

ONE Using Coaching Tools

You already know the answer

As a coach, you know that the client is a resourceful individual and that they already have the answers inside of them. Your job as a coach is to help them to bring those answers to the surface.

You already know how best to market yourself as a coach, but you may not realize it.

In this chapter, I'd like to reintroduce you to some of the coaching tools you're already familiar with, but we'll be using them in a marketing context.

We'll use a variation of the Wheel of Life, the GROW model and elements of NLP.

As you become used to using these tools for marketing, you'll develop a good understanding about what's special about *you* as a coach, and how you can help your clients – so you get that message across to people in a really powerful and compelling way and you'll start to attract clients.

Now, whether that's pro-bono practice clients to start off with, whether it's paying clients ... whether it's attracting the *right* kind of paying clients – this book is going to give you the tools that *you need* to go out there and attract some people, and get your coaching practice off the ground.

Do you have a pad and pen handy? I'd suggest that you keep a pad and pen with you as you go through this book because there are some exercises and you'll probably want to jot down your thoughts as you go.

I'm going to be sharing with you some of the methods that I've used to launch my own coaching practice, the things that *actually work*.

Before we talk about the Coaching Tools, let's take a moment to think about what marketing really is.

What is marketing?

If you open any text book, you'll come across some very fancy definitions of marketing. And, it's always something along the lines of 'Meeting customers' needs *profitably*'.

If you ask the general population, they will probably include one or more of the following in their answer:

- Advertising
- Public Relations (PR)
- Direct mail or sales letters
- Websites

And these are all *parts* of marketing, but they're *not* the whole story.

When you look into 'What marketing is' the classical school of thought on marketing is that there are four 'P's'.

- Product
- Price
- Place and
- Promotion

What most people think of, when they talk of marketing, is the promotion aspect of it. The other P's are hidden. They are happening behind the scenes, but that doesn't mean that they're any less important. In fact, I'd argue that there's no point even starting on promotion until you're clear about the other P's.

More recently, marketing professionals have added a further three P's to the marketing mix:

- People
- Process
- Physical evidence

Let's go through each of the P's one by one.

Product

Coaching is not a physical product. Because it's an interaction between two people, you can't manufacture it in advance and show it to someone. They can't examine it in detail before they decide to buy. But that doesn't mean that you can't present it in a way that people understand. The more that you can be clear about what you're offering to your clients and how it's different, the easier it is for clients to 'get it'. So:

- What exactly is it that you're offering to your client?
- What's special about *you*?
- How can you package up your services?
- Do you only want to be offering one-to-one coaching? Or, do you want to do *group work*?
- Do you want to run workshops? Open seminars?
- Do you want to coach people by *e-mail*?
- Could you use *e-books*?
- Could you use *audio products*?
- Do you offer your clients any money-back guarantees?

There are all sorts of different options available for you, and even once you've got your product right, that's not the whole story because you need to price it.

Price

Pricing isn't just a matter of plucking a figure out of the air. The *more* that you understand your marketplace, the *easier* it is going to be when you're starting to set your prices. And this is pricing for:

- One-off sessions
- Packages
- Different options on telephone coaching
- Face-to-face coaching

Price says a lot about the way you position yourself in the marketplace, and also the kind of clients that you want to attract. Further information is provided on pricing in Chapter 4.

Place

The place is much more than the actual premises you use to coach from. It includes:

- The places that you'll be seen
- The company you keep
- The places that people would search for information about coaching.

Promotion

This is how you communicate your offering to the outside world. Where a company offering a product would rely on advertising and sales letters, promotion for a service such as coaching is done in a different way. But more about that later!

People

This means the people that your client interacts with as you market yourself and deliver your service. If you use a virtual assistant or call answering service to take incoming calls, they are acting on *your* behalf. Are they doing a good job of representing your coaching practice? As you grow, you may take on a receptionist or someone to do your business development. Again, are they representing you well?

Process

This is about how you operate your coaching practice and includes:

- How exactly do you deliver your service?
- What's the process for a new client?
- Do you have a standard set of forms that they need to fill in?

Physical evidence

As I said in the introduction, it's risky for clients when they first take you on because they don't know what to expect. What can you do to demonstrate to them that you are a professional and you're able to do a good job? Consider:

- Testimonials
- Case studies
- Coaching environment: Does it appear professional?
- Are your qualifications and public liability insurance certificates on display?
- Marketing materials: do they portray the right image?

The secret to effective service marketing

All of the Seven P's are important. But there's something else that goes to the very heart of what effectively marketing services is about; it's something that you already know about.

And that's *rapport*.

Marketing is a way of building rapport with our clients, before we've even met them or spoken to them. It's a way of connecting with our clients on a deep level – so that when they see your marketing message, when they hear about you, when they attend a workshop, they do feel that connection with you. So that there is no other choice than choosing you as their coach, because you already have that powerful chemistry with them.

But the only way that you can create that rapport is if you truly understand your target market. Who are the people that you really, really want to attract through your marketing?

Now, the great thing is that you learn how to build rapport with people as part of your coach training. You're taught all sorts of different tools – whether it's through body language, through tonality or through using the right sort of language with people. These can also translate into your marketing, and I'm going to show you 'how' a bit later on.

Before we do that, it's time for your first exercise.



The wheel of marketing

You can either use the wheel that is on the following page or you can use your pad and pen – I'll leave that up to you. On the wheel, mark where you think your level of knowledge is, right now, for each of the subjects listed on a scale of 0 to 10 where:

10 means that you know everything there is to know thank you very much, and you're supremely confident that you're already applying everything.

5 means that you have some experience of it, but you either know that there's plenty of room for new ideas or you're not confident about applying what you know yet.

0 means that you've no idea whatsoever about the subject or the mere thought of having to do it fills you with terror.

Definitions:

Niche: Your specific area of coaching, your coaching expertise, the type of clients that you want to work with

Marketing message: The message that you want to communicate to prospective clients

Price: How much to charge and how to package your services

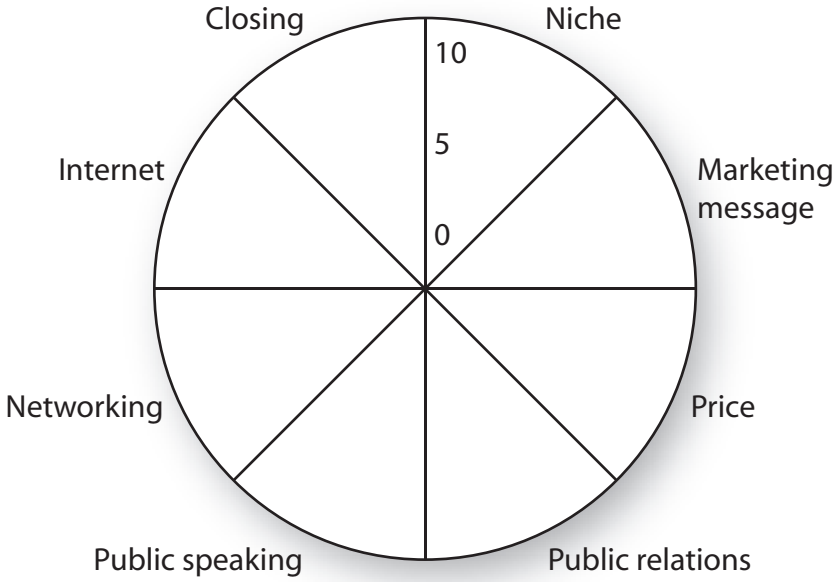
PR/publicity: How to get articles published and use the media

Public speaking: How to get booked as a public speaker and run your own workshops

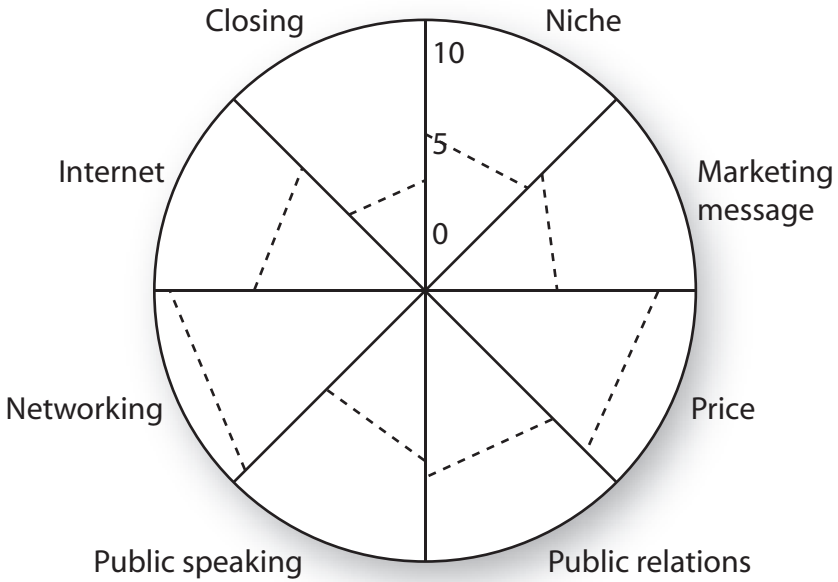
Networking: How to make contacts who will introduce you to other people, word-of-mouth marketing

Internet: Using the internet to spread the word about you

Closing: Asking for the business, how to convert prospective clients into paying clients



The wheel of marketing



The wheel of marketing – example

How wobbly was your wheel?

It's perfectly OK if you have a wobbly wheel. After all, if you were scoring a 10 all round you probably wouldn't be reading this book!

For those areas where you scored 7 or lower, what would it take for you to improve your score? What are the things that you want to know about? What would it take for you to improve your confidence in this subject?

You'll be pleased to know that for each of the subjects on your wheel, there's a chapter dedicated to it. As you work through this book, come back to your wobbly wheel and see whether you can start to improve on your scores.

GROWing your coaching practice

Here's another coaching tool that you can use on yourself when you're starting up your coaching practice. It's also good to use it periodically throughout your coaching career to review your progress.

Let's remind ourselves of what the GROW model is all about:

G for Goal

R for Reality

O for Options; and

W for Way Forward/Will Do

When you're starting a coaching practice, you're also starting a business and, like any good business, you need to you need to have a Business Plan.

'If you fail to plan, you plan to fail'

What are your aims for your coaching practice? What do you want it to look like six months from now, a year from now, ten years from now? It's very important to plan where you're going with your practice because, if you don't, it will be very difficult to work out a strategy for getting there.

Plus, how will you know when you've got there?

When you're starting out, it's very easy to say, *"I just want to get some clients", "I need to start getting some money coming in" or, "I just need to start paying back the money that I've spent on the course."*

But we do need to stop and think – what are your *real* goals here? *How many* clients do you want to have? How many hours in the day are you prepared to spend coaching clients? What do you need to be bringing in on a monthly basis? How much time will you need to do the administration, and also the marketing that creates more clients?

What are the *goals* that you've set for yourself, and your coaching practice? They need to be SMART:

Specific – what *exactly* do you want?

Measurable – how can you measure your progress/achievements?

Achievable – don't set yourself up to fail, make goals achievable

Realistic – what is realistic for you and your circumstances?

Timed – when do you want to achieve your goal by?

When you do set yourself SMART goals for your practice, you are really 'walking the talk'.



EXERCISE

Using the table below (or your notepad), write down your goals for the next three months, six months and the next year. You can add some beyond that timeframe too.

	3 months	6 months	1 year
How many clients will I be working with on a monthly basis?			
How many hours a week will I spend coaching?			
How much will I be earning each month from coaching clients?			
How many hours each week will I spend on administration, marketing, accounts, etc?			

SMART goals save you money!

It is *really, really* important to have very clear goals when you're deciding on the type of marketing that you want to do. It will inform the decisions you make. For example, it's very easy to be tempted by an advertising salesperson to invest money on an advert and say, "Okay, well that cost me £200 – I'll see what happens."

Is your aim here to pay back that £200 or to have generated £1,000 in new business for you?

How many new enquiries do you want to generate?

How many of those people need to become clients?

If you got one new client, would that be a successful result?

And if you want to get that one client – is advertising the best way of doing it?

Are there *other* routes that could get you that one client? Which route presents the best value for your money?

Later in this book, we'll be examining your coaching niche – if you're *really specific* about the type of clients that you want to work with, it becomes an awful lot easier to *attract* them, because you understand them. You understand how they think. You understand where they search for information. You understand what their worries are – what their *concerns* are.

NLP techniques in marketing

Many coach training courses incorporate some Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) techniques. May I suggest that you refer to a good NLP book as you go through this section if you have not already studied NLP. As I said in the assumptions, I have assumed that you already have at least a basic understanding of NLP techniques.

Matching and mirroring is a commonly used technique for making clients feel at ease when they are in a coaching session.

We all know that it's very important to strike up that *strong rapport* with a new client – so that they feel that they are understood, that they've been *heard*. You're their kind of person and you 'get them'. It's very important for clients to *feel* that they've been understood.

But what happens if you're not face-to-face with that client? What are the ways that you can build rapport with them?

If you're talking to them over the phone – you can start to match their tempo, their tone of voice, and the language they use by para-phrasing or using the client's words.

Marketing is rapport

When you understand the people that you want to work with and the way that they like to communicate, you can create rapport without even being engaged in a conversation with them by using your marketing.

You can adapt the language, look and style of your website, publicity materials, brochures etc to create rapport.

But it's just as easy to inadvertently break rapport through marketing. Let me give you an example:

For argument's sake, let's say that you've chosen partners in large accountancy firms as the people who you'd like to work with. You've decided to send them out a letter in a format that *you* really like.

You want to present yourself as fun and light-hearted, so it's got a bright pink header and is written in one of those hand-written fonts.

But think about how that's received at the other end. Think about the expectations of that person and how they might want to be dealt with. They consider themselves to be experienced, professional and they are used to people showing them a lot of respect. Whilst they might be fun and light-hearted themselves outside of work, they have received the letter *at work* where they are a very different person.

Whilst the content of the letter or brochure might be relevant for them, the presentation broke rapport because it didn't appear to be for 'people like them'. Would a letter in black and white in Times New Roman have worked better?

But, wait a minute, what if you sent a similar letter to parents of toddlers via their nursery telling them about parent coaching? Would that be more appropriate?

When you're designing your business cards, your website – all of the different things that are going on with your marketing – think about how you can use it to create rapport with the people who are going to be receiving it.

The better that you can understand the person that you're marketing to, the more likely it is that you'll design messages that they'll respond to well.

Modality marketing

From NLP, we know that people generally have a dominant preference for one of three main senses. There are three main representational systems and these are:

- Visual
- Auditory
- Kinesthetic

The language that people choose can give an indication of which sense they tend to use the most, for example:

- Visual – looks good to me, I see what you mean
- Auditory – sounds about right, that strikes a chord
- Kinesthetic – it hit home, gut reaction

It's fairly easy to pick up on someone's preferred sense when they are communicating directly with you, but it's not as easy when you're engaged in one-way communication, for example, writing the content for a website.

In this case, it's safer to keep your language as neutral as possible to avoid accidentally mismatching with your prospective clients.

Modeling in marketing

Modeling is the process of breaking down what it is that makes somebody successful so that it can be replicated.

You can use this process to find someone who is marketing themselves successfully and model them. Probably the most famous coach who talks about modeling is Anthony Robbins. As he says, *"Success leaves clues."*

Anthony Robbins is very successful at what he does and is known internationally but, it didn't happen overnight and you could look for clues to how he became so successful and model your approach on his.

Something that he talks about a lot was how he used to read as many books on personal development as he could get his hands on. He also says that he would test and try out new techniques as soon as he learned them.

On the marketing front, here are just some of the things that he does to promote himself:

- Writes books
- Holds seminars, events and workshops
- Speaks on the TV and radio
- Writes articles
- Has a website
- Produces audio products
- Advertises on TV through infomercials
- Uses testimonials from well-known people

In addition to examining *what* he does, you can investigate *how* he does it.

Clone alert!

Have you ever heard someone say that they want to be ‘the next Anthony Robbins’ or ‘the next Fiona Harrold’? What’s wrong with being YOU, just more successful?

Please don’t become a clone of someone else. You are a unique individual in the same way that Anthony Robbins and Fiona Harrold are. You can learn from them and carry that learning through to be the best ‘you’ possible.



Exercise

Think about a famous coach or someone you admire. What do they do to promote their services? What are the messages they use? How do they communicate with their target audience? What can you learn from them? How can you model your approach on theirs? (More later about your unique niche.)

Summary

- You already have a number of tools that you can use to plan how to attract paying clients to you
- There are seven P's in the marketing mix:
 - Product/service offering
 - Price
 - Place
 - Promotion
 - People
 - Process
 - Physical evidence
- Marketing coaching is different from marketing a product because it's intangible – your clients can't examine it before they decide to buy
- Marketing is about building rapport with prospective clients
- Use the Wheel of Marketing to track your progress
- GROW can be used to plan the development of your practice
- Set yourself SMART goals to save yourself money
- Take care to match and mirror in your marketing
- You can inadvertently mismatch with your clients through inappropriate marketing
- Use neutral language in marketing materials as you don't know which senses your clients prefer
- Model yourself on a successful coach and pay attention to *how* they market themselves