

Five Quick Ways to Jump-Start Your Practice

By Tony Stoltzfus

Are you just graduating from a coach training program and wondering how to get your coaching business off the ground? Here are five great, low-cost ways to create some movement:

1. Get a Peer Coach.

Grab a buddy from your class and start coaching each other. If you are going to be a coach, you need to be coached. A peer coach is the easiest (and cheapest!) way to make sure you have someone walking with you to help you succeed. And if your buddy is also building a business, you can feed off each other's energy and learnings. My peer coach and

2. Buy a Practice Building Book.

You need a guide to walk you through how to set up your business and how to market yourself as a coach – and if you've not set up a business before, this is absolutely essential! A good resource in this genre will help you define your niche, show you the best ways to promote your business, encourage you along the way, help you refine your selling skills, set a fee schedule and feel good about it, and much more. Visit www.Coach22.com/practicebuilding.html for our top picks. This is one place where the price of a book is a small price to pay.

3. Use the Practice Building Book You Bought.

I can't emphasize this enough. Anybody can read a book – the thing that will make you successful is to actually follow through and do the steps the books lay out. But you're a coach – you already know about follow-through, right? The best way to do this is to join a group that is going through the book, or work out a plan with your peer coach to go through it together. I've worked with many coaches starting out, and those who build a support system, make a plan and stick to it are the ones who succeed. Don't take shortcuts here!

4. Send Out a Friends and Family Letter.

This is a one-page letter explaining your new business and asking for referrals

from the people you know best or are most likely to send business your way. Your practice-building book should give some examples or show you how to do this. For maximum impact, follow up your letter with personal calls to the recipients. Filling in your friends and family on what coaching is and why you became a coach is a great way to refine the coaching stump speech you are going to give to prospective clients. After 20 conversations like this, you'll be confident and ready to dive right in when you meet someone on an elevator or in the grocery store who might need a coach.

5. Take on Some Pro-Bono Clients.

Most coaches start out doing at least some coaching for no- or low fees to get going. It is much better to say to a prospective client, "I have ten clients right now and have openings for a few more," even if those are no-paying clients, than it is to have to admit that you have none. The more you coach, the more confident you will be. When you do sign up a reduced fee client, tell them it is for a limited time, give them your real rate structure up front, and say that you are giving an introductory discount because you are confident that once they've experienced the value of coaching, they will have no problem paying for it.

To see some top-rated resources for building your coaching business, visit www.Coach22.com/practicebuilding.html