

PROFITABLE **FREE** CONSULTATIONS



PROFITABLE FREECONSULTATIONS

Offering a free consultation has long been a method to educate prospective clients and have them book your services. Unfortunately, the term 'free consultation' has now become synonymous with 'sales' so the educational and transformational power of the session is often overlooked.

Not only do potential clients fear that they will be pressured in a 'free consultation' but you, as a business owner, may feel uncomfortable and too sales-y with that format. In this training, you'll discover the way to offer free consultations in a way that is powerful, truly of service to the client, and very profitable for you.

WHAT A FREE CONSULTATION IS NOT:

A free consultation should never be a 'free session' if you're a coach, healer, or other service provider. There are several reasons for this:

1. When someone is not invested in what you're doing, you don't have the level of trust necessary to create transformation.
2. Lasting transformation seldom occurs in a single session, so offering them one session in order to make a decision means that they aren't getting the full picture.
3. Although the results of transformation are wonderful, the process is not always comfortable. A free session may mean that they experience discomfort without the bigger picture of future transformation.

INSTEAD, LET'S SET UP YOUR PROFITABLE FREE CONSULTATION.

What you need for a profitable free consultation

1. A juicy name
2. A description of the benefits
3. An understanding of the desired outcome

JUICY NAME FOR YOUR PROFITABLE FREE CONSULTATION

If you say 'I'm happy to offer a free consultation' or 'let's chat about what I do' then the prospective client is left to imagine what the conversation will be about. You're going to have better control of the conversation, and you'll be able to serve the prospect better if you set the expectation by giving the session a name.

POSSIBLE NAMES:

Assessment
Strategy Session
Discovery Session
Breakthrough Session
Evaluation
Exploration

You'll want to add a descriptive word to most of these that is congruent with your brand. Here are some examples:

SESSION NAME	BUSINESS
Biz Acceleration Session	Make Your Success Real
Health Breakthrough Session	Wellness Within
Breakthrough to Love Session	Meet to Marry
Facebook Strategy Assessment	Real Social Media Success

If you're not sure what to name your consultation, go through the description of benefits first and see if that leads you to a solution.

BENEFITS OF YOUR PROFITABLE FREE CONSULTATION

Because time is valuable, you have to 'sell' people on the idea of having a consultation with you. You also want your prospect to show up to the consultation aware of your expertise, and the value that you provide.

Your consultation should:

- Create or increase awareness of the problem for your prospect
- Demonstrate your expertise
- Suggest solutions to your prospect
- Help your prospect to reach a decision

Don't give a 'bandaid' solution.

It's tempting when you're in a consultation with a prospect to begin solving their problem. You may want to coach them, or tell them exactly what they need to do to fix their problems.

Doing this will not only hurt your sales, it is a disservice to the prospective client. Since you can't solve their issues in 10 minutes, if you try to give them a 'band-aid' solution, they may end up feeling that they don't really need your services.

Do use a diagnostic set of questions.

Instead of a band-aid solution, you can offer your prospect the valuable assistance of helping them know what's wrong. One way to do this is by a series of questions that uncovers the problems they are facing. Here are some examples:

EXAMPLE

“You’ll learn the five things that may be holding you back in your business”

“You’ll discover the three ways you can overcome your relationship challenges”

As an example, the ‘five things that may be holding you back in your business’ can be established by asking five questions to uncover the prospect’s success in those areas, such as

- Messaging: Is it easy for you to tell people what you do, and do they understand it instantly?
- Marketing – are you getting enough leads?
- Sales – can you get people to say yes when you ask them to work with you?
- Money – are you making the money you want, and are your services priced appropriately?
- Mindset – do you feel great about your business, or are you stressed, overwhelmed

Just asking these questions doesn’t mean that you would offer solutions in all those areas! However, the prospect’s answers would indicate the problems that need to be solved, and would show the prospect the severity of the problem.

Favorite additional promise of the session:

“You’ll learn the #1 thing you need to do in order to (get results, move forward, etc)”

The #1 thing your prospect needs to do (usually) is to work with you or purchase from you, so making this promise is easy. If you discover during the course of the session that this person is NOT an ideal client, you can suggest another resource to move them closer to their goals.

OUTCOME OF YOUR PROFITABLE FREE CONSULTATION

Your consultation should have only one outcome: Action for your prospect!

This action can take one of the following forms:

- Your prospect hires you.
- Your prospect purchases a lower-level offering of yours that is more appropriate for their needs, or prepares them to hire you at the top level.
- Your prospect gets into action, looking for funds to hire you.
- Your prospect says no to your offer, because it doesn’t seem like a fit.
- You direct your prospect to another resource or action that is more appropriate for them.
- If your prospect needs to ‘think about it’ then the action required is to schedule a follow-up session very soon in the future

HOW & WHEN TO OFFER SOMEONE A CONSULTATION

During a networking event, people may express interest in what you do. The temptation is to immediately launch into a description of your work. Instead, ask them if they'd like to have a session with you, and tell them the benefits that they'll receive from this session.

Optional hint: You may want to give a value to this session, like \$97 or \$297, and then say 'but I'll be happy to do this with you for no charge, because...' and give a reason, such as

“You're a referral from a friend”
“We've just met at this event”
“I think this could really benefit you”

DO'S AND DON'TS

Don't launch into an immediate description of your work.

Do invite them to your (insert juicy name) session, and tell them the benefits.

EXAMPLE

“I'd be happy to have a Biz Acceleration Session with you. This is a service we offer that helps you identify the five things that may be holding you back in your business, and the #1 thing you need to do to move forward. Would you like to schedule that/would you like me to call you tomorrow and we can schedule that?”

WHEN TO REQUIRE AN APPLICATION FOR A CONSULTATION

Asking for an application in order for someone to have a session with you can be done for several reasons:

1. You may want the prospect to think about certain issues, or gather information before the conversation.
2. You may want to create a 'barrier to entry' so that people have to exert an effort to have the conversation with you. This will cause them to value it more.
3. You may wish to get information from the prospect so you are more prepared for the conversation.

You can send the prospect a simple form such as a Word document, or you can use your database or email management system to collect this information through an online form. The structure doesn't matter. What is important is that the prospect has given you information, thought about their situation, and invested time before the session.

HOW TO TURN A REQUEST FOR PRICES INTO A CONSULTATION

When you tell people what you do in a networking situation, you may get the question ‘How much do you charge?’ Answering this question immediately can shut down the conversation, because at that point the question comes from one of two places:

- 1) Curiosity – the prospect is curious about what you get paid for your work
- 2) Elimination – the prospect wants to know if they ‘can afford’ your service

Neither of these is useful to answer. Instead, you can give this answer:

“I don’t know if I can serve you yet, so I’d like to have the (consultation name) to see what your needs are. If I have something to offer, we’ll discuss price at that time. If I don’t, I’ll try to direct you to someone who can help you. Fair enough?”

If the prospect persists in wanting a ‘ballpark figure’ you can use one of the following:

“I have several different offerings, and I wouldn’t want to mislead you about what you might be looking at, so let’s just discuss your needs first.”

If the prospect STILL persists, you may want to say:

“I will tell you that I’m not the least expensive person out there. If you’re looking for someone who offers bargain basement services, I’m probably not going to be able to help you.”



Pamela Bruner is a Business Success Coach, author, speaker, and Certified EFT Practitioner. After removing her own marketing fears to go from earning \$375/month to building a \$1,000,000 business in less than three years, Pamela specializes in working with transformational entrepreneurs and other small-businesses by removing their fears and blocks around marketing and sales.

She is co-author of ‘EFT and Beyond – Cutting Edge Techniques for Personal Transformation,’ created with many of the EFT masters worldwide, and co-author of ‘Tapping into Ultimate Success’ book and DVD, which she created with Jack Canfield, creator of ‘Chicken Soup for the Soul’.

Pamela also runs Real Social Media Success, a digital marketing company that provides done-for-you Facebook advertising services.