

GROUP COACHING SUCCESS

Target Market Research

Conducting target market research is one the most effective and important activities you can do when you are designing your coaching group. You will be amazed at what you can learn when you reach out and connect directly with your target market!

3 Main Types of Target Market Research:

1. **Conduct an online survey** using a tool like SurveyMonkey.com, SurveyGismo.com or Google Forms. This approach works especially well if you already have a list of people in your target market and you want to get data as quickly and easily as possible.
2. **Host in-person focus groups.** This approach is excellent for getting more detailed feedback and information. The focus group format leverages your time. It's also a great way to enable potential group participants to connect and meet each other.
3. **Conduct live informational interviews.** This approach enables you to gain a personal and in-depth understanding of your target market. It's also an excellent way to build personal connections and relationships with people in your target market.

Objectives:

1. Better understand the specific problems and challenges faced by your target market and ideal clients so you can design your coaching group to address these.
2. Gain knowledge about where your target market gets together (e.g. conference, professional organizations and associations), what they read (trade journals, industry publications) and where they spend time on line, etc. so you can find and reach them more easily.
3. Really connect with what they think about, what they say and how they feel. Pay close attention to the specific words and phrases they use so that you can use their language in your marketing.

How to Conduct an Online Survey

Determine Your Platform – Some popular tools are www.SurveyMonkey.com, www.SurveyGismo.com or you can even use Google Forms!

Determine Your Questions – To get the best results, keep your online survey short. Carefully consider what information you most want to know. Use some (if not all) open-ended questions so you can capture the words your ideal clients use.

Sample Survey Questions:

1. What's your #1 biggest <ABC> challenge you're struggling with right now?
OR... What's your #1 biggest challenge with <XYZ> right now?

[ABC = what you focus on, ie: health, business, relationship, work, money, etc.]
[XYZ = specific problem, ie: growing your business, managing your team, losing weight, being a stepparent, etc.]

2. Which of these best describes you:

[Here it's good to use multiple choice. LIMIT the number of choices!]

EXAMPLE

- I'm a full-time business owner.
- I have a full-time job and run my business on the side.
- I work part-time in my business.
- I haven't launched my business yet.

3. Approximately what's the size of your business in terms of annual gross sales?

EXAMPLE

- <\$10K / year
- \$10K - \$49K / year
- \$50K - \$99K / year
- \$100K - \$249K / year
- \$250K - \$499K / year
- \$500K - \$999K / year
- \$1M - \$2.9M / year
- \$3M+ / year

4. What is your main product or service?

5. What is your niche/target market?

Lastly, I may want to follow up with a couple of people personally to learn more about your situation. If you'd be willing to chat for a few minutes – on the condition that I promise not to sell you anything – please leave your name and number below.

Name:

Email:

Phone Number and/or Skype (Optional):

Determine Your Audience – Since you are doing target market research (vs. list-building) your goal is to get qualified prospects to take your survey.

Potential audiences include: Your email list, the email list of a strategic alliance/joint venture partner, posting on Social Media and using paid social media.

SURVEY TIPS:

=> Read the book Ask, by Ryan Levesque. Especially if you're interested in using surveys for segmentation. I modeled the above survey questions after the Deep Dive Survey example in the book Ask.

=> Consider calling it a quiz – people like taking quizzes more than surveys.

=> Remember, your goal is to get qualified prospects to take your survey. The incentive for a qualified prospect is getting a solution to their #1 challenge.

For example: When emailing your list to take your survey...

“Thank you for opening my emails and being part of my community! Since I know how valuable your time is, I came up with a way to gear my emails towards the topics YOU are most interested in.

Would you take a minute and tell me your #1 biggest challenge with <XYZ>?

I'd really appreciate it and more important, it will enable me give you the kinds of free resources, articles, videos on the topics you want to learn more about.

All you need to do is take this quick quiz.”

How to Interview People in Your Target Market

Use these same main steps for conducting informational interviews and running focus groups.

Step 1: Create a List of People to Interview

1. Make a list of everyone you know in your target market.
2. Make a list of everyone you know who might know someone in your target market.
3. Call the people you know and ask for their help. Tell them that you are creating a group coaching program for people who <insert your target market> and you are looking to interview people <in your target market> to make sure your program is in alignment with what they really want and need. Ask if they know anyone <in your target market> who might be willing to have a short conversation with you.

Sample Script:

Here is a Sample Script for "Sue," a coach who works with successful women in the information technology (IT) industry who want to continue advancing their career while still having time to lead a balanced and fulfilling personal life.

"Hi Bob, this is Sue. Am I catching you at a good time?"

"Great! I'm calling to ask for your help. I am on a mission to help successful women in the IT industry advance their career without sacrificing their personal life. In order to better understand the challenges, obstacles and concerns these women have, I have set a goal to interview 10 women in the Information Technology field this month."

"Do you know any women in IT who are balancing the demands of their career with their desire to enjoy a fulfilling and rewarding personal life who might be willing to have a 15 minute conversation with me?"

Step 2: Schedule The Interview

Call the people on your list to schedule a 15 minute conversation. When scheduling the interviews be very clear about why you are calling and what you want.

Sample Script:

"Hi Ann, this is Sue Smith. We haven't met, but I am a friend of Bob Jones and he gave me your name and number. Do you have a minute?"

"Bob gave me your name because I am on a mission to help successful women in the IT industry advance their career without sacrificing their personal life. And I am hoping you might be able to give me some advice.

You see, I am developing a coaching program for success-oriented women in IT – and I want to make sure what I'm offering will address their challenges, obstacles and concerns.

Ann, I know you are busy, but I was wondering if I could ask you a couple of questions to get your opinion on the program. I really want to make sure I'm on the right track before I get too far along and I could really use your advice."

If the person is receptive and available to speak then, jump into your questions. Otherwise schedule a 15 minute phone call for the future.

Step 3: Conduct The Interview

This is the fun and easy part! You get to have a wonderful conversation with someone in your target market. People love to talk about themselves, give advice and share their opinions. Your job is to focus on asking questions, listening, taking good notes and showing your appreciation. Be conscientious of the time and avoid the urge to share your own stories and experiences.

Inquire about their successes and wins, as well as their challenges. Ask what they have learned and what advice they would give to others in their situation.

Just remember, these conversations should not be conducted like the Complimentary Coaching Consultation that we teach in the C&GR Sales Course. You are not selling! Of course it is fine to share about your coaching and what your offer, but your objective is to better understand your target market. If the person is interested in learning more about your coaching schedule another time to conduct a Complimentary Coaching Consultation.

Sample Questions:

"Does the idea of a group coaching program for women in IT who want to advance their career without sacrificing their personal lives sound like something the women in IT would be interested in?"

"What do you see as the biggest challenges faced by women in IT who want to advance their career?"

"How do you think women in IT feel about those challenges?"

“If we had a magic wand and could instantly address those challenges, what would those solutions be?”

“If you were looking for support or solutions to further your career and professional development, where do you think you would look?”

“Have you ever invested in coaching or training to further your career and professional development?”

“Are there any types of organizations, associations or conferences that are focused on women in IT?”

“Do you go to any of these? How often?”

“Are there any magazines, publications, blogs or online groups/forums that are specifically for women in IT?”

“Do you read / participate in any of these? How frequently?”

“Is there anything else you’d like to share about your experience being a woman in IT that you think would be helpful for me to know?”

“I’ve set the goal to interview at least 10 women in IT to get their feedback and advice. Do you happen to know any other women in IT who I might be able to speak with?”

Sample Wrap-Up Statement:

“Name, thank you so much for your time. Your advice and feedback has been incredibly helpful. I really appreciate what you said about _____. Is there anything I can do for you?”

Keys to Success

1. Be conscientious of the time. At the 15 minute mark begin wrapping up. Fine if they say they want to keep talking, but be respectful.
2. Use encouraging phrases in response to their answers, such as:

“Wow, I never thought of that.”

“That is so helpful.”

“Your feedback is really valuable, I’m taking a ton of notes.”

3. After the interview send a thank you note. A hand-written note sent in the mail makes a much bigger impression than a thank you email. Consider adding a small token of your appreciation, such as a Starbucks gift card.

Sample Interview Script #2

Below is the interview script created by past Group Coaching Success participant Sharon Copsey of www.DesignForLifeCoaching.com. Sharon conducted her interviews by phone and the feedback she received was invaluable for designing her group and connecting with her ideal clients.

A big THANK YOU to Sharon for generosity and willingness to share her interview questions with us!

Hello <name>

How are you today?

Many thanks for giving up a few moments of your time to help with this research, it's greatly appreciated.

In a moment we'll get started but firstly, can I tell you a little bit about me and what this is about? I'm 49 years old and recently qualified as a life coach through the London Coaching Academy. Whilst I was training, I found that many of my clients were ladies of a particular age that had got really stuck in some area of their lives. Is that something you can identify with?

So I really want to address this area in the work I do now which is why your input is so valuable to me.

I'll be asking you around 20 question which are of the type I use in my coaching sessions. However, please understand that this isn't a coaching session but it will open up areas of insight for you into your own life.

(Note from the coach: it is a coaching taster session because I want them to identify a burning issue and to feel they've got something beneficial out of the call that will leave them wanting more!)

I'd like to remind you that everything we discuss today will be 100% confidential and I will only use any information for statistics. Do you feel ok with that?

Now the outcome of my research will result in a FREE teleseminar for women in their 40s and 50s and it will be focused on getting them out of that stuck area to the place they really want to be. How does that sound to you? Pretty good?

What would be the best way of letting you know when this free teleseminar will take place?

Email:

Tel:

Any questions so far?

Great, do you have a pen and some paper handy? Good, shall we dive right in?

So can I start with your year of birth <name>:

Marital status:

Work status:

And which area of your life would you say you feel the most stuck with at the moment?

If you had a magic wand, what one thing would you change about this situation?

What would be the main benefit of changing this situation?

*What would that mean to you?

*What would that give you a sense of?

*What would that bring you?

What are your main challenges around this area of your life?
(What's stopping you?)

What would happen if you did nothing about this issue?

*And how would that make you feel?

How would it affect you in the short-term?

And how would it affect you in the long-term?

What would be the benefit to you of staying the same (in the same place)?

*What does that mean to you?

(Note from the coach: The questions with an asterisk () identify their core values which I share with them and ask if there's anything else they would add to that. There usually isn't and they think I'm great for 'getting' who they are! I explain that their success rate is likely to be much higher if they are aligned with their values when making any change to their lives – and coaching is almost essential to ensure that this balance is achieved.)*

What do you need most to help you make any positive changes?

How will that help you?

What do you feel are your strengths that might help you?

What would your best friend say your strengths are?

What would your husband/partner say your strengths are?

What would your boss say your strengths are?

(Note from the coach: If anyone struggles with the word 'strengths' change it to 'resources.' Read their strengths back and ask them to write them down.)

Looking at that list now, how does it make you feel? *(This empowers them.)*

Now I'm going to ask you what it is you COULD do – not what you WILL do, to take you one step closer to solving this issue. You don't have to tell me, just jot down anything that comes to mind. Be as outrageous or unrealistic or as crazy you like – think about what could you do if for example money was no object or you wouldn't be judged or held accountable?

So what COULD you do to take you one step closer to solving this issue?

Take your time and jot at least 3 or 4 things down then let me know when you've finished.

Of these options, look at which one appeals to you most right now. Circle it with your pen. How does that feel?

(Note from the coach: This exercise leaves them on a high – mostly giggling to themselves!)

Good. You've reached a point where you would really start moving forward with a coach, but for now I'm going to let you absorb the things we've worked with today. Is that okay?

In the meantime can I ask what key insights have emerged for you since we started this call <name>?

I have one last question; Which of the following three titles for the teleseminar would grab your attention the most:

“Finding fulfillment after 40”

“Making the second half of your life the best years to come”

“Reconnecting to the meaning and purpose of your life ”

None of these (which words turned you off?)

Thank you <Name> your feedback has been really brilliant!

Any questions before we wrap up?

Please feel free to contact me if there's anything you wish to discuss further.

As promised, I'm going to send you my "5 Essential Tips to Achieving Your Dreams"
And I'll keep you posted on the free teleseminar.

Enjoy the rest of your week <name> and many thanks again for your fantastic participation, I hope you enjoyed it!