

fly

Seven strategies to help
your coaching business

By David Savage

Leadership Coach & Founder of BeAmazing.co.nz & Zingabeam.com



Intro by David Savage

Before we start, I want to share with you my driver for creating this guide and the Be Amazing.co.nz and Zingabeam.com coaching directories - it's pretty simple ... **I WANT TO SEE MORE COACHES SUCCEED!**

I believe that Coaches are playing a pivotal role in creating a positive future. Every time you coach someone to improve their life, you're in someway improving the world, and I want to see that happen for my children and for yours!

Given the rapid progress we've seen over the last decade, I think coaching has a huge future. But I also see many coaches struggle to gain clients and build a sustainable business. So we need to rethink how to set-up and grow a coaching business.

These strategies are a gift based on my experience and the experience of other successful Coaches I know, and they work!

So be bold and be amazing!

Strategy One: Ask yourself the right question

“How do I get more clients?” This is the most common question I hear from Coaches I’ve coached. However, from being in business since 2003, I believe it’s the wrong question. The problem with this question, is that it focuses you on metrics, and away from being the best coach you can be - and being the best coach you can be is rocket fuel for your reputation - the fastest way to get people talking and grow your business.

A better question is, “How do I build a business based on contribution, passion and expertise?” and here’s why...

Contribution

Your contribution to your clients is **the excellence of your coaching**, the more you can focus on their success, the better their experience will be, and the more they’ll sing your praises to others. Every client you have who exceeds even their own expectations, becomes part of your marketing team.

Passion

What are you passionate about when it comes to coaching? Describe it fully and sing about it. When you’re passionate about something, it means you can sustain the effort you put into it - it’s also like renewable energy, and it’ll be there at times when business gets tough.

Expertise

Being an expert in a specific field instantly makes you more attractive as a Coach to others in that field. Beware! The age of the generalist coach is nearly at an end. It’s about credibility and trust. More on this in the next strategy!

Strategy Two: Niche

The age of the generalist coach is nearly over! If you look at any area of technology, service and business, advancement always comes through specialisation, and coaching is no different.

When I started out in 2003, it was fair to say that life coaching, business coaching and career coaching were all niches. Not any more! Here are some examples of new niches:

- Life Coaching for Executives
- Fitness Coaching for Golfers
- Money Coaching for Teens
- Career Coaching for Technology Experts
- Executive Coaching for Women
- Leadership Coaching for CEOs

And here's one I came across on the web....

- Escape the 9-5 - Coaching for enslaved-Managers

Of course, when you niche you narrow your market, but as a coach how many clients do you need? Niching is still likely to leave you with a BIG market place, plus compared to a generalist coach you become the preferred option. Let's weigh it up ... A finance company executive has two business cards on her table. On one card the Coach tags themselves as an 'Executive Coach' and on the other card the coach tags themselves 'Executive Coach for Finance Executives' - which card will have more immediate pull?

So what is your expertise, and from that what is your niche? It's a big step, but if expertise is important to you, then niching goes hand in hand.

Strategy Three: Engaging the Social Brain

We meet lots of people every week and some of them could potential become clients, but if this is to happen FREQUENTLY we need to understand our 'Social Brain'.

First impressions are massively important and we make an instant judgement of a person within a 20th of second from when we first see them. From that point forward you begin to build rapport (or not), and greater rapport = greater trust; vital for people to have confidence in you, if they're going to choose you as a Coach and share their lives with you.

So understand what rapport is, how it works as parts of our social-brain and make sure your own rapport building skills are finely tuned.

(Recommended reading: Daniel Golemans book, Social Intelligence.)

By the way, this is NOT a marketing strategy -it's about building the best and most genuine relationships possible, which will also inevitably benefit your business.

Strategy Four: Coach with Brilliance

I've mentioned it before, but it deserves it's own strategy because it's so important; ***Coach with Brilliance!***

70% of my clients come to me via word-of-mouth, reputation, referral and repeat custom, and there are three main factors in this:

Numbers

To have enough clients arriving via the grape-vine, you obviously need to have coached enough people to begin with - so for new coaches, there's a little chicken and egg here! However, it doesn't take long and every client you have increases your network significantly!

Connection

Never think of a previous client as someone in your history. Clients become connections and the depth of the relationship you forged with them when coaching them can continue to enrich both of your lives going forward.

I stay in touch with many of my clients because they are great people who inspire me. Plus, being connected means being 'in-mind' and trust me, your connections know people who would benefit from your coaching.

Brilliance

This is the BIG one - **Coach with Brilliance!** When you 'WOW' your clients, their success will permeate through their network along with your reputation. I think the single most effective marketing strategy you have is not actually a marketing strategy at all, but a desire to be the best Coach you can be for your clients.

Strategy Five: Create a Team of Heroes

Your team of Heroes are people in complimentary fields who know and love your work - you should feel the same about them too!

In my team I have a Neuromuscular Therapist (body-worker), two personal trainers, a sales executive, a features editor, a business writer and a HR Consultant - I love their work, they love mine.

Trust is essential. I respect my clients, so I'll only refer them to someone in my team if that person can genuinely help and not to just make a referral.

What happens is that your team becomes an extension of your brilliance and you grow their business and they grow yours.

I would also be cautious of setting up financial incentives for referrals. Without the right agreements in place, it can move the focus away from service, and towards generating additional revenue regardless of the clients actual needs.

In essence, having a team behind you can make a huge difference when it comes to growing your business, and huge difference to your clients too!

Strategy Six: Create an awesome website, smartly!

Not so long ago, an awesome website would cost \$5,000 or more, but even that much investment won't guarantee good visibility in search engine rankings.

However, now you can create your own website for less than \$200 using some of the free platforms available like wordpress - the bottom-line is that you do NOT need to pay LOTS of money for someone to build one for you!

Here are some rough figures:

- Wordpress site (works as a blog and/or website) - \$FREE
- Domain name - \$40
- Annual Hosting - \$60
- Off the shelf design (optional) - \$90
- Total to get started: \$190!

Plus, it's very easy to do and set-up, (Technology doesn't survive unless it's easy) and Wordpress have made it very very very easy!

However, there are two investments I would consider.

One) Sit down for a few hours and teach yourself Wordpress and how to integrate it with other social media sites. Even better, take on a Social Media Coach.

Two) As an alternative to buying a theme for your site, commission a web designer to design you an amazing look and feel to you Wordpress site. This isn't essential, but is money well spent!

Strategy Seven: Collaborative Blogging

Lots of Coaches are setting up blogs as a way of profiling their knowledge and expertise - this is GREAT! However, out of gazillions of web pages, you have just a few, so consider spreading the net!

1. Post your article on your own blog, but post it on other blogs too like www.beamazing.co.nz or www.zingabeam.com - Your article on your own blog may get a dozen views over a week, but on sites like these, it can get a dozens views within hours or even minutes. So don't hide your articles, place them in lots of places and link them back to your profile and/or website.
2. Don't just post, comment too - Find a number of blogs that relate to your nice and subscribe to their RSS feeds. That way you get notified of new articles on those blogs. Then, just a few times a week, go to these blogs, read a few posts and then add value by adding an intelligent comment - your comments will link back to your own website!
3. Hit the share button - if you read, listen or watch anything on the web that you like - share it on Facebook, Twitter and Linked-in - all roads lead back to you!

We're super-skimming surface here of Social Media - but once you know the road rules, it quick and simple!

Thank you!

I hope these strategies are useful. Remember ***You make it happen!***

Flight School for Coaches

There is much more that can be said about building a successful coaching business, so if you want to hear more about these strategies and be coached to apply them, then contact David Savage about his 'Flight School for Coaches' workshops.

sav@elevatecoaching.co.nz

www.savcentral.com