



Coach Approach Ministries Podcast

Episode 57: Nine Things It Really Takes to be a Great Coach - 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. Our podcast today is sponsored by our certificate in Christian Leadership Coaching. This is a nine month, ICF-approved coach training program that will prepare you to coach those around you to set goals, take action, and reach new levels of success. We have a cohort forming in October. So, if you're interested, go to our website at www.coachapproachministries.org/coachnow. I'm Brian Miller, strategic director for Coach Approach Ministries, and I'm joined here today by Mr. Chad Hall, the president of Coach Approach Ministries, and the author of a new e-book called *Nine Things It Really Takes to be a Coach*. Chad, how are you today?

Chad Hall: Brian, fantastic. How are you?

Brian: I'm doing really well. How was your fourth of July?

Chad: Fourth of July was a blast.

Brian: We're recording this before the fourth of July, so I just thought that would be a very funny question to ask even though this is coming out later. We are being proactive, folks, today, getting ourselves ahead of schedule. I just want to stop and give us some applause. Thank you very much.

Chad: Totally, but Brian, if you share that, people are going to start expecting it from us.

Brian: No, no, no.

Chad: That's really against the grain for us.

Brian: That was bad. I'll make sure this one comes out a day late for whatever reason.

Chad: There you go.

Brian: So, you've written this book, *Nine Things*. We've covered the first five things. The first set was

about what you kind of have to bring to coaching naturally. The second one is things you're going to have to learn, and this third part is about you can't coach without clients.

Chad: That's right. We'll cover things, I guess, six, seven, and eight today, and man, it's all about who you show up with. You could be the best coach in the world, but if you don't have people to coach, you're in trouble, so don't call yourself a great coach if you're not coaching.

Brian: I remember early, hearing a pretty successful coach say that he knows people who are terrible coaches who have all kinds of clients, and he knows people who are the best coaches who don't have any clients.

Chad: What I like to think is, let's don't equate being a great coach with, "Oh, well, people who have lots of clients must be great coaches." No, you could be a really bad coach and have lots of clients, but on the other hand, you're not going to be really great at coaching and not have clients. You need the competencies, and the ability, and all that, and you need somebody to coach. This is the thing that hopefully kicks some of us in the pants and says stop learning how to coach for a while, and go get some clients. You have to have people to coach, whatever that is in your context, whether it's paid context, you're a pastor and you get people in your congregation, or you need to start using coaching with the teams you lead. Whatever it means for you, you've got to have clients.

Brian: And in that first couple, you talked about natural things you just need to be born with to be a coach, but one of the natural things that's not usually in coaches we train is a desire to go out and get clients, an entrepreneurial spirit sometimes. Sometimes it's there, sometimes it's not, but a desire to market yourself. These are the kinds of things that coaches tend to just feel a little sick inside.

Chad: The way I hear a lot of people say it is, "Oh, I just don't like selling myself." Who would? By the way, nobody wants to buy you. We're not into human trafficking. That's not what this is about, but getting clients is really about connecting the value of coaching with the need for coaching. If you think about it that way, and you think, I've got something valuable, and there's an audience out there, there's a market out there, there's a population out there that really needs this, and if I don't find a way to connect what I have with what they need, no good is going to happen, and so, you're not selling yourself. You're getting people into a relationship that's going to help them get what they want, and if you think getting clients is about you twisting arms, or, "What's it going to take for me to get you into this coaching today?" Well, you're probably not being very client centered, and you should get out of coaching immediately.

Brian: I've got a really nice beat up coach. It's only been through about three clients. You're going to really enjoy this.

Chad: It's the perfect coach for you. I know we don't want to get into too many of the weeds. This isn't a marketing book. This podcast isn't about how to get a lot of clients, but we have those things. We have webinars, even a class about how to grow your coaching practice, but Brian, maybe steer me on this on how much to share. I would maybe just say, bottom line is, nobody buys coaching, they buy the results. The results that coaching provides. They buy the benefit of coaching. So, if you're a coach, you want to

get really clear on what's the benefit to the people you coach? That's what you're selling. You're selling the benefit, and if they don't want that, it doesn't mean they don't like you. It doesn't mean you're a loser. It doesn't mean you need to invite them louder. It doesn't mean you need to use red fonts. It just means they don't want it, and that's okay. Keep it focused on the value, the benefit, for the clients. I don't think we can go wrong trying to get clients.

Brian: I think there's two shifts, and I think you described them. The first shift is, I feel like I've got to sell myself. I'm like, I hate that idea, but the shift is, I can sell coaching, and I love coaching, so it's not hard for me to talk about coaching, but nobody wants to buy coaching, and that's what we've learned. So, a second shift that needs to be made is to think about people are looking for results. That's really what they want to purchase. You've got to be careful how you promise results, but you can promise a process that often leads to the results they're looking for.

Chad: It means that you're familiar with what they're looking for. You have other clients who got what they're looking for, and the reason you can't guarantee results is because you can't guarantee the client's going to put the work into it, but that's really up to them, and that's why it's a partnership. The bottom line is, if you want to be a great coach, you need clients, and that takes work.

Brian: Then the second thing that I might think about is that the longer I've coached, the more I've niched.

Chad: Right. Not the more you knit. That would be something different.

Brian: I do not knit more. I knit less because I'm busy.

Chad: That's right. I'm expecting a really nice scarf for Christmas, but no. The more you niche. The more you focus, and target, and we cover a little about that in the *Nine Things* e-book, knowing who you coach, really having a plan for how to reach them. The more you niche, just the easier it is to communicate the benefit of coaching and to find the people who can benefit the most from your coaching.

Brian: So, what would be a couple things that might help people begin to niche?

Chad: I think, first of all, start with yourself. Start with who you are. If you're aware of who you are, you're really deeply in tuned with your authentic self, then you can think, when I show up in the world as who I really am, what value do I bring to people? That really authentic version of who you are it's attractive, for one thing. By the way, it's not going to be attractive to everybody, but it's going to be attractive to people who are good for you as a coach, but also look deeply and think, what good do I want to create in the world? So, the way I think about it is, what gets me out of bed every morning in terms of making a difference. As coaches, we don't necessarily directly make that good happen in the world. We help facilitate that good through the people we coach. If you think about I want there to be healthy churches in the world. Well, you might niche to work with pastors, or denominational leaders, or something like that. Those things will help you begin to focus on who are you really called to help through coaching?

Brian: Yeah. I think that's really helpful, and the more discovery you have... You might look at what irritates you. One thing that irritates me is organizations that don't have a clear focus, that they have meetings, and they just seem to talk about the same things. It takes forever to make a decision. Those things drive me nuts. So, interestingly what happens now that I'm a coach is that I approach it with, we talked about this in the last podcast, I don't think about the problem anymore. I think about the process and the people, and I think now I have a gift to be able to help people, organizations, find some footing and get moving, get clarified, and I feel great when that happens. When I first started coaching, and it's true, I felt like I can coach anybody about anything, which is true, but first of all I don't want to sell myself, and second of all, if I say, "This medicine will cure cancer, it will cure the cold, it will cure warts. It's the only medicine you'll ever need." While that might sound like everybody would buy that, I actually think nobody would buy that.

Chad: Nobody would buy that, nor should they.

Brian: They did in the 1800's, right? It was the cure all's, right? Nobody got cured. It is how we got Coca-Cola, though. Thank God that some of that happened.

Chad: And that does fix a lot, but not everything.

Brian: Yeah. Some people are Pepsi drinkers. Not me. I'm a Coke drinker, just because I thought people needed to know that.

Chad: I'm ambi-drinks-trous.

Brian: Oh my. That's a beautiful word. So, let's move into the seventh thing. The sixth thing is you need clients. I think things seven and eight go right along with the idea of clients. That's going to be our theme today. Thing seven is appropriate confidence.

Chad: I thought about just calling thing seven, "Confidence," but the adjective, "Appropriate Confidence," says you need the right amount, you need the right type. My way of thinking about confidence over the years has been that confidence is the dimmer switch to competence. You can be really competent, highly competent, but if your confidence is low, it just kind of turns down the value that you want for coaching, but if your confidence is up, all of that competence can get out and benefit your client. Now again, appropriate confidence. You could have confidence that outpaces your competence. That would be bad. That would be inappropriate, undeserved, unearned confidence. You probably are doing some really bad coaching, but you don't know it. So, you certainly want to develop your competence, but you also need to develop your confidence, so you let all of that goodness out.

Brian: Yeah, and I find that I cannot, at least personally, rate myself on am I over confident, or am I under confident? I find I can be both at the exact same time. I'm complicated.

Chad: Say more about that. That's interesting.

Brian: Sure because I do have skills, and I know I have skills, and I've had success, and I trust in that, and sometimes I can be maybe even just a little cocky about it. I need to be careful about that. I don't want

to do that, but at the very same time, it's the imposter syndrome, is that what they call that? A lot of successful people have that, where they all of a sudden think, I'm a fake. If I'm not careful, everyone's going to figure it out right now. So, it can kind of disrupt you. You can find yourself being messed up on both sides of being over confident and under confident all at the same time.

Chad: You know, one of the little tricks, maybe, I don't know if that's the right noun or not, but I've struggled with that same thing, and then I realized, "Oh, my confidence is can I always trust the client?" Can I put the client first? Can I believe in the client? Can I tap into the client's creativity, resourcefulness, all of that? I don't need to be an imposter. If I pretend like I'm good at something other than putting the client first, one, I'm probably not a very competent coach, and two, I'm misplacing my confidence. I'm coming in like the rescuer, the capable person, whatever, and really all I'm here to do is draw out the capabilities of the client. Again, that does take some competence on my part, but the biggest one, the chief competence is that I always put the client first, and that's really helped me show up in an authentic way, a confident way. It never becomes cocky because the client's the really important, valuable person in this relationship. All I've got to do is help them show up that way.

Brian: It's interesting. Even as you describe it, it can create a cycle, right? So, if I'm over confident about being able to solve problems, the problem is I'm going to go in there, and most likely, there are very few people that somehow that works for them, but most people are going to go in and fail. People aren't going to take their advice, and they'll be like, "If people just weren't stupid, I'd be a great coach." You begin to have failure, and that really starts to bring up the other side of, "I'm not a good coach," and it can feed both sides. You're over confidence can feed your under confidence, and it becomes a cycle.

Chad: Oh, I better try harder. I better make sure the client gets awareness and action. I better do more. Well, then you end up doing the very things that get in the way of good coaching. So, confidence is, I think, a tricky thing. The only other thing I might say about confidence is your clients need it from you. If you kind of show up with a client and act like you don't really know what you're doing, or you seem uncertain, unsure of yourself, or uncertain of the coaching relationship, a smart client is going to think, "Well, if you don't know what you're doing, then why am I with you?"

Brian: Run away! Run away!

Chad: Run! I hear this with coaches who are, especially at the beginning stages of a coaching relationship, when the client will say, "So, how does this work?" The coach will say, "Well, how do you want it to work," and the client's like, "I don't know anything about coaching, so..."

Brian: "Not like this. I don't want it to work like this."

Chad: "Not like this. I don't want this." So, there are things about how the coaching relationship works that you need to know, you need to be confident, you need to be clear, and then when you're in a coaching relationship, like last podcast, or a couple podcasts ago, when we were talking about, I think, things three, four, and five, we talked about interventions. You mentioned issuing a challenge. If you issue a challenge in a way that exudes some kind of confidence that this might help the client move forward, again, a client's going to say, "You don't seem very confident in this. Why am I going to trust

you in terms of what you're offering me right now?" The same would be true for models, assessments, those kinds of things. So, confidence really does bring out the best in your client.

Brian: Yeah, and if you want to know where you're at on confidence, I think the quickest way to test that out is to talk about your price, to talk about your hourly rate. This is how I've measured my confidence because at first, when I would talk about an hourly rate, I would immediately say, "But I can cut that down." Which was basically saying, "I'm not that good." I mean, I just want to point out to you right away, I'm not as good as that price sounds.

Chad: Or, you're not going to get that much value from it.

Brian: "That probably sounds like too much value, and you're probably right. Let me cut that down." Over the years, I found myself, initially, maybe not cutting it as far, and that's how I could rate my confidence as well. It is worth this much, and nowadays, I have found myself, most of the time this year, saying exactly what my price is and not worrying too much about it.

Chad: That's a huge step.

Brian: Oh my goodness. I still worry some about it. I'll be honest. I still worry some about it, but for the most part, I'm able to say it and think, if I were to get less than that, I think I can get enough at a higher level because I'm confident that I'd be hurting myself and hurting my clients.

Chad: Yeah, and I don't know if this is just my own personality or if this is a place all coaches get to, but I think with rate, and with whether a person hires me or not, the confidence comes through in that I'm okay not being the right coach for everybody. So, if I tell you my rate, and you say that's too high, that's fine with me. I don't think worse of you. I don't think I better lower it. I think this person needs a coach who doesn't cost as much. That's a very objective, it doesn't damage my confidence like, "Man, I overpriced it." It's very objective for me.

Brian: Sure, or they need a coach with a different chemistry, or they need a coach with different expertise.

Chad: Different time zone, whatever. Different coaches for different things. Rate is one of them, so we have to remain confident even when we're not the right coach for someone. Now, if you keep getting refused by every potential client, it might mean that you are too confident, and you might want to check what's going on that nobody's a good fit for you. You might want to shift some things around, so you do get clients as we mentioned earlier.

Brian: I would say our observation is most of the coaches we talked to are under confident, and if they just talked with a little more confidence about their rate and what they can do, it's like a magic elixir somehow. It creates more clients.

Chad: I'll mention this before we move on to credibility. What I've noticed is it's the coaches that I have to keep encouraging, dial up the confidence, dial up the confidence, those are the ones who end up making great coaches. The ones where I have to say, "Don't make it so much about you," some of them

end up being great coaches, but a lot of them really struggle to make room for the client. If you struggle with not having enough confidence, it's normal, and greatness lies in your future.

Brian: Completely agree. So, let's move to thing number eight. We're almost through the whole nine, but this is really about clients. There's a great piece here, credibility.

Chad: So, if you want to get clients, you have to be confident and credible. As I mentioned in the e-book, credibility is deeply related to confidence. Confidence is an internal, and of course it exudes, people pick up on your confidence. Credibility is very external. Why should people believe in you? Why should people be willing to hire you, work with you, invest time, and energy, and resources with you as a coach? This is all just about helping people be good consumers of coaching. What is it that makes you a good coach, and you need to be able to put that out there in the world, especially given your niche, client market. What would make you credible with that market?

Brian: As I think about one way to be credible is to have a credential, and there are all kinds of credentials out there. There's the International Coaching Federation. That's more of a standard credential, but still today, honestly, not everyone knows that, and some people will be looking for that, some won't. We have a credential. Our program, the certificate in Christian Leadership Coaching gives you a leadership coaching credential with us, and how powerful is that? It's about as powerful as you want it to be, in some ways, but for me, it gives me confidence that I do have the appropriate training to do this. I think about how we offer it to people. If you go through our certificate in Christian Leadership Coaching program, you will have enough to be able to coach successfully. I believe that. So, whether you need that credential on a piece of paper, or on a wall, or whatever, it does make you credible.

Chad: I think the thing you mentioned with this CCLC is it really covers two of the four sources of credibility that we mentioned in the e-book. A credible coach is a professional, and a credible coach is trained, and a certificate kind of encompasses both of those. So, if I'm going to hire someone, I want to know A, they're trained. They didn't just make this up. They learned how to do this, and that they're a professional. They know what they're doing. They're reputable, consider themselves a professional coach. One of the worst things that some early coaches do, in terms of their own credibility is they start describing themselves as, "I'm a coach in training." If you're in training, you're trained. You have a certain amount of training that you've experienced, and when you say, "I'm a trained coach," it kind of implies too, you're a professional. You do this with people. This is something that's not just even what you do. You don't dabble in it. This is really a specific role for you that you're inhabiting. As I mentioned in the e-book, I don't want someone to perform a root canal on me who dabbles in dentistry. No, I want someone who knows what they're doing. They're a pro. Credibility comes from being a professional, and part of being a professional is that you're trained.

Brian: And then, a credible coach is experienced, and that can be something that's hard to get. Get experience. We do have something at Coach Approach, I'm just going to mention it because it's so helpful, it surprises me in some ways how many people want to take advantage of this, it's the coaching exchange, and with the coaching exchange, you're able to get 40 hours of experience coaching, and it's actually paid coaching because it's bartering. You don't get paid, but that is a great way to get

experience, and be confident, and be coaching a lot over a year. So, that's a good way to get experience. What's another good way to get experience?

Chad: Well, I always think, early coach, coach anybody you can. Your family members, your neighbors, your dog, your neighbor's dog, anybody. You're coaching for the experience. Then you may want to do some bartered coaching, like you mentioned with the coaching exchange, coaching back and forth, but then eventually, you have to go out and ask some people to be paying clients, and even if it's low paying clients, \$30, \$40 a session, that's a whole different kind of experience. You show up differently when you're being paid, and you're gaining that experience, not just that income, and you're going to gain the experience of people saying yes, and people saying no, to the offer of coaching. That's great experience. So, you do need to get experience, and you need to build on that experience, and then that kind of dovetails into the last source of credibility which is a track record of results. So, the more you're coaching, the more experience you get, the more you can get those testimonials and witnesses for yeah, Brian helped me get results. That's, I think, one of the number one sources of credibility is that you've actually helped people through coaching.

Brian: Yeah, and I've had people ask me, just thinking about this, "Can I use somebody from the coaching exchange as a testimony?" Yeah. Yeah you can because it's coaching, because it's really coaching.

Chad: We're not pretending to coach. You're actually coaching.

Brian: And they're actually helped. Chad, I thank you so much for writing this book. I think this is going to be really helpful to a lot of people to understand how to think about coaching.

Chad: Hopefully so, Brian. This has been fun to go through these with you. So, we've got one more. I guess that's going to be next month. We'll leave that out as a teaser. Thing nine, it's its own podcast.

Brian: All by itself. Alright. Thanks everybody for joining us. We appreciate it. This podcast was sponsored by our certificate in Christian Leadership Coaching. This is a nine month, ICF-approved coach training program that will prepare you to coach those around you to set goals, take action, and reach new levels of success, and have a cohort forming in October, so if you're interested, go to www.coachapproachministries.org/coachnow. I don't know if I had four W's in there or not, Chad, but it's only three W's.

Chad: Al Gore has not yet invented the wacky worldwide web. I think it's just three.

Brian: I think there's only three, so we'll see everybody next week. See you.

Chad: See you, Brian.

[Outro Music]