



Coach Approach Ministries Podcast

Episode 91: Breakthrough into Professional Coaching

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Chad Hall: You've been through the coach training, and you've embraced the dream of becoming a full-time coach, but as you've run toward this dream, a wall has appeared that seems too high to scale. The dream is on the other side, and it's slipping away. I'm Chad Hall, president of Coach Approach Ministries, and I want to invite you to join me and the CAM team for our Breakthrough Intensive in Nashville, TN June 20th-24th, 2018. During this time together, we're going to help you gain more confidence in your coaching, identify the coaching niche that will clarify who should be your client, and develop a workable plan to build your schedule with clients. We only have room for 10 more coaches who are ready to breakthrough into living the dream of being a professional coach. If you're ready to stop the struggle, go to coachapproachministries.org/june, and sign up for our June event in Nashville, TN. Again, that's coachapproachministries.org/june. I hope to see you there.

[Intro Music]

Brian Miller: I'm 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: I am doing fantastic, Brian. I always feel like when you're introducing me that I'm like Sylvester Stallone stepping into the ring to fight Mr. T or something.

Brian: You're going to get whooped.

Chad: I would, yeah. Mr. T's getting old, but I think he could still take me.

Brian: Oh, for sure. For sure. Yep. I like that you moved from... One other time you talked about the Price is Right, but I've moved it into the sports arena. This is not just a, "Come on down," but the starting five all-stars here. Absolutely Chad. I feel that way about you. You are, sir, an all-star. Today, we want to talk about Breakthrough. We're pretty excited about trying to figure out how to help people break through in their coaching practice from wherever they're at. From beginner to a solid part-time, or into full-time work. They're very possible, or into being inside of an organization and really setting coaching up as an effective piece of that organization. More likely, you're going to have to drive it into that as opposed to someone saying we have an opening for coaching in our organization. So, we want to talk

about Breakthrough, and we've even put together an event for this, Chad.

Chad: That's right, and not the first time. So, looking ahead to June, we're starting June 20th. I think it's going through the 23rd. It's come in on Wednesday, leave on Sunday, but we have a Breakthrough event in Nashville, TN, and this will be the second one we've done. We did one in 2016 that was just a ton of fun and a whole lot of success, so we thought, "Man, why stop at one? Let's do another one."

Brian: It was a real blast. We got to hang out with a dozen or so people for three solid days talking about coaching, talking about the practice of coaching, eating some great food, listening to Bill sing. I don't want to try to push people over with just listening to Bill sing, but I'm telling you, it's almost worth the price of admission.

Chad: Almost. It's right up there. It's certainly a great add-on.

Brian: He really is a great singer. You only get to experience that live. That's a little push there, but yeah, it's June 20th to 23rd in Nashville, TN, and we will make sure you have a way to look that up if you want to, and I also want to point out, because this is a podcast recorded for posterity, in 2018. So, if you're listening to this in July of 2018, you really need to listen to the podcasts sooner. That's the takeaway for this podcast, but there are two things that we do in Breakthrough. We certainly want to push people's ability to coach, their competency level to as high a level as possible, PCC, which isn't the highest level, but that's where we shoot for, and we also want to move people's business practice in order to get clients.

Chad: Yeah. Those are the two things we hit, and we don't hit them equally. We address the growing your competency, improving your ability to coach, the first morning because no one hires a non-professional coach. So, the rest of the time is about improving things like your marketing, and getting clients, and really running a coaching business, but if you're running a coaching business without professional level coaching, you have an inferior product, so to speak, so we dial that in the first part of Breakthrough, but then the remaining time, we talk about how to improve all of those, what we call, business competencies. We've had some people ask us what is Breakthrough? How does it work? So, Brian, I think it's a great idea to unpack a bit of it in this podcast and really focusing on those business markers, not so much the core competencies and professional level coaching. We spend almost every other podcast on that, so we probably should focus on the business competencies today.

Brian: Well, I was going to point back to episode number 89, just a few back. We did a podcast on PCC quality coaching is your next step, and we believe that. We believe that we should be shooting for a PCC level. That's the International Coaching Federation. They have three credential levels. The first one, the intro level, is ACC, which is a sold credential, but PCC, the P stands for professional. If you want to make money coaching, if you want to have clients in an organization, even if the organization is paying you, you need to be providing professional level coaching, and we will spend some time on that in Breakthrough. Podcast number 89 talks a little bit about that, but we want to focus this podcast on what the business markers are that we're covering at this year's Nashville Breakthrough.

Chad: These markers, they apply to all coaches. Rarely will I say something applies to all coaches, but they do. Whether you are coaching part time or full time, you've got a coaching practice, whether you're coaching as part of a ministry, whether you're coaching internally to maybe a coach or a denomination, or even within a business, if you oversee a coaching ministry or a coaching program, these markers

apply because these markers are all about you've got to know who you're coaching. You've got to know how to get them into the coaching relationship, and you need to know how to sustain your business or your practice. There are these sustainable, I guess you call them, disciplines that you need to have. So, these apply to every coach, no matter what context.

Brian: Yeah, so the first business marker that we're going to look at at Breakthrough, and we're going to talk about it right now for a few minutes as well, is have a clear and compelling coaching niche, clear and compelling coaching niche. This is harder than it sounds, and I think a big part of what makes it hard... One, there's the external part which is trying to figure out exactly what that is, but there's also this internal piece that as I narrow my focus, I feel like I'm telling other people they don't matter to me, or I don't care about them, or I'm unwilling to coach them, and the people we train, most of them... I don't know the percentage. I can't think of any jerks right off the bat, but most of the folks that work with us love helping people. That's their top thing. They just love helping people, so narrowing this niche down to a few, very binary to say this is in, this is out, is really hard for people.

Chad: Yeah, you feel like you're saying no to most of humanity, and you are. By the way, what people confuse, what gets a lot of people tripped up, is they think this means I can't coach anybody else. That's not what this means. This means your marketing is going after a specific segment of the population, and if other people ask you to coach them, that's your prerogative. You can say yes or no. This is the power of focus to say, "Here's who I'm coaching. Here's what it looks like. Here are the problems I help people solve. Those kinds of things. That's much more attractive than just saying, "I coach anybody on anything. I can probably help you."

Brian: Which also, I think if you have a clear and compelling coaching niche, you are more likely to pick up people who are not in your clear and compelling coaching niche because one, they can clearly see that you move people forward. It's much more obvious, so I think they're more interested. Having it say, "I only work with these folks," most people don't say, "Well, they'll never work with me." They'll tend to ask more how you can help them as well. I think it's a win-win. So, as we talk about this, there's certainly a binary component. That's the word that has helped me the most is binary being either zero or one, yes or no, that I can look at your clear and compelling coaching niche and immediately say that's me or that's not me.

Chad: Yeah, so we want to tell a story of our preferred coaching client, the person who really fits our niche, and everyone who hears that story has one of two reactions. They say, "Yes. You have described the story I am in," or, "I understand the story you've described, and that's not me." What we don't want is, "Hm. I wonder if that's me." An example of this would be, I hear coaches who say, "I'm a transitions coach. I help people who are in transitions." Huh. Am I in a transition? I don't really know. I might be, but I'm not sure what a transition is, that kind of thing. So, that's not very clear, so it's not as compelling. It's better than, "I coach humans." I coach people in transition is better than I coach anybody, but it's going to be more clear, more compelling to say, "I coach people who are going through life's biggest transitions, including the transition from employment to retirement. That's a clear transition, so that's going to be more compelling, more attractive. It's certainly more binary than just, "I coach people."

Brian: My experience has been, and maybe this is a relief to some people, that you kind of tighten the knot a little at a time does work. I start with coaching humans. Then, I say I coach leaders, and then I coach leaders in transition. I coach leaders in transition at churches. I coach leaders in transitions at

churches that are over a thousand people. I think you can keep tightening it. I was going to say tighten the noose, but you certainly don't want to put a noose on anybody. The analogy broke down in my mind at that point, but to sit down and say I'm going to go from coach humans to a really tight niche that you probably need is pretty difficult, and as you work with people, you begin to see how you can tighten this up.

Chad: I think one of the mistakes that people sometimes make is they try to tighten it only by demographics or numbers. So, I only coach leaders of churches of this size, in this area code, of this denomination. Yeah, that's getting narrower, but not really in a helpful way. So, to tighten it just using demographics or measurables, indicators. Tighten it in a story form. I coach leaders who are experiencing transition, and this is how they are experiencing it. So, you begin to describe that person. The hopes, the fears that they have, their anticipated outcome, or what would failure look like? You can describe that in a story form. Man, that becomes compelling, and people say, "Yeah, that's me," or they say, "Nah. What kind of doofus is he describing? That's not me," and they go do something else. That's one of the things we'll learn in Breakthrough is how do you define that in a way that's not just age, gender, ethnicity, zip code, all these kinds of things, but instead, look at it as a narrative that really paints a picture of the kind of people you want to coach, you feel called to coach, and you're really qualified to coach.

Brian: And at this Breakthrough event, it creates a synergy as you listen to other people struggling with it. It gives you new ideas, new perspectives. It also builds your confidence because you see you're not the only one struggling with this. I coached a guy within an organization for a year, and it went pretty well, and then we went to an event where he saw me coach one of the high up leaders in the organization, and he watched the high up leader also struggle thorough really thinking new thoughts, and it wasn't just easy for him to sit and think. Then, as we approached this year of coaching, he said, "I am reenergized and know I'm not just stupid. This is exactly how coaching looks, and I can't wait to coach this year." So, I think there's that sense in Breakthrough where you can be around others and say, "These people are like me." You don't have to be Michael Jordan or the ultimate professional to break in at this level. It's a little ugly sometimes.

Chad: It may be helpful not to get too in to a commercial here, but one of the ways we tease this out at Breakthrough is we don't just give you these categories and some content and let you go figure it out. We put you on the hot seat, and we ask you what your coaching niche is or what you're considering, and then we double team, sometimes triple team, through some kind of mentor coaching with you with everybody else listening in and contributing too, and it's more of a mastermind helping you craft your niche and really customize it versus you just going off on your own and dreaming it up. It's an iron sharpening iron kind of thing, and you come in and you'll think, "I've got a clear and compelling coaching niche," and then you realize, "Oh. I've got the beginnings of a clear and compelling coaching niche." We help you sharpen that thing so sharp. If it were a knife, it could just kind of come near the butter and cut it. It doesn't even have to touch it. It gets really razor sharp. That's a process, and the fact you don't have it yet, that's okay. We're going to help you get there.

Brian: Absolutely. You even made it more binary there for us, what kind of people that would do well at this Breakthrough. Because if you just want to sit, and listen, and watch, Breakthrough's not for you.

Chad: No. This is not a class. I'd call it a workshop, but people sometimes think that's just a class. It's a

time in which you will do work and really come to some new understandings and some new actions as it relates to your coaching niche, but that's the first business competency is you've got to have the clear and compelling coaching niche.

Brian: The second one is a system for sales and marketing to that niche. The first thing I would say about a system for sales and marketing to that niche is persistence. You need to feel good about talking about this all the time. The reason why that I find it easier to talk about this all the time is because any time you're offering coaching to somebody, it's typically proactive. It's to say this is an extra for me. This is an investment for me. This isn't I have a broken arm, and I need somebody to come in and set it right now. This is me getting into shape, and I've got to get healthy. If I've got a broken arm, I'm going to the doctor today. I'm going to go right now. I have to have this fixed. It hurts like crazy, but if I'm overweight and not eating well, I need to start that sometime soon. There is that sense. So, I find my potential clients appreciate me coming back to them five, six, even seven times, say, "I just wanted to follow up with you. You seem like you're interested in this. Is it time to make a move?" The reason most people don't often get clients is the ask them once, maybe twice, and they say I want to do this, but they don't, and they think that's kind of a Dear John letter. It's an easy letdown. I just didn't want to tell you no Chad, so I just told you later twice, but that's not what's going on.

Chad: Yeah, and the persistence is really huge. We pull apart the sales and the marketing, so people kind of lump those together, and we say you've got to be consistent and persistent with your marketing which is how people find out about you. You say, "Well, gosh, I spoke at the Rotary club, and he was there." Great. When else did you make contact with this person. They've got my email, but you have to be persistent. It takes these seven touches before somebody really recognizes, "That's Brian. He does coaching at this particular audience." That's marketing. It's how people get to know you, like you, and hopefully trust you. Then there's sales which is when you're actually making a request.

"I would like to coach you. I think you could benefit from this," and we help you think through some sales triggers, so these kind of point in time opportunities where you can help a person decide whether they want coaching now or not, and again, we've got to be persistent with it. It's going to take several of them, and one of the biggest things that we do in Breakthrough, and honestly, in most everything else we do with Coach Approach Ministries, is we help people get over this fear of being pushy because they hear, or a lot of people hear, "You've got to be persistent in your sales," and they hear annoy people. Now, you may find us annoying, but hopefully you'll find us annoying for other reasons, our accent or something.

Brian: I've not found people to find it annoying, and it's interesting, even as you said that, because I was describing this just the other day in a class. Someone said, "I used to be in sales. I made cold calls. I hated it," and it's funny that that's what people tend to hear. That's not what I said. I don't cold call anybody. I don't just sit down and call people I don't know. I meet people different ways. I make it clear that I can help and action can be taken, and then I follow up. When people say, "I don't want anything to do with that," well, I follow up six more times. No I don't, but if they say, "That sounds interesting," then I do follow up, and I just think there's a piece behind the scenes to say they really are interested. We've found this to be true because as we followed up, many potential clients... Most of my clients, I don't think it has to be this way necessarily, but most of my clients take six to nine months to sign up. That's just been consistent with me, so you need to constantly be pressing for this, so in six to nine months,

another client signs on.

Chad: Yeah, and one of the things we emphasize at the Breakthrough is when you need clients, you need to know what do I do to help go get clients? You've got to know exactly what to do to generate business. That doesn't mean it's automatic, that everyone's going to do it, but you need to know, "Oh. If I send out this many emails, I'm going to get one client back. That's another thing that people struggle with in coaching. They think, "I'm going to do all this stuff, but then really all I can do is sit back and wait for a client to say yes." We're like, "No." You can be more proactive. You can know this activity leads to that activity which leads to a decision. Understanding those sales triggers, and what are those things you can do to help get more clients, and knowing you have to do them consistently, really helps you feel a lot more in control of the business versus just saying, "Well, it's kind of all up to fate."

Brian: I was mentor coaching someone the other day who had some clients lined up, but they all fell through. I know what goes on in your mind when clients fall through. You think, "It's over. Nobody wants my coaching," and we've been in this business long enough to know that happens. It happens. I think coaching is an extra piece. People don't have to have coaching. They benefit from coaching. So, sometimes those things fall through. You just have to keep moving forward. I was also going to point people to episode 88, a couple months ago, where I interviewed Laura Catherine Etheridge and Bryan Pettige. The title of that episode is called something like *Make Six Figures Coaching*. It's a provocative title, and it isn't about money, honestly, it's about the fact they have enough clients that they can make full time money as coaches. It's not about money. It's about getting clients, and that's an interesting episode to listen to, and they talked a lot about networking which just sounds like going to dinner parties and eating little hot dogs on a toothpick, and it's not. It's about being persistent, following up with people who are interested, and meeting clients. It's about persistence. That's a great episode by the way.

Chad: Yeah, they're great people, and they are doing a fantastic job. It's interesting, Brian, that the other Bryan and Laura Catherine, they are not pushy people, yet they have a ton of coaching business, and it's because they clearly understand their coaching niche, and they have a system for marketing and selling to that niche. I don't want to get too deep into it here, but we unpack all that at Breakthrough from how to network, sales triggers, what's a sales process in terms of how to have the conversations so you're ready for it, and even customizing or creating some coaching packages that target your niche. All of it aligns with your niche, so that's the important thing, at least to begin with.

Brian: Chad, I appreciate you joining me here, and we certainly hope that lots of people come and join us in Nashville. It's a great town. We just had so much fun down there. We ate well. We're going to eat well again, for sure, and it was just fun hanging out with people in a really compact time.

Chad: I'll give a quick plug to say you're thinking about coming. You're wondering what it's like. It's a lot of work, but there's also a lot of downtime, and Brian, and myself, and Bill Copper, we make ourselves available during the downtime because you don't know when a great idea's going to hit. So, we do a lot of talking, and coaching, and collaborating during breaks, over breakfast, shooting pool at night in the hotel lobby. There's just a lot of comradery and connection. Establish some really close friendships out of it, even. It's a fun time. It's a really valuable time. It's not for everybody, and that's why it's limited to 20 people, so we can really invest in those who are there. We have thousands of people in our network. There are 20 people who this is right for, so you might be one of them, and I'm sure Brian's got some

information he can share with you about how to learn more about it.

Brian: For sure. I'll put a little advertisement right after we sign off here, so if people want to know more, they'll know how to get there. Thanks so much for joining us today. Don't miss any of our podcasts. Subscribe to our podcast at iTunes, Overcast, Stitcher, or Google Play by searching for Coach Approach Ministries Podcast. We'll see you next week, and maybe in Nashville.

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