

New Coaching Manifesto: Revisited

By Milana Leshinsky

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After I published my “New Coaching Manifesto” earlier this year, I received many responses. I expected to be “eaten alive” and held my breath as I pressed the “Send” button. Instead, my e-mail box and my blog were flooded with a lot of positive feedback and heart-felt stories. I thank you for that!

Despite a lot of positive comments, some readers disagreed on a few things, so I wanted to take a moment to respond. I thank you in advance for your open mind and the ability to see things beyond your current thinking and business situation.

Milana Leshinsky

P.S. If you missed the original document, you can download it free of charge here: <http://www.newcoachingmanifesto.com>



1. It's Never Too Early to Niche!

I can't tell you how many coaches I talk to every week who are tired, exhausted, discouraged, and lost. They feel confused because, even though they were professionally trained as a coach, they still don't have a coaching business. They're also tired of watching in frustration how “so-called-coaches” get new clients and build successful businesses, while they continue to struggle.



Kay writes:

“My mentor coach says it is too early to niche so I am not getting any support there.”

Kay, your mentor coach comes from the assumption that you're “brand new” and couldn't possibly deliver any value to a specific group of people. “Wait for the niche to find you,” she's probably saying to you. The truth is, **you may be brand new as a coach, but you are full of lifetime experiences!** Look at your past careers, accomplishments, and obstacles you overcame. Think about your friends' and family members' experiences.

Keeping this problem in mind, on the very first call with my coaching program students, I asked them to choose a niche. “I want you to compress time,” I said. “Why spend months or years dabbling in coaching when you can start generating income faster?” Fortunately, they listen. Oh, they resist at first! But ultimately everyone is working inside a niche market, bringing value to it, while creating a profitable and fulfilling business.

Bottom line is, the sooner you choose a niche to work in, the sooner you’ll start making money as a coach.

2. Coaching Outside of U.S.? What’s the Difference?

I found it fascinating to receive comments from the coaches residing outside of United States. Somehow, the perception of coaching is different in other parts of the world. Or, the ability to sell coaching is reduced by the “slower growth” in their country.

So don’t sell coaching!

Sell solutions to the problems people are experiencing!

In addition, since coaching can be done over the phone, there is no reason to limit yourself to a specific geographical area. I’ve seen many coaches feel the constraints of a certain city, state, or country, as well as the local economy, people, culture, traditions, and other factors that influence coaching industry in their areas. It doesn’t need to be that way. You’re free to coach anywhere in the world!



Luckily, some people got it. Joe Passage from Netherlands writes: *“I felt that your approach could never work for me here in this small country. Nevertheless I must say that with this “New Coaching Manifesto” you have succeeded in creating a mind shift for me!”*

3. Selling to Other Coaches? Gasp!

It might seem from my manifesto that David’s comments are accurate:

“...To be a successful coach one has to devise a way of selling the recipe for ‘success’ to the 91% of coaches who are not getting clients but are prepared to pay to coaches who advertise the best system.”

Yes and No: You DO want to develop “recipe for success”, but NOT necessarily for other coaches. You can work with any other group of people! ‘Nuff said.

Giselle poses a different question, which I was glad to receive:

“Are you, Milana, doing what you are preaching? Is your practice mostly full of non-coaches, as you suggest other coaches to have? Do you have books, teleseminars, CDs, etc., bringing real value and being wildly and successfully sold to hundreds and thousands of people other than coaches? I would really appreciate you answering these questions and I’m sure your answer will be an honest one.”

Honest is the only way worth writing,
Giselle!

Actually, I don’t consider myself a coach, but rather an entrepreneur who provides business and marketing solutions to the coaching market. Coaching individual is a very small part of what I do.



Going back to the roots of my business, I started out as a web designer. I spent several years building a web design business, and noticed that many of my clients are coaches who desperately tried to build their practice online. After working with coaches as a web designer and learning a lot about this field, I expanded into providing other services and solutions to the same target audience.

The problem I see with coaches coaching coaches is that they never leave the field. They complete coach training then become mentors to other coaches based on nothing but coach training itself.

Every coach has so much more to offer to other people!

4. Why I Hired Two Coaches This Year

I want to talk about something I’ve been holding from you. In fact, I even hesitated discussing this in the original “New Coaching Manifesto” document.

My decision to hire two coaches this year made me realize how important this conversation is to every coach and every business owner, so here we go.

There are two types of coaches in the world. There are coaches who do “pure” coaching. They focus on accountability, acceleration, and stretching you beyond what you think you’re capable of. They made a decision to dedicate themselves to your success. They are your fan, cheerleader, confidant, and “soundboard.” **I call them “Implementation Coaches.”**

Then, there are coaches who accomplished what you want to accomplish. They successfully raised bright children, created fulfilling relationships, lost a lot of weight, mastered a skill, or built profitable businesses. They develop products and programs around their “formula for success” so they could share it with more people without investing their personal time.

I call these coaches “Mentors.”

If you’re lucky, you might find both in the same person. I’ve never met anyone like that. Usually, it’s because “Mentors” have become so successful at what they do, that they’re simply too busy to coach clients one-on-one. So, they create ways to “mentor” clients through group programs and “inner circles” and charge a lot of money to give access to their personal time.



I’ve been fortunate enough to find two coaches this year who will no doubt help me get where I want to go. My “Mentor” built a business that I want to model. **I am in awe of his success, and still can’t believe he has room for private clients!** I am grateful for the opportunity to be exposed to his wisdom and expertise he gained over the years, and will take any amount of time he’s willing to give me.

My “Implementation Coach” is amazing, as well. She has coached many clients to success, has an incredible ability to “read” me, and comes up with great ideas to help me move forward on the direction my “Mentor” suggested to take. **I “clicked” with her in the first 15 minutes we spent together.** *(Frankly, I don’t care if I “click” with my “Mentor.” Lucky for me, he happens to*

be an amazing human being, but my primary objective is to learn from him, and hopefully have his success rub off on me through various forms of coaching that he does.)

Here’s something else important...

Your “Implementation Coach” must understand, appreciate, and “subscribe” to the ideas your “Mentor” is guiding you through. Otherwise, it will create a conflict in your strategy and may “paralyze” you in complete inaction. My “Implementation Coach” fully understands the business model I want to build, and is ready to support me.

(I see so many coaches try to follow the advice of different experts, systems, models, programs...No wonder they get nowhere.)

Now that I’ve explained that two types of coaches and coaching relationships, let me ask you a question: **What kind of a coach are you?** And, if you’re an “Implementation Coach”, what do you need to do to become a “Mentor?” What have you accomplished in your life, career, or business successfully? What do people consider you an expert on? Should you even want to become a “Mentor?”

The decision is entirely up to you. I am simply putting it out there and hope you think about it.

Whew! You’re still with me?

Interestingly enough, the coaches who recognize, appreciate, and apply their biggest accomplishments to their coaching businesses become much more successful than those who engage clients in “pure coaching.” Speaking of that, let’s get into another “sensitive” issue.

5. What Is *Real* Coaching? And Who Is to Say?

The distinction between coaching and other fields seems unavoidable. We try to “defend” what coaching is and, oh no-no, it is NOT consulting, NOT therapy, NOT mentoring, NOT training, NOT teaching!

Unfortunately (or very fortunately for some!) the market doesn’t care.

People don’t care if you help them transform their lives using coaching, consulting, therapy, mentoring, training, or teaching. They just want to reach their goals and overcome their problems faster!

Barbara Saunders writes:

“The radical critique of the “professionalization” of coaching is long overdue. I believe sports coaching and voice coaching and acting coaching are better models for life and business coaching than professional counseling. In those fields, licenses and certificates are not the norm; the test is knowing how to help people do a particular thing.”

In other words, **the results speak louder than any training or certification in the world.** And that’s exactly what clients want, regardless of how you help them achieve it. Coaching is simply a tool you have at your disposal, but tools don’t sell – results do. Keep that in mind.

Pascale Cotton from Switzerland writes:

“I think that what [many successful people] provide under the label of “coaching” belongs more to the areas of counseling, mentoring, consulting or individual training, not “real” coaching. But what is “real” coaching?”



Exactly! What is real coaching? And most importantly, who is to say what it is?

Quoting the ICF, “Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.”

Very true, yes? We live to inspire others to transform their lives. Couldn't that be said about motivational speakers, book authors, group leaders, and college professors? In addition, “coaching” does not equal “coach.” A coach may offer coaching, plus a variety of other services and products.

In other words, **a coach is in the business of transforming people's lives by helping them solve problems and achieve goals.**

So who is to say what coaching is? YOU are!

6. Can Information Products Replace Coaching?

Perhaps Ronnie from Israel submitted the most controversial and insightful comments.

Ronnie writes: “*E-zines, cds, teleclasses, ebooks, group coaching calls, books and more books on the same topics... Who has the time to buy and read al this stuff anyway? And how many books on the same topic with a very small angle shift does our world really need anyway? Are we writing books just to say, I have a book so interview me on the radio?*”



Sure, we all want to expand but there is no escaping the essence and the deep-seated importance of the one- on-one coaching that can change a person's life and make a difference. Is that not the reason that most of us came to coaching in the first place?”

Ronnie, I appreciate what you're saying. I had similar concerns a few years ago. What I discovered on my journey to building a coaching business, however, is that product development is not about stopping to coach individuals.

The purpose of developing information products is three-fold:

- Creating credibility on a certain subject
- Leveraging yourself by creating different ways of getting the benefit of your expertise
- Grow a company that doesn't rely on your presence

This means you need to think like a business person. **Otherwise, what are you building? Will it last? Will you be happy trading time for dollars 10 years from now? Or can you “bottle” your expertise and allow it to live for years and years, even after you stop coaching personally?**

Ronnie raises more interesting questions:

“I think the real challenge is how to do this in such a way that you don’t keep rehashing the same thing as everyone else. The business that runs without us, is it really worthy of that? A business that has our true value, expertise and “essence” and does not become a pile of auto-contracted, virtual assisted, teleclasses, laser-coached and people who have “trained” with us for a weekend and so on...I think coaching is one of those professions that are really from the “heart” and really quite “personal”. That is where the value is created. It is really quite different than most other types of consultancy, if you ask me. So we have our work cut out for us to be creative, be economical but not at the expense of what our value is really all about...”

Wow, I am so glad you bring up these issues, Ronnie!

First of all, let’s talk about creating rehashed products. The key is in YOU and how you make it unique. Remember the “X” factor? It also applies to your personal story, background, emotions, and how other people relate to you.

Someone might hear about law of attraction a thousand times, but when they hear it from YOU, they’ll say, “Wow, I never heard it put it this way, she’s really good.” So, personality in business is important, and capturing it in products and in process is very important.



I am not saying that you should stop coaching and start creating products, not at all! All I am suggesting is that “capturing” your coaching process in a product allows you to offer it to people who:

- a) Can’t afford coaching;
- b) Aren’t ready to hire a coach;
- c) Don’t fit your ideal client profile.

It gives you a **choice** in your business, and it gives your customers a choice of how to work with you.

Would I love to be coached by Toni Robbins, Brian Tracy, or Donald Trump personally?

Absolutely!

Do they have the time to coach everyone who comes along? *Not humanly possible!*

That’s why they developed programs and products that allow them to transfer their “magic” through other people and methods. Their businesses can function without them.

Donny Deutsch, on the other hand, is irreplaceable. That’s because the brilliance of his business is in his interviewing style and the unique personality he brings to “The Big Idea” show. (Although, I am sure that all his TV appearances will become a lifetime video archive for entrepreneurs for years to come.)

Here’s one coach that sees product creation differently.

Annette Reissfelder from Germany writes: *“I love and thrive on the live interaction with highly motivated clients who have great ambitions. BUT: I can (and will) produce “products” to attract media interest, so that I am being invited to the right type of conferences, getting interviewed by the right people and magazines, or being asked to contribute to business dailies.”*

Aaaahhhh...Music to my ears.

Bottom line is that the need for individual coaching will never disappear (heck, I just hired two coaches myself!), but it should be the LAST thing you offer to people! Leading with coaching as your primary service simply devalues it in the prospects’ eyes. Make people “jump through “hoops” to get to you personally. Only then will you get an ambitious, committed, passionate, and driven client who will succeed with you by her side...while building a rewarding and profitable business.

I don’t see any other way to think about it. Do you?

That’s it for now!
Signing off,
Milana Leshinsky



Milana Leshinsky is the author of *“Coaching Millions: Help More People, Make More Money, Live Your Ultimate Lifestyle.”* Originally a music teacher from Ukraine, she founded Association of Coaching & Consulting Professionals on the Web (ACCPOW), pioneered a series of global Coaching Telesummits, and created a virtual business university for coaching entrepreneurs.

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