

Date: September 17, 2013

Host: Robyn Logan and Andrea Lee

Topic: Coach Street #6 – How to Get Your First Coaching Client

Welcome

Welcome to Coach Street, the premium podcast that brings you insider coaching conversations in the fast lane. When coaches need to shift gears, they come to the Coach Street podcast. Grab a coffee and buckle your seat belts as hosts Andrea Lee, from the Wealthy Thought Leader and Robyn Logan from Coach Campus, learn what drives the world's most successful coaches.

Introduction

Hi everyone. Welcome to Coach Street, Episode Six. I'm your host, Robyn Logan and your co-host is Andrea Lee. Hi Andrea, how are you?

Andrea: Hi, I'm good. For a second there I thought you were both of us.

Robyn: It sort of came out like that, didn't it? Let's move on with that. We could go back and re-record or we can just roll with the punches. What do you reckon?

Andrea: I love rolling.

Robyn: Perhaps rolling would also be good to tell people what this episode is. Episode Six is how to get your first coaching client. This is a great topic. Andrea and I decided to do this topic because for whatever reason, that first client can be a huge hurdle. Once that's achieved all sorts of things can happen.

I'm going to pass over to Andrea to do the intro for this episode.

Andrea: Having that first coaching client, it's really, really important to first establish that. By client we mean another human being, yeah? For most of us. I'd say 99.9% would mean another human being.

The reason I say that, even though it's kind of funny, is that it may seem very obvious but actually sometimes not all that clear that in order to get a client in some way we must interact with other human beings. Because coaches, for the most part are sometimes a little bit more introverted or perhaps not as outgoing in traditional ways—not all of us, just a generalization—we can forget. It's like, "Oh, I need a client. Let me sit in the corner and read a book and try and get a client."

Well, no. It's a human being we're after. You're not going to find them inside a book. So it doesn't matter in many ways how to come to the notice of another human being, but underlying all the different ways in which you can get a client that we're going to go over today is that we must increase the amount of time and interaction we have with other human beings. That's it.

Robyn: I think that's a really good frame for this topic. It really is just about getting out there and meeting up with other people. In fact, that's something that I've found quite useful sometimes. If you are sitting in a corner thinking, 'How am I going to get a client,' any action is better than no action, right? Just anything. Getting out and speaking to anyone anywhere about coaching and about what you do is better than sitting there thinking about how to do it.

Andrea: That is so true. It can be a real 'aha.' Even if it means I write an article or whatever—we'll get into those things. We have to interact with other human beings or you're never going to get another client. Let's just make that point.

Ways to Get That First Client

1) *Get Your Business Cards Out There*

Robyn: That's right. So let's just go through some of the ways, a quick brainstorm on how to get that first client.

One of the ways I think is a really great way to go about it is to hook into other networks that your client is already participating in. So this does require you to do that little bit of work first of working out who your ideal client is or the sorts of people that would be good clients for you. Then find out where they hang out.

If you're a life coach, for example, maybe the sort of people that might want life coaching also like massages, for example. So you can go down to the local massage place and ask the guys there if you can put a card there and do a cross-referral. That's just so easy to do.

Not even that. I've got to say my butcher has cards up on the counter for the local massage person. Now, I don't even know what that connection is but if you don't ask you don't get. You know what they say?

So I think that's a total winning way to go about getting a first client.

Andrea: It's so low-tech there's no reason why anybody could say, "No, I can't do that." If you don't have a business card just handwrite something or print something and post those things up. That's just a simple way to get started.

Robyn: Actually, MOO.com, online printing, have you heard of them?

Andrea: Yeah, I have. Those are adorable business cards and so affordable.

Robyn: So affordable, so adorable. It's just not the case anymore that you have to make a \$3,000 investment to get a business card. So don't worry about your business name. In fact, use your own name. Robyn Logan Coaching. If you haven't worked that out, don't worry about it. Put your name there, put your phone number, and just get those cards out there. So that's #1 on how to get your first client.

2) *Build a Website*

Andrea: Number two, just like what you said, Robyn, about getting business cards being so accessible and cheap, it's now really easy to get a website. In the amount of time it takes for you to finish listening to this episode of Coach Street, you can go ahead and set up a basic site on WordPress using blog technology.

You simply describe yourself, describe three main benefits that your coaching would bring, and set up a little form for people to be able to say, "Hey, Robyn, I'd like to find out more about coaching with you." Bam! Website. A great way to get new clients.

Robyn: Totally. And this is potentially the topic for another entire episode. A lot of people get very significant about their websites. Some people spend a lot more time and money than is really necessary. I would go the path exactly like I just suggested with the business cards. You just want four pages. About Me, My Coaching, My Philosophy, Contact Me. Four things, that's it. That's all you need to start with.

You know what? I'm going to put a link at the end of this episode in the transcript for a couple of places that I know you can get websites for \$300 to \$400. Perfectly fine. In fact, there's no reason to even do it yourself. Just get that baby up, put the URL on the new business card, and that's step #2 on how to get your first client.

Andrea: You know, it's one of those things that people think it has to be really hard. You can take three days to get this done or you can take three years. For those of you who are listening, how many of you will cop to the fact that sometimes you push the finish line out farther than it needs to be when actually as Robyn outlined, it can be done within a week and away you go?

Robyn: Just on that with the website, let's look for a couple of minutes to help people when they do this. I think a really great way to go about this is to position your coaching on the front page of your website as the answer to a problem. It's a little bit formulaic but really, it's much better than what most people do. They start their website and they talk all about themselves. "Hi, I'm Robyn Logan. I'm a life coach. I work with people and I do this and I do that."

What would be great is to just take a step back and think about your client. What kind of problem does your client normally have? If you're a parent coach, maybe your clients normally have the problem of troublesome teenagers or something like that. You pitch that on the front page of your website and offer them something. Something for free, even, would be wonderful.

Andrea: I highly recommend that, actually. I call it a “pink spoon.” It refers to that little tiny pink spoon inside an ice cream store that sometimes you get as a sampler.

I remember when I didn’t know what Tiger flavored ice cream was. What’s Tiger flavor like? Orange and black? Well, it turned out to be licorice. If I had not had the opportunity to try it I would not have known that I might love it. It’s the same for your coaching. Having a pink spoon equivalent on your website is a really good idea.

Robyn: Okay, I’m going to ask you about the pink spoon because this is one of the first things I even found out about you. I mean, I did know about you from before that from our coach school days. But your concept of the pink spoon I think was one of the first. You were early. You were out there with that concept right at the very beginning.

Now people package it and call it all sorts of different things. The concept is that you provide something of value for free that people can download or get somehow and that this is a lead that you can turn into a sale. But let’s just unpack that a little bit. Tell me why you think that works so well.

Andrea: Well, in any relationship between a business and a customer there’s the element of the unknown. If I were thinking of hiring you, Robyn, as my coach—which I absolutely would, by the way—it would be a question of *Well, she looks good. She sounds good. I’ve heard something nice about her from my friend.*

Any of you listening could have this going on for you. But you’re not 100% sure. I don’t even know what I don’t know. So if it’s possible for me to listen to something of Robyn’s or read something she’s written or even watch a video or something that she’s got, then that’s the equivalent of a pink spoon. I get to actually experience what it would be like to be in a relationship with Robyn.

If you really relieve my sense of anxiety and you give me confidence that it could work out really, really well, that’s why I think pink spoons are so critically important.

If you think about it, you’ll notice that pink spoon mentality is everywhere in business. When you go to buy a new car they will let you drive the car

around for a bit. That's a pink spoon. Or you go in the back of the grocery store and there's some crazy new product like a peanut butter and chocolate milkshake thingy or something. They let you taste it. All of these things are. It's just as old as time, this concept of letting people try before they buy and lower the risk that they perceive that they have.

3) *Free Coaching Session*

Robyn: Like wine tasting is another great example. There are all those bottles of red wine there. How do you actually know? You can look at the labels and think, 'That's a nice label.' But how would I know? I would have a little sip of that wine. If I find one I like I'm going to say, "Give me a dozen, thanks." I'll buy a box of that wine. So I think that's a really good way to get that first client. Actually put something out there that people can sample.

That could be a session. What do you think of the trial session concept? A lot of coaches do the trial session.

Andrea: You know what? There is varying advice about that. What I've found is that it depends on how you position it and it depends on your personality. If you're the kind of person who has trouble saying no or tends to be very, very generous and are a bit of a softie, a free session is probably not highly recommended for you.

It's going to sap your energy and you'll be giving all that wonderful coaching away and finding it more challenging than other people to say, "Okay, that's it for your free session. Now you have to buy the ice cream cone and cough up some coaching fees." In that way, Robyn, I find that for that personality type that's really setting them up for agony later.

But if you're someone who's pretty buttoned-down and you know how to manage a call. Perhaps you've been a consultant in the past. You know your way around people relationships and how to nip conversations in the bud when need be, then sample sessions can be great. They really can turn into a reliable, consistent way of securing new clients.

Robyn: Yeah, I think so. I think it's also how you frame the transition. If the transition is framed as a free coaching session, I agree. I don't necessarily think that's a great way to go. But really, every first session is a trial session. At any time the client can decide that's not for them, right?

Andrea: Yeah, that's true.

Robyn: So I think you have to frame it so that people know how your coaching happens, what happens when they become a client of yours. "When you start with me, the first session we'll talk a little bit about what you want to achieve, how to do coaching, blah, blah." Just even in that conversation people can generally tell if it's a fit or not.

See, the other problem with the transition for me is that it's a one-on-one activity. You can only do so many, whereas if you put out a short video of yourself and talk about your style of coaching or create an e-book on the type of coaching that you do, you can reach thousands of people with that. So I think that's a better way to go.

So you've got your website; your website hasn't cost much. You've got something you're offering there which gives people a taste or a flavor of you. That's a way to get a first client.

4) *Run a Workshop or Teleseminar*

Andrea: Teleclasses, you were saying.

Robyn: Oh yeah, workshops. Run a workshop. A workshop or an online teleseminar if your market is global, which it possibly would be. I find this is a fantastic way to get clients.

And really it's along the pink spoon thinking, as well, because what that's about is creating value anyway. Just getting out there and doing what you want to do anyway. Do it for a low cost or no cost. It could be your pink spoon offering. A free teleseminar once a month. Offer that. Give people value so that they can actually see and feel the type of person you are.

From that you should get some clients for sure. I don't know what the conversion rates are but it's a classic tool people use a lot. You might get 30 or 40 people come along and from that one or two people are potential clients. So it's easy. You know what? If you did do a teleseminar and you recorded it, then you've got something to offer for free on your website.

Andrea: It's a tried-and-true, proven leveraged way of getting a client.

Robyn: It really is, isn't it? And it's not that difficult to do. Once again, you can get a free conference line. There are many providers. We can put some links into the transcript.

You get one of those and just start telling everyone. It doesn't matter if you only have six people turn up for the first one. And it doesn't matter if most of them are family and friends because if you record that, you have a fantastic audio. That's how you grow. You have to start somewhere.

Andrea: Beautiful. I love that. That is so highly leveraged and a good use of your time. Once you get your first client in your pocket you're going to start considering how you can get more clients with less effort, and this one's a really hot one for that.

5) Practice on Family and Friends

Andrea: Practicing on family and friends may seem like kind of an odd way to get a new client or a first client. Having said that, I will tell you that it is the most easy way that I know of, especially if you are shy or are some of our more introverted coaches.

Practicing our coaching is a very important part of being good at what you do so that once you do get clients you're going to get referrals because your coaching rocks. So you do need to be practicing and I know that's something you teach at the International Coach Academy.

However, the not-so-secret thing about practicing is that once you do get good, even if you're doing it for free with your family they're going to tell other people. Those people may become your first paying clients.

Robyn: Absolutely. And the great thing about doing that is just the thing of get out and do it. As you said at the beginning, you have to interact with other humans. So even if you feel you don't need the practice, just get out and do the coaching anyway. It's better than sitting there waiting for the client to knock on the front door.

Andrea: As you go along, if you start to build a marketing machine and you might have other priorities so you would do this less, but especially because the topic is how to get your first paying client, this is really easy, no-excuses. Go out and do it now.

6) *Professional Networks*

Robyn: And referrals is one of the best ways to get a first client, which leads to the next way to get a first client. It's through your networks, which is a little bit like family and friends but I'm talking about your professional networks.

Most people who come to coaching come with a rich history and background in some area, even if it was real estate or management consulting. Most of our students have one or two degrees and have done at least ten years in the workplace. That's a massive network. You don't want to turn your back on that network.

In fact, you want to turn around and look at that network with new eyes and think about how you can leverage not only the skills and knowledge that you have but the contacts that you have.

You can also practice, as well. You can also choose a couple of key colleagues and practice your coaching, which is a great way of educating them on coaching. Then just ask for their referrals. Ask if they know anyone who needs some coaching. I think reaching into your networks is a great way to do it.

Andrea: I think people underestimate the power of that. I think I'll throw in a bonus one, just an item that applies to all of these things. You mentioned it, Robyn, when you were talking about websites. It's to try and get as clear as you can about the changes that you are willing to stand behind.

So if a person starts at a certain place, Point A before they coach with you, by the time they're done coaching with you or have coached with you for a month or three months or whatever the period is, they're going to be at Point B. Hopefully there's a difference and hopefully it's a good difference.

Getting comfortable with what that change or what I call the "coaching Delta," the change, as you practice you're going to get clearer and clearer about what that is. You're looking for patterns and then you can start to articulate what that is. When people come to me they usually come with too many business ideas and at the end of it they've chosen one. They've dug down deep and they've tapped into their income and done it in a fun way. That's a tangible change.

That can apply to every single one of these ways to get a first client. When you're first starting out it can be really challenging to understand that. So if that's the case for you, then it's back to practicing. That's what's going to give you that answer.

7) Get Clear on Your Niche and Then Dig Deep

Robyn: Maybe people need to go back and listen to Episode Four, "Getting Your Coaching Niche." Listen to that before you get your first coaching client. It will be really helpful.

Get very clear on what your niche is because that's going to help you get your first coaching client. Like you say, Andrea, I love the analogy from that episode that you used about digging many holes. It's much better to dig one hole and go deep into that one hole than to start a couple of holes, throw the spade away, and start somewhere else.

I think this applies also to getting your first coaching client. Figure out what your niche is and then dig deep into that. Go to all the places where clients hang out in that niche. Speak to as many people as you know. Ring up associations or organizations and offer to come and do a free presentation for them.

Andrea: And then as a final point before we go into Spot the Coaching, never underestimate enthusiasm. It's really okay and I'll even do a tiny bit of role-play for you. You might be speaking and doing a coaching session or you might be teaching a teleclass or what-have-you and you've got real, live human beings, just as we're teaching you.

And they're excited; they're getting something great; they really like you, your charm, your personality, your good looks. All of that is working well for you, okay? And you like them. The thing that you really want to make sure you always, always do—and this goes for advanced people, too, since I know advanced people who miss this—it sounds like this, Robyn:

"You know, just listening to you talk about your life and what you want to achieve, that has me really excited. I would love to work with you." And just pause.

I'm not saying be a liar. If you don't want to work with a person, don't say that, okay? No coming back to blame me if that's what you do. But if you

would genuinely love it, it's actually a beautiful thing to let it show. That more than anything is going to assist you in opening the door to the prospect saying, "Really? I think I might like it, too. How would it work?" Bam! There you go.

Robyn: That's great. It actually reminds me of one of my coaches, Jim Schramko. He's got this thing he calls the "haircut close" the "hairstylist close," when it comes to sales. Evidently one of his cousins or friends was a Greek hairstylist named Nick. He just goes up to people and goes, "Your hair. What's happened? It's terrible, shocking. Okay, you come Thursday, I fix." It's great.

8) *Believe You Are a Coach*

I'm just going to sneak in an extra one in, as well. I think what you're talking about is the way to get your first client is to totally believe that you are a coach and totally believe that you can help people in the way that you think. If you can get that to come out in the enthusiasm, then you'll get a client. People will believe you. It's a classic thing.

People do pick up on your thoughts about yourself. So if you're talking to someone and you really totally can see exactly where you could impact their lives and you talk with that in your tone and in your whole body and whole being, that's contagious.

Andrea: This is so up my alley. We've talked so much about creating undeniable proof of what you can do. That is the bedrock of your confidence that's going to allow all these things to sing. So yeah, 100% what Robyn is saying.

Robyn: So you have a workshop coming up in September that is looking at lead generation. It would probably help people in getting their first client.

Andrea: I think so. It's a fairly deep workshop where I'm pulling out all the stops. You should see inside my brain--all the drawers are open. All of my notes and everything is scattered around my brain.

Lasting Lead Generation is going to address how to interact with other human beings in lots of deep, cool ways. Using technology, playing to your strengths, allowing you to create a lead generation budget and plan. It's happening later on in September in Baltimore, Maryland, on the East Coast

where I'm at. I've done nine events in the last three years, Robyn, and only one of them has been on the East Coast. Shame on me.

Robyn: Can I just say none of them have been in Australia. Double shame, triple shame.

Andrea: I don't know. I'm like sitting back waiting for an invitation.

Robyn: Oh, I see. One of those. Let me publicly say you are invited. There is an open door. Come on down. It would be so cool.

Andrea: Stay tuned. In a future episode of Coach Street when we will talk about Australia.

Robyn: In this *Lasting Lead Generation* workshop, it's focusing on lead generation. It's not actually looking at once someone's interested how you close the sale and get the client to the first session? Does it look at that, as well?

Andrea: No.

Robyn: We should do an episode on that. I think that's a really good one.

Andrea: We have a second workshop about that in January that's called *Feel Good Selling*. We're focusing a lot on those things.

Robyn: Excellent. We'll hear more about that in upcoming episodes.

Spot the Coaching

Robyn: I haven't even heard your *Spot the Coaching*. You have one prepared.

Andrea: I was with a dear, dear friend who had just been on a world tour and she was actually in Thailand speaking and then a bunch of other places. We finally ended up in Florida where a really dear friend of ours was getting married. Well, she was exhausted. She said she took one look at me and she didn't even hug me after getting off the plane. She said, "I need a liquor store."

We went into the liquor store and were looking and neither of us is a particularly heavy drinker. I'm looking at her and she's like, "Okay, what should I get?"

I go, “What do you feel like?”

She grabs two things. One of them was a Malibu Rum, coconut rum thing. Another was a big jug of something else. We’re about to leave when somebody next to us leans over and says, “You know, if you really want to get the job done, go to the only 26 proof,” referring to how much alcohol content is in the selections we had.

I looked at him and said, “Oh. Is that right? I didn’t know that.”

He says, “If you *really* want the job done you should get this.” And he pointed to this thing that looked like some homemade moonshine, like really weird-looking. He said, “Now *that* will do the job,” in a Florida accent that I can’t really reproduce.

It was kind of shocking. I guess he had heard us joking about how much my friend needed a drink. I realized in that moment, Robyn, that I’m really getting liquor store coaching. We’re being coached on an outcome.

Robyn: Did you buy the upgrade?

Andrea: No, we didn’t actually switch. What I ended up saying was, “We’re not actually that much in training, if you get what I mean. So I think this might actually be plenty to do the trick.”

He said, “Oh, I gotcha, I gotcha. That should do the trick.”

We proceeded to the cashier and got some orange juice. She had a drink and then we had to leave like two-thirds of all of it in the condo that we had rented.

Robyn: And you left him to practice his coaching skills on someone else.

Andrea: Exactly. It was just really adorable. He saw us having a problem. We had a goal we wanted to achieve and he leapt in with his liquor store coaching.

Robyn: Now back to the 26%--you know, that is way strong enough anyway. What was he even recommending to you?

Andrea: Honestly, I tell the story light-heartedly now but I was a little bit in culture shock. First of all, the liquor store was tiny, like a closet. But it

was packed to the rafters like a warehouse. Like a bunker or something really fearful like Prohibition was coming back, you know? It was tiny and you couldn't walk past other people and it was crowded with a bunch of people. I didn't know why this person was talking to us. So we just got the heck out of there and had our drink.

Robyn: Well, I hope it worked.

Andrea: We actually had a great time and she slept like a baby that night.

Robyn: Well, yeah, I would too if you gave me 26% alcohol.

Andrea: I only needed like a thimble-full and I'm done for.

Robyn: Okay. We'll have to try you out when you come to Australia. I'll give you some of our beautiful wines.

Well, I think that's a wrap for this episode of How to Get Your First Client.

Conclusion

Andrea: If you've enjoyed the other episodes, we'd really like to hear.

Robyn: Yeah. We totally want to hear. And also we're very interested in topics for future episodes. Between Andrea and I, we could pretty much talk about anything, right? So anything you want to know about, you let us know. You can do that by emailing.

You can email me at www.robyn@coachcampus.com or Andrea at www.andrea@wealthythoughtleader.com.

So thanks, guys, for staying with us and we'll see you next time.

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