



Coach Approach Ministries Podcast

Episode 87: Disciplines That Get Clients

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Brian Miller: Are you a certified coach that needs some mentor coaching to improve your skills, grow your business, or renew your credential? Coach Approach Ministries loves to help you grow. To sign up for 10 hours of group mentor coaching that improves your skills and fulfills your credential requirements, go to coachapproachministries.org/coachmentor, or to hire a mentor coach who will help you grow your coaching practice, go to coachapproachministries.org/coachmentor. This is the decision that propelled me into full-time coaching.

[Intro Music]

Brian: This is Brian Miller, strategic director for Coach Approach Ministries, CAM for short, and I'm joined here today by the president of Coach Approach Ministries, Mr. Chad Hall. How are you doing today, Chad?

Chad Hall: Brian, I'm fantastic, even better now that I get to record this podcast with you.

Brian: Well, how is the research going on finding out if you can claim your beard as a dependent this year?

Chad: Well, the good news is, I can claim my growing beard as a tax deduction, but the bad news is, it's not much. So, the jury's out on whether it's here to stay or to go.

Brian: Our topic today is, what are the daily/weekly disciplines for getting clients. You know, Chad, we've been asking our audience what are the most important things for them in 2018, and we're hearing overload on getting clients.

Chad: I did hear something in coach training. Getting clients is always near the top of the list of, "Man, I wish I had that figured out." It seems like a lot of us came into coaching thinking there would be this somewhere-over-the-rainbow-day where we finally had clients. They just kind of fell into our appointment scheduler magically, and it'd finally be figured out, but the truth of it is, it's never figured out. It takes work to get clients, and it takes work every day, every week, every month. Hopefully, we'll unpack that some today in a way that's helpful for everyone.

Brian: Yeah, and I think that's true even if you are an internal coach, even if you are inside an

organization, I think you still have to be out there getting clients. They certainly can be assigned to you, but I find most organizations don't want to force people to get coached, so you still have to get out there and make that an invitation. There's something that we've learned. It's just a really basic marketing. It's probably the most basic marketing thing that I know. It is people need to like, know, and trust you to hire you.

Chad: That's right, and those are the three magical ingredients. Nobody's going to work with you unless they, first of all, know you, and second of all, like you, and third, trust. It's interesting because the mantra used to be know and trust, and somewhere along the way, about 10 years ago, like got thrown in there. It takes work to get people to know you, and hopefully to like and trust you. Not everybody's just going to like and trust you and become a client, but nobody's going to become a client unless they know you, like you, and trust you.

Brian: Yeah, and we also want to make sure that we are talking today around the idea that these are things you can do. So, these are daily, weekly, monthly disciplines, things you need to be doing on a regular basis to get clients, and we want to approach this thinking that you may be thinking about the internet, social media, email, those websites, or you may be thinking geographic, that you are trying to get clients locally.

Chad: You really have to know your context. So, if you try to mimic somebody else in a different context, that's a recipe for failure. So, knowing whether you coach people regionally, locally, globally, but also knowing the context of what kind of clients are in your niche because social media may not be a great way to get clients if the clients you're trying to get are the Amish. I know where your mind's going, Brian. No, the beard does not indicate that I'm becoming Amish.

Brian: I wasn't for sure. I don't want to be a judge. I live within stone's throw of the Amish, and I have not thrown stones, nor have they thrown stones at me, so that's not the reason I know this, but interesting niche that you might be describing. We also want to set that aside whether this is a side-hustle, I want some clients. It's my part-time gig or my retirement gig, or if this is full-time. If this is, what a lot of people call, a side-hustle... The word hustle just has a bad connotation. It's like you're playing pool, and I'm going to take you money, doesn't it?

Chad: That's the negative connotation. I think the positive is you're going to have to hustle.

Brian: Charlie Hustle, the Pete Rose. He always worked 120%. That's the idea there. Is this a part-time or a full-time? If it's part-time, you need to be doing some of these. You need to have a discipline to do some of these daily, weekly, monthly. If it's your full-time gig, I'm going to go out on a limb and say you might ought to be doing all of these.

Chad: Yeah. Adapt them to your context, of course. Adapt them to who you are, your personality, and those things, but if you're not doing these, you at least need to be doing a lot of something daily, weekly, and monthly. Brian, maybe this is a good place. We're going to go through a list. We've got a handful of ideas under each of these categories; daily, weekly, monthly. If you're driving a car, if you're on a treadmill, or whatever, we have a transcript of our podcasts, so if you're looking for notes on this, we've got you covered.

Brian: And I'll break down, there's going to be at least 11 at this point. We'll see what we end up with.

I'll put them in the show notes too, so they'll be on the website under *Podcasts*. Chad, why don't you start us out and give us a daily discipline that would be spectacular for getting clients.

Chad: Yeah, one daily discipline is you have to somehow stoke your positivity. Sales people, and if you don't consider yourself a salesperson, by the way, you're not going to have clients. You might not be a sleazy salesperson, but you are trying to help people make the decision to hire you as a coach, and that's a sales function. One of the things that sales people know is you hear a lot of no's. N-O. You get turned down a lot. You plant a lot of seeds that never bare any fruit or vegetation. So, that can be discouraging. You need a daily discipline of stoking your positivity, your encouragement, staying optimistic. That could look a lot of different ways. For some people, it's scripture. For some people, it's meditation and reflection. For some people, it's an encouraging podcast, maybe this one, who knows, but you need to do something every day to stoke positivity and encouragement. Don't rely on others to do that for you.

Brian: That's a great word, and just the other day, I got an email from a student. It wasn't a client but a student. He wrote a simple two sentences that just really was encouraging to me. He wrote I'm not sure if what he liked about me was coaching skill or simple likeability. I just put it on a piece of paper, and printed it out, and stuck it on my bulletin board so I could see it. It was just so encouraging to me. I thought I know there's days I'm going to need to see that.

Chad: I like that.

Brian: That was great. So, that's a great way just to stoke your personal encouragement. I love that. Here's one that I wrote down, Chad, for a daily discipline. This one might sound odd or obvious, I don't know which. It definitely starts with an O, though, whatever descriptor it has. It's coach somebody. You need to be thinking, "Who can I coach today?" You need to be coaching so when you do get a client, you don't feel like oh, I got to remember how to coach. You need to find a way to be coaching... You know, we discussed this earlier, Chad, and I put it on my daily list, and I doubt you're going to coach every day, but weekly is too few.

Chad: Yeah, I think you need to at least try to coach every day. It could be a formal coaching. It can be informal. If you've got nobody else to coach, coach yourself. Sit down for 15 minutes and work through a topic as both the coach and the client. If nothing else, I think that keeps coaching front burner for you, especially if you're kind of new to coaching, maybe a year or two into coaching. It's easy for it to slide to the backburner and become an important thing that's not getting a sense of urgency. Doing some form of coaching keeps it at the front of your mind, keeps you focused, and I think helps you spot other opportunities for coaching.

Brian: I love that. I love the idea of coaching yourself, or there's going to be somebody you just wish could understand your perspective, and you're wanting to tell them. Instead of telling them, even if it's just on paper, write down some great awareness questions that aren't, "Now do you see my point?" Just write down questions that make them think in a real respectful way. I really love how you described that, whether I can find someone to coach or not coach. We all have friends. There is definitely someone out there, if you're not coaching someone once a week, there's somebody out there who you can oblige upon to let you coach them at least once a week.

Chad: It's funny, Brian, because one of the coach training programs I went through a decade and half ago, whenever it was, one of the things we had to do was coach someone on a Saturday night. It was a

weekend training; Friday, Saturday, Sunday. We had to coach someone for 30 minutes on a Saturday night during the training, and Sunday morning, a few people role into the training, and they say, "I just couldn't find anyone to coach," and the instructor, in a very... These were not Christian instructors, that I know of. They said very crassly, "If you can't find a friend, or a family member, or a neighbor to coach while you're going through this training, you're never going to find clients," and it just kind of set in for this person. You could just see the lightbulb moment happen of, "Oh yeah. I like to coach, in theory, but when it comes to actually asking someone to be a client, I can't even ask my spouse. How am I ever going to get a full book of business?"

Brian: What's another daily discipline?

Chad: I think another great one is to somehow engage or immerse yourself in your coaching niche. For example, if your coaching niche is, maybe you coach people who deal with ADHD, you need to read an article on that. You need to subscribe to a journal so you can read on it, you need to visit a blog, watch a TED Talk, something to engage in that niche market that you serve. Not because you're going to become the expert to tell everybody what to do but just because you want to really become super familiar with the context of those you coach.

Brian: That could be a book. That could be hanging around ADHD I suppose, or if you're a leadership coach, hanging around leaders, or sitting in on meetings, or just something that you're observing and listening, seeing what some of the solutions are, seeing even more so, what the problems are so that you're aware.

Chad: What's one more for daily that you can think of?

Brian: Reach out to somebody every day. Reach out to someone every day. I left that pretty vague because it could be somebody you're wanting to be a client. It could be somebody who's been a client. It could be somebody who's just interesting to you. It could be somebody you know. It could be somebody you never met but always wanted to. Reach out to someone every day. For me, I am certain that would be via email because I'm thinking I don't want to bother anyone on the phone. I also don't want to be in an hour-long conversation. Those are the two boundaries for me.

Chad: Introverts of the world rejoice.

Brian: Or call somebody 15 minutes before you've got to be somewhere, so you have to get off the phone. That's right. I'm an introvert, so it concerns me, but I think if you're taking the chance to reach out to somebody, you've got to be relational, and as good as coaches often are, especially maybe introverted. I think introverted coaches can be excellent coaches because they're really good. They enjoy the one-on-one. We've got to expand ourselves into being more relational.

Chad: I know, for you, your default is to do that via email. For others, it's fine to do an email, phone call, have lunch, have breakfast, meet someone for coffee. By the way, these aren't sales calls. These are just reaching out and engaging someone in a conversation, nurturing the relationship because people want to do business with someone they know, like, and trust. By reaching out, you're helping people know, like, and trust you. By the way, if you're likeable and trustworthy

Brian: You have to be likeable and trustworthy in the beginning, and as you just said, I did it naturally,

but I didn't think about it. A guy who's a client as well as a friend, I saw a note that his father-in-law had died, and he was away and working on that. I just sent him a note saying, "Hey. If you need to talk or anything, let me know." That's reaching out. That has nothing to do with being a client or immersing myself. It's being a human being, and I tell you what, the people who we know get hired as coaches most often are great human beings. People just like being around them. They might not even be that great at coaching. They probably are, but people like to be around them. Not because they're super relational, necessarily, but because they're great human beings. Let's go on from daily to weekly. Chad, what's one you have for weekly?

Chad: One that comes to my mind is you need to visualize your week. I really think ideally this is happening at the beginning of a given week. By the way, visualize is not the same thing as plan. Maybe you do want to plan your week. You probably do, but visualizing could just be like a five-minute meditation where you look out over the week that is to come, and you create kind of a mental model of what's going to happen, what you'd like to see happen. You just visualize that. A good book on this that's come out on this recently, Charles Duhigg, I think he's a journalist with the New York Times or something, but he wrote *The Power of Habit*. He just came out with a new book. Something along the lines of better, smarter, faster, handsomer.

I don't know. It's three of those. I don't think handsomer's one of them, but he talks about mental models, and it's not necessarily that if you think it's going to happen, but it's when you visualize or have a mental model of your week, then as you're living your week, it's almost like you've already been there. You just kind of go through the steps, and you have the responses. Kind of like you're already familiar with the week, and I think for coaches, that's so important because if we're not careful, the week just happens to us, and we turn around, and it's Friday evening, and we think, "Wow. Where'd the week go," but visualizing or making that mental model of the week ahead of time and to just live with greater purpose, intentionality. Some of these habits actually get played out every week.

Brian: That's a great one. Let me add another one to the weekly. Make an ask. Ask somebody to be your client. I'll tell you what, this is the number one thing I've seen with both fundraising and getting clients is you have to ask for it. If you're just waiting for people to say, "You know what? It just occurred to me that I should ask you to be my coach." You're going to be waiting a long time. It just doesn't happen. It's not the way it works. You have to ask people if they would like to be your client. You just have to. So, once a week would not be too often. It might not be often enough. Although, daily might be too often, but once a week, you should be asking somebody that you'd love to coach. I've done this. I love it when I'm interacting with somebody, and I think I would love to coach this person. I just send them a note and say, "You're awesome, and I would love to be your coach." Sometimes it works.

Chad: I like this one, Brian, because there's a risk factor to it. My guess is that there are a lot of people listening who think, "Yeah, I don't want to do that. It sounds risky." Well, it is risky, and you're listening to this podcast maybe end of February, middle of February 2018. If you started this this week, you're probably going to be comfortable with this, and the ask is not going to be as big of a risk by about June. So, just set your expectations that it might feel challenging or risky depending on your personality, but do it anyway. Make an ask every week. Embrace that you're going to have 20 no's and that's fine. The discipline isn't getting a yes. The discipline is making an ask. Brian, what's one more that we could do every week?

Brian: You made me think, too, that so many times when I've done this, I've said, "I've just enjoyed being around you, I'd love to be your coach." They don't tend to have this reaction of, "Oh. I can't believe you just asked me." What they hear is, "You just said I'm great, and I appreciate that." I don't know. I tend to ask people I'd love to coach more than I ask the people I'd despise to coach.

Chad: That's probably a good idea.

Brian: I don't know. So, a third one in weekly is to add value. Add value to people, especially in your niche. Chad, what could that look like?

Chad: We have been long-time fans of this idea of being a go-giver. We often talk about being a go-getter, like you're trying to get something from life, but be a go-giver, and try to give something of value to people, and that can take a lot of forms. I tend to think of it as I've done some thinking, so now you don't have to. I found a resource. I found something that's an encouragement, an insight, a YouTube video. Just sharing that with people. Maybe you create your own resource, and you share that with people. Man, I think about one of the guys in our community, a guy named Luc up in Toronto, and every other morning, I get a text from Luc. He calls it the Early to Rise, ETR, and it's a text. It's short, but man does it add value. Sometimes it's a prayer, sometimes it's a reflection, sometimes it's a news story. It's always encouraging. I don't know how long it takes him to put that together, but it's really valuable. Brian, you probably could think of 30 other ways someone could add value, but that's one that comes to my mind.

Brian: I love the piece there because I think maybe the most common one is to write a blog post. You know what? Writing a blog post every week is a commitment. It's like getting a pet. It's got to be fed, watered, and taken out a lot. It's a commitment, but what you just described, even as a text, that says I cannot send them more than 130 characters, or whatever the number is, 140. It's pretty short. If you can't think of something valuable to say to a group of people that's 140 characters or less once a week, then you might not have anything.

Chad: Just to have different models here. Luc, what he's doing, or a blog, or something else. That's going out to a lot of people. You could also add value to just one person, but to add value to somebody or some group of people every week. I think it's an awesome weekly discipline.

Brian: I would try to think beyond the blog. I'm not opposed to it. We do it, but that's not for everybody, and there are other ways to show up and add value to people in your niche. There's lots of ways to do that. Let's move on to our final category which is monthly. Chad, what do you got?

Chad: One that comes to my mind for monthly is to just read a great book. Let me rephrase that. Read a good book, and the refrain is, it doesn't have to be the world's greatest book. It just needs to be a good, solid book, but coaches need to be learning, developing, pouring into themselves. One of the things that I struggled with for years, and I see a lot of other leaders struggle with, is they think quantity over quality. "Oh, Andy Stanley reads four books an hour," or whatever it is.

Brian: He's amazing.

Chad: Come on, if you read one really good book a month, and you let it really soak in and change the way you show up. I don't mean reorient your life around it. I just mean it makes a positive impact in who

you are and how you are with people. That's awesome. So, just be on the lookout for one book a month. It's a super discipline.

Brian: Let me stretch that, and I'm going to invite you to push back because you might not agree with me. I want to stretch that to say it doesn't have to be non-fiction. I would rather you be reading a book of fiction than not reading a book of non-fiction. Sometimes I need a book of fiction because it's interesting, it's good, and I want to read it. Sometimes non-fiction feels like eating rocks. I have to just chew and chew. So, it's not for everybody.

Chad: But they're broccoli flavored rocks.

Brian: It is artificial flavoring either way, Chad, and I don't think you can disagree with our conversation about broccoli flavored rocks. The other one might be don't feel like you've got to read the newest, greatest book. There are a lot of great books that have proven classic, and I would go read 12 of those this year. So, you can mix it up, for sure, but I just want to get people... They may think I've tried, and I just can't. I tried reading the last book that was so popular.

Chad: That's a great point. It doesn't need to be, maybe shouldn't be the most recent popular book. I remember a couple years ago, I had Drucker's book, *The Effective Executive*, on my shelf for probably 20 years and never read it. Finally, I pulled it off and read it probably in an afternoon. It's a pretty short book, and it revolutionized how I thought about managing, leading, and how I coached people in leadership positions, especially people who were recently promoted, and I thought, man, what a doofus. This book has been on my shelf. I was almost embarrassed to be reading it when I was reading it. It was an old book, but man, classics become classics because they're great, and heck, maybe even reread a book that you picked up years ago.

Brian: Yeah, this is a podcast, so people can't see the video that Chad sees, but I've got a couple bookshelves behind me, and there are no new books on those bookshelves. There probably are, but those books are the classics. The ones I pull from. The ones I base my training on. I think that's a great piece. So, that being said, let's see. What's another one, Chad? Show up somewhere monthly. Show up somewhere monthly. A way that I personally do that, the way we do it at Coach Approach a lot is through a webinar. If I were to suggest one thing without knowing any context about what you do or have, I probably would say think about a webinar. I think it's a great way to connect with people. They get to see you. They get to hear you. In a lot of ways, it's easier than writing a weekly thing because you're just talking about something you know really well. You definitely want something you are an expert at, that you can add value to them. It doesn't have to be a webinar. What are some other examples, especially geographic, Chad?

Chad: Yeah, geographically, you could think of a workshop. The workshop could be one that you host, or you could invite someone else to host. We just went to a workshop a couple months ago for families preparing to send their kids to college, and the lady who led it is a local, college admissions coach, counselor-type thing. Free workshop at the local Presbyterian church. I didn't go. My wife and daughter went and said it was packed. What a great marketing opportunity. What a great way for people to get to know, like, and trust this woman who provides sound guidance for the college selection, that whole journey. We ended up hiring to do some one-on-one work. Those kinds of things, workshops, speaking to a local Rotary club, or whatever it is in your area. Those kinds of things that give you an opportunity

to show up somewhere. You could also show up somewhere where you're not the main person. Show up to a conference. Show up to a networking event. Show up to your local, I was going to say local ICF chapter. That's great. That's probably not where you're going to find clients.

Brian: You also made me think. You and I both know a coach who hangs out monthly with people who pay him to lead them through a cohort. It's not specifically coaching, but he picks up almost all of his coaching clients through this bigger pond that he's created and gets paid to attend. There are lots of options here for this show up monthly. Chad, what's another one?

Chad: I'm going to give two more, and these are both going to be pretty quick, but the one would be develop at least one new relational or sales skill every month. Just kind of think, what are the competencies? What's something I need to be good at in order to get clients, and give yourself permission that you're not good at it yet? It might be talking to a stranger. It might be putting together a webinar. That's a set of competencies, but learn something, grow a skill, develop a relational competency every month. Just give yourself a focus. That's the growth mindset instead of that fixed mindset. The fixed mindset says, "I don't have it, I'm not good at it, I'll never have it, I'll never be good at it." The growth mindset says, "I'm not good at it yet, so what will I do this month to get better at it. Find one thing a month to focus on that you want to improve. The last thing I would have monthly is to somehow reconnect with your purpose. There's a reason you're coaching. There's a good that you want to help manifest in the world through the people you coach. Find a way to reconnect with that. Do a sabbatical. Do a morning sabbatical, even, a two-hour sabbatical, but somehow reconnect with that purpose in a way that's powerful, encouraging, and motivating for you.

Brian: That was a good word. Things popped into my head about my purpose and why I'm here, just when you said that. That was so helpful. I'll say this. I'll just add to what you said. If you want to be a full-time coach. If you want your coaching calendar full, these last two, develop one sales relationship skill and reconnect with your purpose on a monthly basis, set aside time to do that, you've got to do those two things if you're going to fill the stable with clients. Chad, what a great podcast. Thanks so much for joining me today, and thanks to everybody else joining us. Don't miss any of our podcasts. Subscribe to them at iTunes, Overcast, Stitcher, or Google Play by searching for Coach Approach Ministries Podcast. We'll see you next week.

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[Outro Music]