence*.

Remember, 80% of all salespeople never follow-up, nor call their potential clients, nor stay in front of them. They have their initial call, and then they let them go. Follow-up is where the rubber meets the road. Follow-up is where you bring on clients. Follow-up is where you make all the difference.

Throughout this book, we've talked about the importance of creating a sales system, and this is the part that makes it all come together. The scripting is vitally important, as is the appointment setting, and all the previous foundational work around undeniable authority. But all of that work will go in vain if you don't have a follow-up system that you use every single time.

Below is what I call the coaches follow-up playbook. I'll walk you through each section of that playbook, how it works and what it will do for you. And as we go through the playbook, I want you to understand that you can customize each portion of it to work for you personally and for your demographic. The key to all follow-ups is using variety and making sure that you're never the same thing every time, so the people could become numb or calloused to you, as we talked about in the initial prospecting.

As I finish the call (we've talked about this before), never getting off the call without having the next call scheduled. This is important because having it scheduled keeps them on the calendar and keeps accountability to a point where the two of you can talk together without keeping it scheduled. It's not real. This is something I want you to remember and write down in your coaching practice. If it's not on the calendar, it's not real. I have to be booked with them to keep this going forward. I always have to have something on the calendar.

Before I move directly into the playbook, I just want to hit on a couple of objections that you'll often hear and exactly what to say. When somebody says that, 'I need to think about it', your first response is to agree with them to defuse any combativeness on the phone, and then help them answer any questions they need to think about it. I don't subscribe to the hard-selling approach and forcing your program on anyone. So, when they say, 'I need to think about it', my first response is 'I think that's a great idea'. Remember, it's very difficult to be frustrated with somebody when they're calm playing. When you tell somebody, their ideas are great ones, they will like you more.

Grant Cardone who's a sales trainer out of Miami, Florida teaches the principle of always agreeing. This was from his book, *Sell or Be Sold*. That concept is around when somebody has an objection the first week, what to do to begin defusing the objection is to agree with them on their perspective. It doesn't mean the customer is always right, and I'm sure it doesn't mean the prospect is always right. In fact, many times, they are wrong because they don't understand what they need. But by always agreeing with them and understanding their perspective, you defuse them and defuse the frustration and bring them closer to you. Now I'm not telling you in this book to be dishonest, you're not telling them that they're right and that you think they're making right decisions, you're telling them, 'I think something's a great idea if you do', or you're telling them that you understand their situation. That's very important, and it's also equally important to not add a *but* at the end of that. So, if you say, 'I agree, but...' or 'I understand, but...', that is still creating disagreement on the phone. You need to have an agreement to resolve it. When somebody says that, 'I need to think about it', you agree first, and then you defuse it. 'What questions can I answer for you while you're thinking about... how can I make this easier when you try to flush out any concerns they may have', and have that dialogue. Then, as you're wrapping up the call, book a follow-up call on the calendar. Make sure they receive it in their email, so you can finally let them go.

Another objection that will come up a lot is 'I need to speak to my spouse'. You would begin with the same method and say, *"I think that's a great idea. I would never make this type of purchase without talking to my spouse. What questions can I answer for you while you're talking to your spouse? Or even better, would it be easier if the three of us talked? Because if you're like me, I know when I talk to my wife, I don't do very well. I'd much rather have a direct meeting with you, or she can ask you a question."*

That's how I would respond. That's what I would do. And then once you fill that out, I booked the next call.

When you have people say that price is too much, I'm going to give you the one question response that defuses this objection every time. Somebody says, 'this is too much'. I say, *"Hey, I understand. What if that wasn't a problem? What if I found a way to make it work price-wise? Would we be able to sign up today?"*

Notice what I did. This is called flushing out the objection. You will hear price a lot of the time. But remember this, it is almost always never price. By using this simple response, you're taking away all the ammunition on their concern with a price, and saying you will do whatever it takes to work with them. *Is that all it takes? Can we sign today?* And if they still started saying, *"No, I don't know if I'm going to sign today..."* or *"I don't know. I still have some concerns..."* Now you'll know it wasn't priced, it's something else, and you need to flush that out. So, you'll go back and answer questions and solve their problem. In a perfect scenario, the person will want to think about it, and you will agree and book the follow-up call.

Now I'm going to walk you through the follow-up playbook of what to do and when. Remember, when there is a lack of variety, your prospective clients become more callous to your efforts, and it becomes easier to ignore you. Be creative, be different, be persistent and always be yourself.

The first step in the playbook is on Day Zero, meaning right after this call ends. Within the first five minutes, send them this text: *Thank you so much for your time (first name). Call me into yourself if you have any questions.* And on Day Zero in that first hour, respond one more time: *Hey, thanks again. It was an opportunity to chat with you. I'm excited about our conversation.* That's it. You notice you did two steps of gratitude without any pitching or selling. People can't help but like people that are gracious.

Then on Day One, within 24 hours, this is called the idea text. You will say: *Hey Joe, I have a great idea. Give me a call back when you have some time.* Or you can say: *Text me back when you have some time.* And now you're going to just add an idea to something that they're working on when they respond. It's not about selling or closing a deal, it's just about engagement.

Then on Day Two, you're going to send them this email: *Hey, I just want to make sure I've got your address correctly because I usually do a "Thank You" card to everybody that I speak to.* You could email them and confirm their address. Again, it's about engagement. It's about keeping them close.

On Day Three, if you haven't had the appointment yet, and you're worried he might be ghosting you, you're going to send them a video text. You'll take your phone, record yourself, and send it over. The best videos are the ones that are raw and authentic. So, after you've just done a workout or a run outside or something, throw up your phone and just let them know: *Hey, I just finished a workout. I'm thinking about our conversation. Hope to talk to you soon.* It's really simple with lots of variety.

On Day Four, you're going to take a rest.

Day Five is when you send something creative. I typically use humor to be creative. I will put them on the cover of Forbes Magazine, or I will send them a funny movie poster redone to mirror our conversation. I, one time, sent a client a remade poster of the *Titanic* movie poster, where there were Jack and Rose on the front of the boat, and I superimposed his face on Jack and my face on Rose. Then I said 'this could be us' with the exception, 'our boat won't sink'. With lots of humor, lots of creativity, it goes a long way.

I will then give it a rest until Day Nine. On Day Nine, I will send them a piece of content like an article that has to do with her industry, or an article that has something to do with what they're working on. I'll send it to them via email and let them know. Something like this: *"I'm sorry, I was reading up on this from our last conversation, and just got my head spinning around our conversation. Hope to talk to you soon."*

Then on Day Fourteen, I will do another final text asking this question: *Have you given up? Have you given up on coaching?* And I'll wait for the response. I'll also send an email on that. Throughout that entire process of texts and emails, I'll be calling on the same days.

Things to remember about the different follow-up tools that you can use. You can use a phone call which has high value, (always have a reason for the call) but you always have to make sure you have a good attitude, and you're super excited. You can use text, which they can respond to very quickly. They can understand what you're sending very quickly. It's quick and easy. You can use email, which typically only has a 16% open rate, and it's your least likely to get through to them. But email has its advantages because, you know, some people prefer to communicate via email, but it's showing the combination effort. You can use cell phone video messages, which show your personality and show who you are, that you're a genuine person. You can also use social media to reach out, messaging them on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, or more. Remember your customers are continuing to express that they want to communicate via their social channels more than anything else. And you can also send handwritten cards, notes, letters to try to bring them over the top.

Remember that when you get a lead, and you've taken him through the coaching call and this process, you need to do everything you can to set the initial appointment. Nothing happens without the first appointment. Then plan your day built around the idea of being able to call prospects and also follow up. Have that baked into your schedule because without follow-up, nothing occurs. That's how you bring it home. That is the most important part of this entire follow-up process. Sticking to this system regularly will lead to more success.

This whole book is about the sales process that I used to train 1100 coaches all over the world. Every coach understands that the follow-up cadence is where you make the difference. You can be great at scripting, you can be great at marketing, but if you aren't following up discipline, you lose sales and slip through the cracks.

CHAPTER 18

RENEWALS AND REFERRALS

As I built my coaching practice, I started to find some relatively good levels of success because I followed all of these teachings. I revamped my undeniable authority. I created a program and I started to line up with different lead sources that could get me opportunities, even small ones, regularly. Then I input an appointment setting system with a hook to get them on the phone. I had my script mastered, and my follow-up cadence system built and implemented. I was starting to find some success.

Everything I talk to you about are things that I do today regularly, and I love being successful. It is one of my favorite quotes from Tony Robbins, where he said, "there's nothing more addicting than progress." That could progress in your life or in your business, and at this point, I was feeling both. My little coaching practice, which only hit \$20,000 in the first year, was on pace to do \$80,000, maybe \$90,000 in its second year. I was excited and so thrilled with the efforts that I had made. But as I was making this progress, something happened that I did not expect. I started to get tired. I started to get overwhelmed by the sheer amount of prospecting and follow-ups I was having to do, as well as the lead costs that I was paying for just to maintain my level of success. It was frustrating. It was disheartening. It was discouraging, to say the least. I realized with everything that I've built, there had to be a better way to continue to scale the practice. And that's where I went to the concept of *renewals and referrals*.

When you sign a client to a 6-months or a 12-month contract, as I've mentioned before, you're baking in a frustrating conversation of renewals. In the early days of my practice before I was using the retainer model, a lot of my early clients had to be renewed regularly. Not to mention, I was losing clients just like anybody normally would, even though I was a good coach. That's where I started to understand how renewals worked. Renewals do not occur at the date of your last session. Those of you that have baked in an end date, maybe in six months, or maybe after ten sessions, you're waiting until the last session to ask for the renewal. I did that as well, and I had a very low conversion rate. Understand that most people that are making budgetary decisions will make a decision of a thousand dollars, usually 45 to 60 days in advance. So, if you're waiting till the very last session to ask them to renew and buy more sessions, or buy another six months of your program, chances are they've already allocated their personal budget. They've known the session was done, and they're already spending their money somewhere else.

That's why I changed how I asked for renewals for those clients that still had renewals. And every once in a while, I had them. I will ask for the renewal 60 days before the engagement ends. I will start to talk to them about when we work together in the next phase, when we go through these next pieces and the next goal, and I will start to plant the seeds around continuing to work together as if it's already been done. Then around the 45-day mark, I will say to them: *"Hey, just so I can get everything lined up, I want to continue moving into the next phase. I'm going to send you the agreement, so we can just keep moving forward. I appreciate all the work..."* I'm going to propose it in a very simple and already completed way. That is called positive, assumptive closing. Using an assumptive tone in asking for the renewal in advance time gives you a significantly higher likelihood that you're going to close this renewal and continue to move forward. Don't fall into the trap of waiting for them to bring it up and just hoping that they renew. They have already allocated that budget, I promise you. I found, as I changed, that my renewals went to nearly 80%.

In addition to the renewals is the concept of referrals. This is where my practice started to take off because in time, I was paying for all my leads, either through my own lead generation from Google or LinkedIn or referral sites like Bark, Thumbtack, or NuMi. So, every lead had a very high cost to it. I knew from my days in sales that the best type of lead is and the ones that closed the most were referrals. But what I didn't have was a system of asking for referrals. So, what I would do is find the highest emotional engagement point after I've been with a client for over a month. I look for them to have that breakthrough session with me where they're extremely thankful emotionally for what we talked about. When I see that positive emotion at the end of the call, I'm going to take off my coaching hat and begin thinking and acting and talking like a business owner, because I'm going to ask for the referral.

So, I always follow this exact script at the end of the coaching session. I would say, *"Mr. Jones, thank you so much for the call today. I don't know about you, but I think it was a great call, and I think we accomplished a lot. What do you think?"*

I'm going to get him to reaffirm his breakthrough and how great the call was.

Then back to me: *"Man, that's awesome. I'm super excited about that. I wanted to just talk to you about one more thing before we jump off the call if that's okay."* And then I'll get their positive 'yes'.

Back to me again: *"As you know, I'm a small business owner, and I'm building this coaching practice all on my own. The number one way that I grow the business is through word of mouth and referrals. You've just seen the big breakthrough you've had today. Who do you know that would be a great benefit to have the same type of breakers that you're having? And before you answer, I want to let you know, I heavily incentivize referrals because they're so great for me. So, anybody that you send me that comes on board, you'll also get the same discount of whatever they sign up for against your monthly total."*

Now, you see what I've done? I've incentivized them to get free coaching by just referring people over to me. That's very important because even though I then lose cash in the first month of engagement, I can get people to stay with me on average for 12 months or longer. So, it was more than worth the referral. It was the best decision they ever made, and I ever made. To get it, I started to use this system consistently, and I found one out of every four clients would give me a referral that would sign. That means, once I got to 4 paying clients, I've got 5. And once I got 8 paying clients, I got 10. And once I got to 12 paying clients, I've actually got 15. That math continued to work month over month without fail.

That's where my practice went from that \$80,000, all the way up to a quarter-million dollars and a half million dollars, and more because I continued on my process of lead generation and added in a system of renewals and referrals. By following the system, I started to scale exponentially to the point where I couldn't keep up, and I had to hire help to help me manage it all, which I have to this day.

The last piece I want to cover in this chapter regarding renewals and referrals is the down-sell of group coaching. So many times, as coaches, you start out doing time for money, one-on-one coaching. As your practice starts to get bigger, you get tired. This is because your whole day is booked with coaching sessions, and you don't find enough time to prospect or to follow up and how you practise stalls. That's where I would want you to create more time in your schedule, so you can stick to those consistent sales activities as well as get a breather every once in a while. But in addition, when you're only selling one main product, or even though there are three versions of it with one-on-one coaching, it is very difficult to down-sell and have a growth-oriented product that frees up your time for money. What I'm talking about is having a group coaching program. You should have a program that every single one of your clients gets to get into once they've decided one-on-one coaching is no longer for them, or they may have graduated (as you say). You have an opportunity to move every single person into a monthly session for a very low cost.

I have five group coaching programs going on currently, and some of them range from \$47 to \$497 a month. But all of them are one call a month when we meet, talk and discuss everything. I normally catch up on my coaching program, but we do it in a group format. Initially, every one of these programs lost money because I would only have 1 or 2 or 3 people in there. But then, as that group of 3 grew to 10 and 20 and 30, and all of them paying \$47 a month, it became a great piece of cash flow for me that I can move every client into. And for \$47 a month, they're getting high value on a once-a-month call. That continues to grow their practice and gives me cash flow into my practice.

As you build out your system of referrals, renewals, and a down-sell of group coaching, you'll be protected, and you'll be able to scale your practice.

Your practical exercise is this. Number one, write out your renewal and referral scripts, and your referral offers (what you're going to give somebody for giving you the referral), and practise it. Remember, 92% of people have said they will give a referral if merely asked. Take advantage of that nine out of ten percentage.

Lastly, I want you to describe and write out your group coaching program. What's the cost going to be? How often will you meet? How will you deliver it? By creating the group coaching program, you will have a very successful down-sell that will level up the cash flow of your practice and help you get through the lean times consistently.

CHAPTER 19

THE GULF STREAM EFFECT AND PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

My practice finally started to grow. I was over six figures and I started to find a system that was proven consistently successful. I had good lead sources coming in because I had taken the time to do my undeniable authority, and because I took the time to understand who my true demographic was. I had consistent appointments from those lead generation services, because I had a great hook with my four Cs of accountability e-book. With that, I was able to get appointments regularly. I followed my appointment setting system without fail. My close rate ended up being consistently around 40% because I used my magic coaching script, including the follow-ups, and I brought my deals home. When people needed to renew, I knew how to rebut it if they didn't, and I could down-sell them into my group coaching programs.

Everything started to really work until it didn't. I forgot one of the most important things about running a business. Years before when I was in my first entrepreneurship journey, a digital marketing agency in Salt Lake City, Utah. I was, for the most part, a solo entrepreneur. Even though I had a business partner in the business, he was a serial entrepreneur, and always off doing his next venture. In fact, at one point during our time together, he moved away to Colorado for nearly a year to be a part of an entrepreneurship accelerator program. I was left to run the business all alone, and doing things on your own can be very difficult. In Christian theology, you will hear the line from the early portions of the Bible where it says it is not good for man to be alone. As much as I believe this to be a reflection of the importance of marriage and family, it's also important to us as individuals. Anytime you do something on your own or solo, it is a lonely affair.

Think about the word *solo* for a second. It just means that you do it with no one else. And it can always be difficult to motivate, drive and build yourself up all alone every single day. This is hard not just for me, or maybe yourself, but it's hard for millions and millions of other people all over the world that particularly have a small business all on their own. How do you combat the loneliness, structure, frustration, and the never-ending treadmill that you're on? This is what I call the *Gulf Stream effect*.

The Gulf Stream is a water current that travels between Europe to the Americas, and it moves 4.8 billion cubic feet of water every second. Early sailors in the origins of the American continent knew that to travel this great distance, it was dependent upon them riding the Gulf Stream. This has been a well-documented current and continues to be a navigation point for cruise liners and other ships to this day. The reason I use that as a metaphor is that to be a successful solopreneur, you need something that pulls you and pushes you along. You need something that pulls you with such force and ferocity that you don't have time to think, you just do it. This is how I created the Gulf Stream effect in my life.

As I plan out my year every December, I look for 4 conferences in a year. One in each quarter. Each one of these are not just regular conferences. These would be conferences about my trade, conferences about motivation, conferences about self-development, and more. Now, typically I pick one that is pure entertainment. And let's be honest, my pure entertainment conference is usually in August when I go to a Star Trek conference because I'm an absolute Trekkie nerd.

As I plan out each of the 4 conferences, I will pre-book my attendance, pre-book my hotel, and pre-booked my flights if I can. This has still been an okay practice, even amidst COVID. After doing that, I know I have 4 important events on the calendar. I know that when I attend them, I will leave highly motivated, highly engaged, and highly excited to go after my goals. I will typically attend one of my most motivational and positive conferences in the first quarter. In the second quarter, I'll do a similar one, but maybe it'll be more marketing-focused. Third quarter, I'll do a conference that is pure entertainment like the Star Trek conference. And then the fourth quarter, it will be some sort of strategy conference, or something like that. But all 4 of those create motivation and power in my life. When I attend each one, I always walk away with new insights, and a new level of motivation that push me forward. That's a key part of the Gulfstream effect. It drives me the entire year.

Secondly, in addition to putting conferences in your life, you would find new ways to also invest in yourself throughout the year. No coach can be a coach if they don't have a coach. I'm going to say that again and I want to make sure it's coming through clear. No coach can be a coach unless they have a coach. Reason I say that is that it's very similar to why you would never hire a fitness trainer that wasn't physically fit. It's important. You can't sell the Kool-Aid without drinking it. Many of you, as you're reading this, don't have a coach currently. You're saying the things that your prospects are saying to you. You're saying things like, 'well, it's too expensive' or 'I don't have time' or 'it's not worth it'. If you believe those things, I promise you, it'll come through in the way you sell coaching. You have to have somebody helping you and holding you accountable to further drive your activities to be a successful coach.

To this day, I have a coach. She's one of the most talented female entrepreneurs I've ever met. I meet with her every single week without fail. Sometimes it's very uncomfortable. Sometimes it's difficult because I'm traveling, but I meet with her because I believe in coaching and sell coaching. I believe in my product so much that I invest in it for myself. That's an important aspect to wrestle with your frustration with sales. If you believe in coaching so much and believe in what you do, then you would do it for yourself, and you wouldn't stop unless you could afford it. You would find a way to make it work.

So, invest in yourself. Have a coach that can drive you and your business. Remember the biological law of *entropy*. Entropy means anything left unto itself in a constant state of decay. You can't be in a constant state of decay. You have to be working with somebody to make you better. Otherwise, you and your business are going to continue to shrink and get down. As I built my gulfstream with the conferences, and had a coach keep me accountable, I started to achieve amazing things. My practice continued to grow. I've created large-scale partnerships with some of the largest coaching organizations in the world. In addition, I have been able to create large programs and businesses and help them grow from \$200,000 to 6 million. From 12 million to 18 million. I had helped startup businesses that were non-existent. And probably my proudest achievement is I've helped over 1100 coaches start and grow the practice, and this is just the beginning. The same thing could occur for you. The same concepts and ideas can work for you.

I want to speak to you about one big difference. All of these have to do with time. You know, for example, 168 hours in the week doesn't change for you, or me, or the President of the United States, or your neighbor or your sister-in-law. All of us have the same hours every week, no matter what. And there is nothing that you can do to change that. Your success will be determined by how you use those 168 hours. Are you using it to find your undeniable authority, to define your market to find out where they congregate, to build lead sources, to prospect and get leads on the phone with your hook, to sell coaching, and through a follow-up cadence bring them into completion? Is that what you're doing? Or are you spending that time wondering, hoping, getting another certification, etc. That's what your time management is about, how you choose to use those 168 hours. Nothing has been proven better than the 168 hours that can turn you into the richest person in the world, Jeff Bezos or Elon Musk, or at this time a homeless person with no prospects and opportunities. This is all because of how you choose to use your 168 hours.

If you can, I want you to imagine you receive the tree that was giving you printed money. Literally, this tree would grow one hundred dollar/Euro bills off of it. If you had this tree that was giving you an endless supply of money, would you take care of it? Of course, you would. You would do whatever it takes to take care of it. What if I told you that a tree had to have a very specific set of rules to take care of it? It had to have certain things to make it grow the best way. It had to have an exact amount of sunlight, and had to get an exact amount of water down to the ounce. Would you make sure you did it? Of course, you would do it every single day, because the tree is growing money. So why wouldn't you? What if you heard some people coming to play on that tree, or some kids walking by that tree and said, "All I ever wanted to do is play on that tree." Would you let them? Absolutely not. You would do whatever it takes to guard that tree and stop them from interacting with it. What if you heard somebody with a chainsaw within 100 yards of that tree? Would you let that person with the chainsaw come by your tree? No, you would stop them. You would do whatever it takes to protect your tree.

I want you to understand this principle, probably more than anything. Your time, that 168 hours, is your money tree. How you use it will make you successful. It has a particular set of rules that if you use it correctly, you will have a money tree. It will grow your endless money, and you will retrieve all the levels of success that you want. But if you let people come and play on your tree, or distract your tree, or prevent you from taking care of it the right way, or even come there with a chainsaw and cut limbs off the tree, it will not grow. It will not produce money, and you will always be wishing you were successful.

Don't stop yourself from being successful. Don't let limiting beliefs prevent you from being the best version of yourself, and the best coach you can be. You were destined to have a thriving practice. If you follow these steps in this program, this literal blueprint, your practice will grow, and it will grow as big as you want it to grow. Take the time to do it right, take the time to do the work, and take the time to invest in yourself.

Build the Gulf Stream and make it all stick.

There has never been a better time to be a coach. The personal and business coaching industry is estimated at two-billion-dollars and is growing exponentially every single year. The continual challenge for most coaches is not about how to be a great coach but rather how to build a great coaching practice. Now, as the world continues to face new struggles of unemployment rates, challenging economic crisis, businesses facing new global competitive landscapes, and people are trying for new quickfixes to help find their way into long-term solutions, the importance of building a systematic and thriving coaching practice has never been more important. In this eBook, I walk through your very own resource kit that will help you on your way to building your thriving coaching practice. This helps you from beginning to end so that you can get in touch with your potential customers and get hired. Without that process, you simply won't be able to change lives. In here we will walk through: • The Trick to Getting the first Consultation • The Magic Coaching Script (even for people who hate selling) • The Follow-Up Playbook We will take each of these in turn and you will have exercises for each to get you started. For now, strap in and, good luck. Building a coaching practice is hard but it is worth it when you do it right.

Sincerely,

Don N. Markland

CEO & Founder

Accountability Now, LLC

The trick behind getting consistent meetings is having a cadence that you follow *every single time*. Not some of the time. Not part of the time. Not most of the time. **Every Single Time**. Why does a pilot take the same route from New York to Los Angeles? Because that is not what's the only safest, but because it is what works. Are there spots within that route where they can make adjustments if needed? Sure. But do they stay consistent on the flight plan every single time? Yes. Find your cadence. Stick to it. You will win.

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10
Call 1	SMS 3 (meme)	Call 4	Call 5	REST	Call 6	Call 7	REST	Call 8	Call 9
Voicemail 1	Call 3	Voicemail 4	Voicemail 5		SMS 5	Voicemail 7		Voicemail 8	Voicemail 9
SMS 1	Voicemail 3		SMS 4		Voicemail 6	Social Media Engage		Social Media Engage	Email 5
Email 1	Email 3		Email 4		Social Media Message				SMS 6 (meme)
REST 1 HOUR			Social Media Connect						Social Media Message
Call 2									
Voicemail 2									
Email 2									
SMS 2									

Phone Calls:

These do not have to be a big stressful event. In fact, the most simple the better. Remember, you have the advantage here. You know you aren't a telemarketer or someone annoying. You have the upper hand.

In our cold outreach, we make it very simple and straight to the point.

Opening:

"Hi [first name], this is Don with Accountability Now. I was calling to make sure you got the email I sent regarding coaching. Did you see that email?"

That's it. Simple. This gets the prospect talking. It doesn't matter if they say yes or no. Your next response is ALWAYS the same.

"That's great (if Yes), or That's okay (if no), the reason I was reaching out was because you had filled out a form/reached out/connected with Noomii/Bark/etc. about coaching. I wanted to find time where you and I can talk about your ideas, plans, and find whatever the best fit is for you, even if it's not us. What does your schedule look like this afternoon? I have time at 2:00 or 6:00, which time works better for you?"

That's the basics of the script. Keep it simple. Book your appointment. Start the process.

To get the full list and sequence download it here: [DOWNLOAD 30 TOUCHPOINT SEQUENCE](#)

To get the full 6 EMAIL TEMPLATES, download it here: [DOWNLOAD EMAIL TEMPLATES](#)

Now that you've lined up the appointment you are ready to talk to them on the phone and close your client. This is where the magic happens which is why Noomii and Accountability Now have you covered with your very own *MAGIC COACHING SCRIPT*.

DOWNLOAD THE MAGIC COACHING SCRIPT HERE: [MAGIC COACHING SCRIPT](#)

The Follow-Up Playbook for Coaches

Remember, when there is a lack of variety, your prospective clients become calloused to your efforts and it becomes easier to ignore you. Be Creative. Be Different. Be Persistent. Be You.

Day Zero – 5 Minutes

Thanks for your time – Call me [insert Cell Number]

Day Zero – 1 Hour

“Thank you for the opportunity it was a pleasure working with you...”

- Any Questions?
- What did I miss?
- If everything was perfect?
- On a scale from one to ten?
- Who else would be involved in the process?

Day 1 – 24 Hours “The Idea”

“I have a great idea give me a call back.” (text, email or VM)

(to use if you don’t feel like the deal was closed)

Day 2 – 48 Hours

Text / Email / Call / VM

Want to be sure I have the right address I have something special to send you? Text me back at [Cell Phone]”

Day 3 – Video Text / Email

Hey [prospect first name], I wanted to put a face to the name. Give me a call back [cell phone]. Couldn't stop thinking about our conversation. My head is spinning with ideas. Let's talk soon.”

Be Persistent - "In the confrontation between the stream and the rock, the stream always wins; not through strength, but through perseverance."
- Buddha

Day 5 – CREATIVE

Look what I found on my desk this morning. That's what I see after we work together! (Go to this site: <https://funny.pho.to/forbes-magazine-cover/> and mockup their Forbes Cover (or a different magazine for their demographic and GEM).

Day 9 – CONTENT

Video Text & Social Message, (Find them on a social channel if no response and message them) and send them a relatively important piece of content relating to their industry or life you discussed "I was reading this earlier and couldn't help but think about our conversation. Hope you enjoy it. It's a pretty good read." You might also consider a personal video message discussing it.

Day 14 – HUMOR Video Message, Email, Phone

Hey, I'm worried you might be stuck under a hippopotamus in which case I should call animal control and get some help. If that's the case, text me back and I'll send someone over right away. I just want to help. Thanks so much, text me back at [cell phone], Thanks.

The Follow-Up Tools

Phone Call

- Add Value – Have a Reason for Call
- Have a good attitude
- Quickly make the call

Text

Texting vs. Phone Call

- Customers can consume data immediately
- Avoids direct communication
- Quick and easy – no time requirement
- Can send photos, images, links, videos
- Information overload via text

Email

- Least trustworthy
- Unreliable (spam filters)
- People overloaded with email
- The purpose of an email is not to close
- When using email, keep in mind these things:
- Keep them short

Cellphone Video Message (SELFIE)

- Low production cost
- High volume
- Tremendous

Social Media Reach Out

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- YouTube
- TikTok
- SnapChat
- WeChat
- WhatsApp

Social media isn't just about getting known, it's about you being able to get to know your clients and follow up on them. Follow, Like, Share their stuff.

Handwritten Letter

- Lost art
- Opportunity to differentiate yourself
- You can dominate in this area
- Takes time, but it's
EXTREMELY Personable

Now you've got your resource kit, you are ready.

With this kit, you can accomplish anything.

Approach prospecting your clients like you would any job. Follow these three concepts and you'll be fine:

- I. When you get a lead, do everything you can to set the initial appointment. Nothing happens without that first appointment.
- II. Plan your day with a full schedule. Block your calendar with appointments just like you would with work. Instead of meetings, time block it with activities (for example: from 9:00 – 9:30 I will reach out to the recruiters from Pearson and Block and Howard and Jackson to see about their openings; from 9:30 – 10:00; I will do a networking sprint on LinkedIn and make 20 connections with new companies in my specific job industry); and the like. Eliminate as much whitespace on your calendar as you can and fill your day with activities. Be busier than you've ever been with not busy work but productive HUNTING work.
- III. And last, have an accountability partner that you report your work to every day. If you can, hire a coach to get you through it. If you can't afford it, use someone else. But use someone that you can report your daily numbers and activities to so you know you're accountable and what you do every single day.

The hunt is a grind, but using this playbook, you'll find your way to victory every single time.

BE THE BEST COACH YOU CAN BE

And so, we come to the end of our journey together. Being the best coach isn't just about knowing the game. It's about having a system, a way to do things that works best for you and your team. It's about putting your energy into what really matters, like making sales, and not getting distracted by people who might not understand or agree with your methods. Remember, the path to success is often filled with bumps and twists. But by sticking to your system and believing in what you do, you can reach your goals. Keep your eyes on what's important, work hard, and don't let anyone slow you down. You've got the tools and the knowledge.

Now go out there and be the best coach you can be! And so, we come to the end of our journey together. Being the best coach isn't just about knowing the game. It's about having a system, a way to do things that works best for you and your team. It's about putting your energy into what really matters, like making sales, and not getting distracted by people who might not understand or agree with your methods. Remember, the path to success is often filled with bumps and twists. But by sticking to your system and believing in what you do, you can reach your goals. Keep your eyes on what's important, work hard, and don't let anyone slow you down. You've got the tools and the knowledge. Now go out there and be the best coach you can be!