



## Coach Approach Ministries Podcast

### Episode 58: How Kim Found Her First 10 Clients

Published: July 27, 2017

#### [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](http://www.coachapproachministries.org/coachnow). Today, we're going to talk about how to start a coach training network. I'm Brian Miller, strategic director for Coach Approach Ministries, CAM for short, and I'm joined here today by Kim Izaguirre-Merlos. How are you today, Kim?

**Kim Izaguirre-Merlos:** I'm doing really great, Brian.

**Brian:** I'm thrilled to have you. I got a little bio on you I want to read. Four years ago, Kim got an assignment from NPR, National Public Radio Latino USA, asking her to embed with major league baseball teams and study their best Latin American players. Already, I am disappointed because we are not going to talk for an hour about that. I'm trying to think of a way that we could put that into a podcast of why that would be interesting to our listeners, but it's just interesting. Let me continue the bio. From there, her story took one unexpected turn after another. She's really proud of it. Becoming an Assemblies of God certified coach trainer, she had the feeling she was doing something really different and great. The brand new cohort she made with women in the church is out today. Fast track is available now, all 28 sessions, ready for binge-listening, and you can watch it on Vimeo, wherever you get your Facebook, or join an upcoming, live session. Even saying that, where's the best way people can connect with you, Kim, if they're interested?

**Kim:** Yeah. I love connecting with people on Facebook. It's my go-to. That would be the best place. Definitely reach out, send me a friend request, also like a private message, a DM, just so I know. Otherwise, I might be like, "I don't know who this is." So, Facebook is great.

**Brian:** You better get used to that, your phone ringing and going, “I don’t know who that is.” So, it’s [facebook.com/kizaguirrem](https://www.facebook.com/kizaguirrem). That will be on our podcast post on our website. So, you can definitely get to Kim through our site. Let’s get started, Kim. Tell me why you started a coach training network.

**Kim:** Alright. So, I think what happened was, I had been running a private practice for about a year, and I had my certification for a little while as well, probably about three months. The people that I was coaching were mostly women in our churches, our AG churches, and I started to notice that there might be another way that we could help them and just the same kind of pattern in them. Like, a lot of our women leaders were really great. They were already coaches; they didn’t realize that they were already doing it except that there were a few challenges. It was usually one of three, time, confidence, or resources. By resources, that typically, bottom line, came down to money. They couldn’t afford to get basic training, development, just grow as leaders, the leaders that they were.

There just wasn’t the funding available. When we took a look at that I, around the same time, or maybe just shortly after that, saw a training that was going to be going on at one of our training offices, and there was two. There was coaching teams and there was leading and managing through a coach approach, and I said those are the two classes that I’ve been waiting to take. I didn’t know at the time, right? It’s not like I had it on a list, but I still needed to take two classes to get my ICF certification and had kind of been holding out, waiting for the right two classes, and I felt like those were the ones. I just had a feeling that if I took those that I was going to know what to do with what I was seeing and how to best move forward.

I went, and I took the class. It was with Jane Creswell, who’s also a founder of CAM and just has an amazing story of how she started, and I could really relate. She also had some physical challenges, and I could relate to that part too. Just seeing the way she had brought leaders and groups together in that sort of a thing, I actually had now like a process. It wasn’t just an idea. I could actually see the way. All those pieces are what made it possible to be like, “Oh. We can actually do this thing.” So, I think those were a few of the driving forces initially that helped get the cohort going.

**Brian:** You named a couple things there that were interesting about how you defined your network. This podcast could be about you and your coaching training program, but I think for our listeners as well, it can be insightful into how you set your business up and how you grew a network. I heard three things that you identified. You first identified your base which was women in ministry, specifically in the Assemblies of God. Although, that’s not in stone. You don’t have to be Assemblies of God to work through your network, but that was your core, where you started, but then you named three things that they lacked, time, confidence, and resources, and then you went further to define the resources. So, how clear was that at the beginning, and what did you do to clear that up?

**Kim:** It’s kind of funny looking back on this now. So, maybe the best thing to do is to start at the very beginning. So, when I took my 501, which was with you, I started...

**Brian:** So the 501, you did take it with me. I won’t forget because we never offer them on Saturday’s. People always ask for them on Saturday’s, but they never sign up for them on Saturday’s. So, it’s a catch-22. I need something in the evening or on Saturday, but they don’t take them. I did have something on

Transcribed by Alyssa Miller

Saturday because I really wanted to see that happen, and I had it scheduled for eight or nine in the morning my time, which is Central, and you signed up, and you're on the west coast, and you had to come in at like 5:00AM, and you did, and you were chipper.

**Kim:** It was something that I'd been wanting to do for a really long time. I just didn't know it was a thing I'd wanted to do. So, I was hungry. I had an answer now. I had a way, and I wasn't going to let anything get in the way. This ties in too. I didn't have the money to do coach training. Someone invested in me, and so I was excited to show up, to learn, and to apply. I also had high stakes because somebody had backed me, and I needed to be able to pay them back. I needed to be able to show that I was worth the investment, not that they didn't believe it, or anything like that, but I'm high in significance, so I'm always trying to prove myself to others and be recognized for what I'm doing. So, at that point, I knew that I needed to take action and take action quickly. So, how was I able to hone in on who was I going to help? From the very beginning, I knew, "Okay. I need to start coaching now."

First class, who do I know that I can reach out to right now? Who would I like to start coaching? I just started taking the list, and I think what happened in 501 was that we would kind of hit different types of people, and I think in that, we had a conversation about millennials, and basically, what happened was it was the typically, "You know millennials. They're a challenge," and in my head, I was like, "No they're not." My initial instinct was to be like I'll reach out to all of the young, millennial women that I know. What I did was I sent out a direct message to every millennial on my friends list on Facebook. There were a hundred and something of them. Regardless of whether I had talked to them in a long time or had just talked to them. The challenge for me was just you need to send every single one of them a message. I think this comes from my reporting background where you're kind of just taught to reach out to people. If you're curious about something or you need to get something done, it's about finding who you're looking for. I don't know who those people are unless you ask.

So, I just sent all of them a message and said, "Hey. I'm opening up my private practice. I'm going to be offering two free sessions." If I look back now, I think back to that, and think I wouldn't do that now because I think at the time, I was trying to build my confidence, so I felt like I need to have a fair value, a fair exchange here. Since I'm just getting started, I'll offer two free sessions. What I realize now is I've been a coach my entire life, and it was okay. I could have charged from the very beginning. That's what I try to teach some ladies now in the cohort. That's a lot of the model that we run. At that time, with those kind of 100 or so messages that I sent out, there were probably about a dozen people that replied back with a yes. There were about two dozen that replied back with interest, probably about a dozen that replied back yes and actually did sessions, and that helped me narrow it down to one person. The thing I want to emphasize there, and I hear this a lot with coaches especially is that I've posted stuff, I've reached out, nobody responded.

Then I'll ask how many did you send? "I sent out like five." Okay. My brother is a marketing director at a large investment banking firm in San Francisco, and he just kind of caters to the best in Fortune 500 companies, and he sends out hundreds of thousands of emails for these big events that he's responsible for, and their goal is simply to sell 200-500 tickets. That's just in the world of marketing, and things like that, people know that they need to send out a lot. They need to make a lot of touches to find the

people who have this need that they can help out with, and I think for me, my reporting background helps me see you have to reach out to a lot of people to find the one, and I think that's what we're all searching for is who's that one person that I have been uniquely designed to partner with and help move forward, and what that process helped me figure out initially was that out of all the millennials that didn't pan out, the one that did pan out, she turned out... There was a range. There were a lot of young teachers, young professionals, some who were just getting started. The one who panned out was a woman in her 30's who was a youth pastor, and so I just looked a little beyond that and said she's a woman, and she's in ministry. How about that? She's a leader in ministry. So, I just kind of ran with those three identifiers and started to apply that and focus that in going forward.

**Brian:** So, I love that story. I love how you reached out to who you already knew, and you reached out to all of them. It was not just like, "I put my toe in the water." You belly flopped, and, "I want to send it out everywhere possible, a ripple out there, so people know what I'm doing." You got 10 or 12. You got actually 20 or so back, 10 or 12 that were mostly interested, and then you came down to one. The one that what?

**Kim:** The one that I built my practice out of. My first entire year, I actually only had one client. A lot of people would probably think that's crazy. How could you run on just one client? Well, for me, in my head, it made sense to get really good at what I was really good at, and I figured, hey, if I spend this one year just working with this person and figuring out where I'm really great as a coach and who I partner best with, I figure that I can then see that person all the time when I am out in the field. I'm going to know who's going to be a great fit, and I'm going to be able to make better decisions in the moment. That's going to grow from there. Now, it was a huge, I guess it was, a risk in case it didn't pan out, but it did, so that's validating now, that risk that I took. I think that's what I was, in my head, a lot of the work that I had done previously, again, going back to reporting, you learn to hone in on patterns and things like that. I think I was applying that in a new context, and I knew if I focused on my one...

That's something my mom told me growing up a lot too. Prior to that, I worked in the public-school system and the university system, and when you're a teacher, you're in the teaching environment. It can be really tough. It can be really challenging. I was working in a very low-income community, basically the school with the poorest students, and it wasn't always happy days. Some days I would come, and she would see that I was a little down, and again, being high in significance and maximizer, just always wanting the best and wanting to draw the best out of people and situations that we were in. She would look at me and help me find my perspective by saying, "Who's your one?" If I could understand that enough, I could focus on that, I could always move forward. So, I think it's just that idea of sometimes when we're in a tough bind, or up against a wall, we're desperate.

We make these decisions and we take who we can get, and I know it seems a little counterintuitive, but if we can just be like, "No. Let me stand right here where I'm actually doing really well, and what do I see." If I just focus on that and keep moving forward, I'm actually going to be okay. I think that's what I was trying to apply there. This is the one that's working, yes. I have other needs. I've got to meet those needs. Let me just trust myself and the gifts that God's giving me, and apply those, and grow with this process as it grows instead of trying to force it, or it's not going to grow.

**Brian:** But you found the one out of a larger... I love how you found the one because most people just find the one... Chad and I always go, "You coach your mom, you coach your best friend, you coach your dog, you coach your neighbor's dog," but you really reached out to a large group, found the one and started coaching, and then at some point, you decided, I not only want to coach, but I want to expand this into coaching training.

**Kim:** Yeah. So, then after that, at about the one-year mark, I knew who I was out to look for and was really confident about it, and now that you made reference to it, that's probably what gave me my confidence. I knew that I had pulled from a large enough set of data, or had a good sample size, so it wasn't just 1 out of 100. That's actually, for me, it's pretty significant. Okay, if I tested 100 people, and this is the one that works, then I know it works for me. So, I need to focus on that and move forward with that. Then I just started, basically, again, this comes down to money, limited resources... At the time, I was trying to figure out, what is the certification that I'm actually going to invest in. Again, it wasn't my money, so it was limited, and I had to make a good decision. There was the CCLC, there was the ICF, and then there was AG that I was considering. I actually went in thinking I was going to do the CCLC, and then I realized, I spend most of my time in church, AG churches, that sort of thing. A CCLC versus an AG. It just came down to what's the smarter business decision, and that helped me focus in.

**Brian:** Tell us exactly what a credential's about. A credential's about what will give you credibility, and the AG certification, in your situation, would give you much more credibility.

**Kim:** Then that helps me focus in even more. From there, I started to specifically reach out to AG, women leaders, just cold. I think this is from the reporting background where it's just like, "Hey, this is who I'm looking for. I've got to knock on these doors to find them." So, I started to reach out, again using social media. The reason why I think it worked was because I was using social media, and the reason why that happened was I didn't really have the ability to get out for a lot of the time and was still rehabbing from a spine injury, so I was actually very home-bound, so I had to use what was in front of me which was either my phone or my computer, and the access to the outside world was through social media.

**Brian:** Which is amazing, yeah.

**Kim:** And I felt most comfortable on Facebook because it just felt more personal to me.

**Brian:** So, when you say social media, mostly Facebook?

**Kim:** Yeah. For me, it ended up being mostly Facebook. I think it's Facebook for a number of practical reasons. On Facebook, you can reach out to people, and you don't have to be friends with them. So, they can get your direct message without a lot of the walls that you might find with Twitter or LinkedIn, so very practically, it was the one that was allowing me to do the work that I needed to do.

**Brian:** So, talk specifically about how you reached out to people you didn't know, and not to get too technical, but how do you do that?

**Kim:** I love that question. I actually think that's the stuff that people need to hear. It's really simple. So, I

knew that I needed to reach out to women in AG churches, so the first place, when I started to look, was where are there groups that are AG affiliated groups on Facebook? I want to be a part of those because those are my people, and I need to start a conversation with them. So, I started to join the groups and just have conversations with women in those groups. Then, one thing leads to another and you're able to start reaching out to them, just like you would when you go to church and you meet somebody at church. You start talking to them, and you exchange numbers, or you exchange contact information, or you're just seeing each other frequently, and that's developing a relationship. Another big thing that I did, which is probably a really big rule-breaker, I have a tendency to break rules and then ask...

**Brian:** It's a spiritual gift.

**Kim:** Yeah, and sometimes it has its consequences. I think a really practical way is that I would reach out to groups that I wasn't a part of, and I would just look at their list. So, very practically, Facebook allows you to, depending on how the group has set up their settings, to see who was in the group. So, I would look at these groups that I was interested in being a part of, or wanted to connect with, and I would look at the list, and I would just send people on the list a direct message introducing myself, and saying what I was about, and what I wanted to do with them. It was very simple. It was just like, "Hey. I'm Kim. I have a private practice. I'm a certified AG coach. I'd love to be your coach. What do you think of that?" Some people would reply back and they would say yes, and some people would say no, and some people would say, "I'm reporting you." Okay.

**Brian:** I'm reporting you as in this is a breach of, you're not supposed to...

**Kim:** The group rules or that sort of thing. I think the thing that drove me was more and more I was hearing from women, "Thank you for reaching out to me." In my head, it's like yeah, there are some people that are going to be bothered by this, and then that voice pops into my head of that conversation I just had with a woman that I just coached, or that I just trained, and it reminds me that there's someone out there who has a very specific need, and they're on their knees praying for this, and if I don't do what I'm responsible for, then that's on me. I have to answer to God for that one day. So, I think there's different levels of motivation that drive me. There's the service level of I've got bills to pay, I've got a family to feed, I've got to make sure that I'm responsible on that end. Then, there's the next level of I want to be using my talents. It's part of what gets me up in the morning. It helps me feel like I have purpose. When I was rehabbing, I was stuck in a wheelchair. I couldn't walk. I told myself I never want to be stuck on my butt ever again.

I've been given a second chance. I want to do that. So, there's these different levels of motivation, and then there's a third, that top level of just beyond me. Hey, we're put in this world for a bigger purpose, and we're here to help each other, and I got to do that. There's someone who needs my help to be able to move forward because in doing that, they help me move forward together. They help me move forward, and then we do that moving forward together. So, very practically, sometimes that means you have to get down to that level where you do the things that maybe break rules, or that you're not comfortable doing, or that you think you're not comfortable doing. I didn't sometimes feel comfortable reaching out to people, and I think, over time, practicing it, doing it more and more, and breaking some

of those rules, hearing those messages back from women. A thank you for doing this thing that is basically breaking the rules, that others say you should do, is basically changing their lives. Now, more women are coming. Now it's growing. Now we're expanding, and none of that would happen...

**Brian:** Let me stop you there because I don't want you to go on. I want you to stay here for a second. What I'm hearing you say is identity helped you overcome uncomfortableness. So, it's interesting how I hear this. I don't know if other people will hear this or not, but sometimes, you go to church, and somebody exchanges numbers with you, and they call you, and they want to sell you insurance, or Amway, or any number of things, and you start thinking, that's not why I gave them my number, so that they could sell me insurance. The difference I hear in what you're doing is your identity is you were there to help those women, and you had something they needed that came out of their faith, that came out of who they are. That allowed you to not see yourself as a bother but to see yourself as someone who could really help, and you got some feedback, a lot of feedback, from women who said, "That's exactly what this felt like." So, when you're reaching out to that many people, you're going to have somebody say, "I'm reporting you." You're going to. Somebody's not going to like that you crossed the line. I love the idea. All of the things you talked about. The levels, they all felt like identity. "I knew who I was and what God wanted me to do."

**Kim:** I think that's the key piece beyond what's in front of us. I've got to take this action. You and me, we hear it a lot, "I don't want to sell." That's a mindset. I don't know how else to put this, and this might... I don't know. I'm just going to say it. Whatever we're doing, it takes money to do that, and if you're a coach, or you're a trainer, or you're just a leader and want to be a really great leader, there are some things that you've got to do and some mindset shifts that we have to make to do that to the best of our ability. If I'm a coach, part of my responsibility in running a practice, whether that's informal or formal, is to say, "Hey. You know what, if it's on the money side, that means I've got to charge." Ministries need money. They run off of money. That money's got to come from somewhere.

**Brian:** Absolutely. We've got to be sustainable. I can only do it volunteer for so long, but if I think it's that important, I've got to find a way to be sustained.

**Kim:** I think here's the best way to liken it, for me personally, is, and I had to go through that shift, and I think that's why I'm a little of a hard nose on it myself, now and even when I'm training people, is that a year ago, a year and a half ago, if you asked me if I was a business person, I'd say no, I'm not a business person. I just want to coach, that sort of thing. That's been a repetitive pattern across my entire life. My mom ran a bookkeeping practice, and every summer, she'd bring me in.

**[Dog howling]**

**Kim:** Oh. My dog's going to howl. Give me a second.

**Brian:** That's okay. This is a podcast first. We've not had a howling dog, but I'm surprised we haven't by this point. This is a milestone for us. I'm just enjoying this moment.

**[Dog howling]**

**Brian:** Oh, he's into it too. Let me finish up. We're out of time, actually. I'm just glad we're leaving people wanting more as we're serenaded by the howler.

**Kim:** You're going to leave this in?

**Brian:** I think so. I absolutely love it. I just want to say this. Kim has a network now that she's put out there, she's built. She's training coaches, women in ministry, and not only is she training them, she's created a community where these three things, that I look back already, time, confidence, and resources. She's created a community to help with that. She helps with all three of those things, and she helps people to know what she didn't know which is, you can start charging today and have a part-time business, if you will, or a full-time business as a coach. I would encourage anybody who's interested in that to get ahold of Kim because you can be a part of her community at several levels. You can find out about that at the Facebook address. I'll make sure it's on the website, but Kim, you are just a testament to putting yourself out there, trusting God, investing in people, and giving people opportunities. I just love everything about it.

**Kim:** Thank you, Brian. You're a big part of that.

**Brian:** Thanks. I'm happy to be a part of that. Let me just say thanks so much for the listeners joining us. Next week, Chad Hall will be back, and he has a dog too, so we'll see if we can get that dog to howl as well next week, and we'll give you a coaching challenge: improve your ability to create awareness in your client. If you don't want to miss any of our podcasts, I'd invite you to subscribe to our podcast at iTunes or at Google Play. This podcast was sponsored by our certificate in Christian Leadership Coaching. It's a nine month, ICF-approved coach training program that will prepare you to coach those around you to set goals, take actions, and reach new levels of success. We have a new cohort forming in October, so if you're interested, go to [www.coachapproachministries.org/coachnow](http://www.coachapproachministries.org/coachnow). We'll see you next week.

**[Outro Music]**