



## Coach Approach Ministries Podcast

### Episode 29: How to Get New Clients

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#### [Intro Music]

**Brian Miller:** Welcome to the Coach Approach Ministries podcast where we help people find their way with God by training the best Christian coaches in the world. I'm Brian Miller, strategic director for Coach Approach Ministries, CAM for short, and I'm joined here today by the president of CAM, Mr. Chad Hall. Welcome Chad.

**Chad:** Brian, how are you doing this fine day?

**Brian:** Well, it's a new year, and I'm kind of excited about a new year. In today's episode we want to talk about finding new clients, but to our surprise, we are going to look more inward than outward. That's kind of surprising to me Chad, has that surprised to you?

**Chad:** It's a little surprising, and I don't think we're going to find new clients inward, but I think we're going to talk inward and that's going to help us find clients.

**Brian:** Very soon, in some of the following podcasts, in January certainly they're going to be out, I'm doing an interview with David Knauss of Knauss Executive Coaching, and I was so excited to find out how he got corporations to hire him to do coaching. It was 100 percent about who he was and confidence. We're going to talk about confidence, but the confidence he had I think that people saw in him that they sought him out rather than him seeking them out.

**Chad:** Well, one I love David, he is a great guy, and folks are going to love that podcast. They're probably right now turning this one off and searching for that one, it's not out yet, don't worry, we'll get to that one. But one of our mantras in coaching, and in all businesses, is, "People do business with those they know, like, and trust." David is a great example of a man that you talk to him for fifteen minutes and you feel like you know him, you like him. Man, you trust him. Some of what we're going to talk about this podcast... When you talk about confidence, it really does help you just get people to know you, like you, and trust you. They want to do business with people who have confidence.

**Brian:** There's different hurdles for different people, we're not going to get into that specifically, but certainly there are those out there who know how to coach, who want to know, who've had a client or two, who've not had a client, and they're looking for someone. And then you certainly have people who've had five or six clients, and they're ready to start a practice, having multiple clients, having them

on a regular basis. Certainly, there are all kinds of different levels you can get to, where you're looking for more clients, but I would say most coaches are looking for their next clients.

**Chad:** Yeah, if you're not, you really don't have a coaching practice. The only people I know who aren't looking for their next client are the people who aren't really serious about coaching, or I know a handful of people who just have more business than they can handle. Those aren't that many. David's one of those. David's giving away business, but in the middle, there's 98 percent of the people who are looking for their next client.

**Brian:** That's funny, as you said that I thought, "So, a lot of listeners right now are googling David Knauss right now to find his email since he's giving away clients." Number one way to find clients is to find someone who's giving them away. No, it's not, don't email David, that's not going to happen for you, but Chad, I think when we look inward, the question you have to ask yourself first when you're looking for clients, it's a surprising question, is "How confident am I in my own ability to coach?"

**Chad:** Yeah, and I've been working with coaches for a really long time, and I like to categorize people. I mean that in a loving way. When it comes to confidence in coaches, I see there's really three types of people, three types of coaches in terms of their confidence. One, and this first one is the minority, but they are the one's that kind of exemplify one of my favorite quotes from Will Ferrell. He loves to play characters with unearned confidence. Let's say a category of people that have more confidence than they deserve, and again that's such a minority of Christian coaches that I know, but there are a few. They think just because they get out of bed in the morning they deserve whatever. That's not really what we're aiming at. The other two categories are people of course with right-sized confidence, and that's what we're hoping to get folks. Then there are the majority of coaches I know, probably at least 50 percent that really struggle with having enough confidence, confidence in their ability to coach well, to provide value to those that they work with, and for whatever reason their confidence is lower than what it should be. It's a mismatch with their actual ability, and until you find or dial up that confidence, you're really not going to find clients.

**Brian:** Yeah, it's really interesting to note right off the bat that your level of confidence is probably in no way connected to your level of skill. I know it's true for me. I think I have a tremendously high level of skill and confidence, and I know that early on in my coaching career, my confidence was not directly connected to my level of competency.

**Chad:** Yeah, and what was it connected to? If you can recount those days.

**Brian:** Sure, maybe a fear of failure. I think, as I look back at some sports, high school sports, there was just a feeling of I wasn't able to achieve. You said there's two kinds of people: people who can achieve things and people who fail to achieve things. That's kind of the way I came out of high school sports, that I was one of those people that the coach might tell stories about. "You don't want to be like him." Which is just, I'm trying to think of the right word you can use on family-friendly radio here, garbage. Just stupid, there's no accuracy at all to those statements. There's definitely some internal stuff, some psychological stuff. It's funny because I think I've also said I'm probably one of the most unconfident arrogant people you've ever met. It's complex. It's not that simple to figure out sometimes.

**Chad:** That's one thing that the folks listening to this podcast may take away from what you just said is that you may have a lot of confidence in one area and really struggle with confidence in another area of life, even though those don't really match your level of competence. We are mixed up, kind of messed up bags of whatever. When we look at just the coaching aspect of who we are and what we do, if you want to find clients you really do need to dial up your confidence. Don't overdo it, but enough confidence that you come across, "Ok, I know what I'm doing." Because if I hire a coach, I want to hire someone who knows what they're doing. I don't want to hire someone who seems awfully eager to convince me they know what they're doing. That's the overconfident, pushy, whatever. We don't have to go there in order to be confident and to exude confidence, but if you want to find clients, the first place to start is inward with your own level of confidence in your ability to coach and provide value.

**Brian:** My dad passed away just in the past month, and one line from the funeral sermon that stuck out to me was, "He was a stable person in an unstable world." I think there's some truth to that. He was a confident guy, but he wasn't cocky in any way. When somebody hired him to do some carpentry work, they knew that he wasn't going to get in trouble. They felt confident that he had it figured out, or he could figure it out. So Chad I want you to spend just a few minutes here kind of describing the right-sized confidence, I think that's how you stated it earlier. What's right-sized, what are we not talking about?

**Chad:** For me, right sized confidence tends to exhibit itself in that we talk more about the client than we do ourselves or the value that the clients would get from the coaching rather than I'm good at this, I did that, here's my experience, blah, blah, blah. A confidence coach to me comes across really interested in individual clients. I want to know who you are, what's going on with you, I'm very confident that I can help, I don't have to take up all your time telling you about how well I can help, I can just go and start helping. That communicates. People are attracted to that, they gravitate to those who are interested in them, and I think one of the signs of right level confidence, this would be true for all areas of life, not just coaching, would be when you can give sincere attention to people, you feel good about yourself.

**Brian:** I love the way you describe that. You're around people, and I'm sure I've done this myself sometimes, and you find yourself giving out your résumé as opposed to listening to the other person. There's a real confidence that I think is communicated when you're asking curious questions about the other person's situation. There's a level of confidence where you don't have to sell yourself.

**Chad:** Yeah, you can genuinely be interested in the other person, in what's happening to them, and that very interest starts to actually add value to them and begins to transition into the possibility of them becoming a client. I did want to declare there's some point where you have to ask for business, but that's not where we start and the path to get there is not to hand out a resume, tell them about all of our credentials, blah, blah, blah. The path toward the point at which you ask for business is confidently leaning into and being genuinely curious in the other person. At some point, you're going to do that long enough that you realize, "Oh, this person could actually benefit from a coaching relationship with me, and I'm not afraid to ask for the business."

**Brian:** I remember being pushed on, "Why should someone hire you," and I was really being pushed on it. I finally kind of blurted, "You're going to be better off, you're going to do better with me in a coaching relationship than you're going to do by yourself," and that sounded really strong to me, but I think that is what we want to communicate, whether we say it that bluntly or not. Although there may be a time

to say it that bluntly, and I do believe that to be true. You seem like a right-sized confident guy. How would you describe your confidence and your coaching ability?

**Chad:** Well... Perfect.

**Brian:** I've seen it! I've seen it!

**Chad:** Yeah, my confidence level is pretty perfect. No, I think anybody who thinks that their level of confidence is perfect has probably mastered the art of self-deception. We all have room to grow, we either have too much or just not quite enough or whatever. I'm not saying this is the way that all coaches should come across, but the place that I've landed is I'm going to be okay whether you hire me or not.

**Brian:** That's a good test of your confidence right there.

**Chad:** As Christian coaches we're going to ground that not only in our okayness with ourselves, but also that we don't find our okayness with any clients we have. We don't have to run around and be anxious about trying to get clients. Doesn't mean we shouldn't exert effort, we shouldn't try. For me, what I've dialed my confidence to is that I'm okay whether you hire me or not, and that frees me up to have a genuine client-centered conversation. When I'm talking to a potential client, I'm not really trying to talk them into working me. I'm trying to help them explore what they need when they can find it, and if they can find it with me, great. To be honest, I think there's a lot of coaches that do probably need to dial it up a little bit more than I do. They're probably going to need to be a bit more assertive, not anxious, but just not afraid to ask for business maybe a little quicker than I do. I think that's part of finding your own personality and being okay with that. Another huge thing is just are you okay with people saying no. If you're not okay with people saying no you're probably not going to ask very often.

**Brian:** Definitely what I heard you saying is that you're client-focused and you're listening to how you can help them, and there's probably a shift at some point when you need to clearly communicate, "Here's what I hear where you're wanting to go, and I feel confident that I can help you to get there and here's how."

**Chad:** And here's what it would look like, and here are the questions you should be asking, and here's how it would work, and x, y, z. Another thing I do, and I don't know that other coaches need to do this, but I always encourage potential clients to talk to other coaches. That's a way for me to keep myself in check. I say I think you could benefit from coaching. I think you could benefit from working with me, and truth is you could probably benefit from lots of other coaches. I would encourage you to talk to maybe two other coaches just to see if a certain chemistry fit, do I think this person could me more, whatever. To be honest, I give names of coaches so that the potential client will go out and talk to these other ones. Two-thirds of the time they don't talk to them. I always encourage them to, but two thirds of the time they say, "Well, no, I feel good talking to you." I don't push them on that, I used to really push them on that, but I stopped pushing them on that because I thought, well, people are trying to get the value from coaching. I don't want to make them jump through a bunch of hoops and make the sales process be difficult for them. That's me trying to be client-centered.

**Brian:** Definitely, I think that if you can exude the appropriate, proper confidence you are more likely to stumble into a coaching relationship than if you spent \$10,000 dollars on Facebook ads.

**Chad:** Definitely.

**Brian:** That makes it sound like, “Well, how do I get more clients just by being more confident?” There certainly is that ability, and what I would add to what you were saying, is that in the coaching industry if you’re perfect at exuding the right-size confidence and then expressing perfectly what you can do for the client, the client is very unlikely to commit at that very moment. There will be a delay, and the delay will be much longer than you think it’s going to be, and you have to be okay with that because that can really mess with your confidence of, “Well, I felt like I just perfectly laid that out for them. I can help them, they know I can help them, they know they need help, and yet they haven’t pulled the trigger on that.” We see that all the time, and maybe just to let the listeners know that could be helpful to their own long-term confidence.

**Chad:** Yeah and that it’s okay to follow up, it’s okay to wait, it’s okay to pray, and it’s okay to let go. None of those are the magic elixir that’s going to make them become a client, but we do those things in order to manage our own expectations and to allow us to get out of bed the next morning and go after additional clients. So if you get too wrapped up around, or you’re twisted in a knot around, “Oh my goodness, what it’s been a week and they haven’t called back.” You talk about a blow to your confidence, that’s really going to eat away at you. Just go ahead and say, “Yeah, some people it takes them a month, three months, six months, and they come back around and then they’re ready to work with you.” On the other hand, one thing I had to learn early on in coaching is that some people are ready to start tomorrow. I was always trying them, “No, it’s okay if you’re not ready.” Finally, I had one guy say, “Well, stop trying to talk me out of it. I’m ready to start, can we start tomorrow?” I was like, “Oh, okay, yeah.” That part, what we can do clients too, is we can help them navigate what’s the right time for them to not be pushing our timeline, but to be open to their timeline.

**Brian:** Out of the choices you gave, if somebody’s not responding right away, I would choose follow up. Follow up with them, if they’re really not interested, you’re not going to ruin it, they’re not going to be really interested and then feel annoyed most likely. If you call them everyday, they will be, but if it something they want to do, I find they usually appreciate a follow up of “I’m so glad you called me back because it’s something I really want to do.” It’s an extra thing, it’s not like a toothache where they’re like I’ve got to call the dentist to get this thing out, it’s different than that. It’s something that I should join a gym, I should whatever. I should buy my wife’s Christmas presents before Christmas. It’s a nice thing to see happen. That’s a terrible example obviously.

**Chad:** That’s a terrible example. Did you buy Danelle’s gifts before Christmas?

**Brian:** I did! I bought them on Black Friday. I actually went out on Black Friday secretly. Oh my gosh, you should know how much I love my wife if you know me well enough to know I went out on Black Friday.

**Chad:** We digress, but I’m impressed.

**Brian:** You should be impressed there for sure. Let's go to the next question. So first question is, "How confident am I in my coaching abilities?" To do an inward check is a great way to think about getting new clients. Then this next one may seem a little more practical, but you're still looking inward. What kind of clients or issues do I feel confident coaching?

**Chad:** The way I see these two connecting with each other is if you really dial up your confidence, where will you aim it? You're going to confidently create some kind of good in the world or at least facilitate the creation of some kind of good in the world. Where will your confidence connect with what the world needs? This would be, for me at least, issues and people. What kind of issues am I confident that, if a client brings those kinds of issues, I can help. This is where you can begin to design and develop a coaching niche. It's in things like time management, work life balance, getting healthy. I bet there's something that stirs you up and makes you think, "Man, the world would be a better place if people had help with this." I think it's that platform of purpose that gives us the confidence we need to be able to reach out to people who really need what we have to offer, but if you're not clear, if you're starting off with "Well, I can help anybody with anything," you're probably not going to take some steps of finding clients. The clearer you are in terms of where to aim your confidence, I think the better off you are to coach.

**Brian:** Yeah, and it might show up as a negative in you. It might show up in "I don't understand why people can't get their reports turned in on time because it's not that complicated." I know I was working with an organization, and some of the leaders in that organization were having trouble getting their reimbursements filled out and turned in on time, and there was one guy getting them turned in like clockwork. So I asked him, "Can you just tell me what works for you so I can communicate to others," and in fact, he was so irritated by the fact, he was just like, "You know, they just need to do it." He was no help at all. But there might be some of that in you, it may just be a natural easy thing for you, and you could pick that apart a little bit and use that as a coaching area you feel very confident in.

**Chad:** You know it's interesting because I think, for me, where I have aimed most of my coaching is in the areas that I'm not good at. I like to joke, I didn't make it as a pastor because I can't remember names. To be honest, I love coaching pastors because I wish I could be good at that. I really admire pastors who week after week, day after day, do what it takes to shepherd a congregation. Boy do I admire that. I have done that. I am not very good at that. However, that actually makes me a really good coach for them because I'm always thinking, "Man, they're the expert on this." They're creative, they're resourceful, they're really successful with this, and now we're going to help them be even more successful. I end up generating the success based on who they are versus who I am.

**Brian:** There is that, but I also think that your best basketball coaches aren't the best players. They were the six man. I feel the same way. I was an adequate pastor. I probably rate myself like you rate yourself, although the people around just say, "You're underestimating yourself," but I do think just because you don't have the strongest abilities in that area doesn't mean you can't coach that.

**Chad:** I know people who coach on the flipside. They have been successful in whatever and now they're coaching others. The challenge for them is that their success doesn't somehow get in the way of the coaching.

**Brian:** For sure, you hear this all the time, Magic Johnson was not a great basketball coach because he was like, “Just throw it to the guy you can’t see behind you.” What?

**Chad:** Ted Williams, you know the greater hitter in the history of baseball, terrible hitting coach, “Well just pick up the spin of the ball as it comes in.” I’m sorry, what? He had some kind of eagle eyes, but this is the second phase, to kind of bring us back. The beginning is you dial up your confidence, now you’re figuring out where to aim it. Who do I want to help, what kind of issues do I feel good about being able to address as a coach? Again, not that you have the answers, but what do you feel good and confident about being able to help in the lives of others, and that should really begin to stir your confidence and start aiming it outward.

**Brian:** Chad, I find people miss this all the time, and I don’t know why they can’t see it as clearly. I was coaching a coach not too long ago, and he named several areas he thought could be helpful, and as we talked, he talked about he had successfully planted a church that started growing, but he never mentioned coaching church planters. I don’t know why that didn’t seem obvious to him that that was an area. What are some things that get in the way of our sight of what would be great at coaching, but we just can’t see it internally?

**Chad:** Yeah, I guess we all have blind spots. What I have heard from other coaches is just the unwillingness to focus. Probably the biggest thing that gets in the way isn’t that, “I can’t see options,” it’s that, “I see 47 options,” or they buy into the sort of idea of, “Well gosh, a great coach can coach anybody on anything.”

**Brian:** I get that.

**Chad:** Golly that’s true, but until you focus, you’re not going to coach anybody on anything, unless you just have some serendipitous good luck to have some clients come your way. The most negative way of that manifesting is that they feel that focusing on one or a few types of people or kinds of issues is excluding others. So somehow they’re not willing to help anybody else. Of course my advice is, “Focus, and if you find that people outside of your focus are coming to you don’t turn them away!” You’re not being unethical to say, “Oh yeah, I can coach you too.” It’s just where are you going to focus your confidence? Where are you going to aim it? What kinds of people? What kinds of issues? You can have the other stuff come alongside of that but please focus. To me that’s one of the things that really gets in peoples way.

**Brian:** And I think you’d be better off focusing on something that might not be perfect for you than not focusing on anything.

**Chad:** Yeah, I agree to that, and maybe that’s the other thing that gets in the way, “Well gosh, I’ve got to find a perfect coaching niche or whatever.” I think another one that gets in the way Brian, is just not being able to articulate it very well. Sometimes we’re so close to an issue, a problem, a challenge, that we just can’t say it in a way that others can really understand. You and I have talked about this before, the “Curse of Knowledge.” We’re just so close, we know so much about it. I know a guy that one of his specialties is he coaches pastors to come up with sideline occupations or jobs. As he talked about it with us, he’s giving us the Encyclopedia Britannica exhibition on this coaching niche, but we finally said, “So

what you're talking about is you're going to help pastors find side gigs," and he's like, "Well yeah, but it's more than that, it's this..." And we're like, "No."

**Brian:** "It's not, it's about helping pastors find side gigs, and there's a lot of benefits to that."

**Chad:** Exactly.

**Brian:** That's the result people are looking for, that they get a side gig. That's a result that people could say, "That's what I'm looking for. I'm looking for a side gig that I could get some extra money for. What could I look for in that area?" So Chad, let's assume that you have figured out at least where you're going to aim this thing. Let's give our listeners at least one or two things they can think about how to reach out to new clients. They now have an inward confidence, they've thought that through, they've got an area they feel like they can do something with, and I know we only have a couple minutes, but what would you encourage them to do with that information?

**Chad:** I would say you've got to be proactive now instead of sitting back waiting for something to happen. By the way, that's not a proactive step. You can multitask, you can sit back and wait for something to happen, and at the same time take some practical steps. I would say, one, think of five people you would absolutely love to coach. Dream big. I would love to coach this pastor, this leader, this home maker, this student, whatever. They don't have to be your ideal client. Just think of five people you'd really like to coach and then ask them.

**Brian:** Ask them. Just ask them.

**Chad:** Just ask them, and if you don't think, "Oh I could never do that," you're probably doing it wrong. So go ahead and think, "Oh, I'm going to feel like I probably shouldn't do this or I could never do this." That's normal. That's typical. That's okay. But if you ask those people, and it's fine that they say no. Who cares? We don't care whether they say yes or say no, just ask them, and then, what did you learn from that? What would you have done differently if you had a do-over? Those kinds of things. I would say just look at it as a total learning opportunity. So that would be one practical step. Five people, go ask them.

**Brian:** Let me add to that. What I would do is I'd have that list of five people, and I would try to reach out to them to try and explore how I could help them. I'd like to explore with you how I think I might be able to help you in whatever area it is that you're working on. What I wouldn't do, is think about a reduced priced, I wouldn't think about a free session. I wouldn't think let's just try this out. That's the lack of confidence stuff. It actually communicates I'm not sure what I'm doing here. I would just reach out and say, "I think I can help you, I would love to have that conversation." Then have that conversation. I think most people would have that conversation with you, whether they understand what coaching is or not, and I wouldn't just start with, "Let me explain what coaching is." I think I'd start with the client. What kind of things would you love to be able to achieve, and I'd like to think about how I can help you achieve those things.

**Chad:** You don't necessarily have to say this out loud, but the truth is it's going to be helpful for them because you're going to help them explore what's going on right now for them and really what's next in this coaching. Are they ready for coaching? That's a benefit to them. It's a benefit to you because you're doing client investigation. You're research. Again, even if they say no, you've heard from the kind of



client you want to coach and you're more prepared for the next conversation with a potential client, so it's a win-win even if they don't hire you. Who knows, they may hire you. That's a practical step. Another practical step is, and I can't believe so few coaches do this, find the three, four, five clients you already have and you think, "Boy, if I could clone that person, I would love to have more clients like that," and then ask them for referrals. You can even say it exactly this way, "I love coaching you, if I could clone you, I would love to have more clients like you, who do you know that would benefit from a coaching relationship with me?" What gets coaches to step on this is they think, "Woah, gosh, I hate to ask my client for a favor. Is that ethical even, to do me a favor?" You just have to get over that. It's perfectly okay, that's the way business happens. They're actually going to do their friend or business partner a favor by helping them find success through coaching with you. Just ask for referrals. What are your thoughts on that Brian?

**Brian:** I love it, it just takes more confidence to do that, there's no doubt. You're kind of afraid they'll have that feeling of "I wouldn't sic you on my worst enemy. I wouldn't want to condemn anyone to have this relationship with you," but it's not likely, if you're in a solid coaching relationship that's a great question to ask. The awkwardness for me when I think about that is when I'm being paid by an organization a lot of times the client doesn't know the full value, the monetary value, so they could be surprised. So maybe you need to explain to them what it would look like if I were to approach them. I don't know. What do you think?

**Chad:** I would probably look at it a little bit differently, which is you're not asking your client to broker the deal, you're just saying, "Who do you know who would benefit from this, and would you let me use your name in contacting them?" Then your client who's not even paying for this directly, it's organizational third-party coaching, they give you the name of Jane Smith, you reach out to Jane and say, "Hey, Bob Jones," That's a terrible name I just made up from the universe. "Hey Bob made the introduction." You just have to think Jane is capable enough to decide if the value was there or not on her own. You don't need your current client running interference or brokering that somehow. She's a big girl. She can make that decision by herself. You're just looking for an introduction.

**Brian:** I think you can also apply everything we've said about an individual to an organization. What are five organizations you would like to be coaching? Ask them. What are some organizations you're working with now? Ask them for a referral to another organization. Chad, this has been so good. This is such an encouragement. I hope our listeners find this encouraging to help them reach out, to find new clients. We believe here at Coach Approach that God is using coaching to change the world, and not all the time does God send a big fish to take you to clients and spit you out on to them like he did Jonah. Most of the time you have to take some proactive steps in order to gain business. Thanks so much for joining us. You can find more out about us by going to [coachapproachministries.org](http://coachapproachministries.org) and download our free eBook *The Beginner's Guide to Christian Coaching: How to Have Powerful Conversations that Really Make a Difference*. We'll see you next week. Thanks so much Chad.

**Chad:** See you Brian.

**[Outro Music]**