

## Preliminary Questions

- Describe: "What's your dream?"
- List: "Who is your ideal client (avatar)?"
- Assess: "How much money do you have available to launch?"
- Decide: "What's your target date to get your business up and running?"
- Reflect: "How would you define "success"? What are your limiting beliefs?"
- Consider: "How comfortable are you with technology?"

## Defining Your Niche

- List: "What are you passionate about? (Get specific about who you are going after)"
- Research: "What are the needs of the market? Who are my competitors? What do they offer?"
- Describe: Determine what you will offer.
- Define: Develop your 30-second and 1-minute elevator speech (be bold about what you offer).

## Business Formation Steps

- Determine business structure (Sole Proprietorship, LLC, S-Corporation).
- Choose a corporate name (even if you are a Sole Proprietorship entity).
- Get an Employer Identification Number through the IRS (free).
- Get a State Identification Number and Business License (\$\$\$).
- Depending on the business structure, get liability insurance for you and/or business. (ICF offers a great option through the Hartford Insurance Company).
- Open a business bank account that comes with a VISA/Mastercard ATM card.
- Optional: Register business with Duns & Bradbury (DUNS) and NAV. (DUNS will provide you with a number that you can give other business you do business with in order to build business credit. NAV is the equivalent of EQUIFAX or other credit agencies, but for business).
- Start building credit for your business.

## Marketing:

- Determine what you will charge for your services.
- Create a logo (doesn't need to be too sophisticated).
- Create a "tag line" and an email signature.
- Determine if you want business cards. (Today e-cards are more common, but having a business card doesn't hurt. Follow the rules to create an effective business card).
- Purchase a URL that comes with email accounts.
- Update or create a LinkedIn account. (Make sure to add logos received when completing certifications).
- Create a website. (Follow the 8-second rule and add offer something for free to create your client funnel).
- Frequently track traffic on your website.
- Update your LinkedIn page to reflect your coaching expertise and the services you provide.
- Create a blog/e-newsletter where you provide free information targeted to your audience (post frequently).
- Create a social media presence and post regularly. Invite people to follow. Follow others.
- Identify and network with at least three "connectors" (people who have connections with large # of people).
- Network with other coaches and business people (Chamber of Commerce; local civic groups).
- Develop benchmarks for success.

## Marketing Don'ts

- Don't make your website/business cards too busy, less is more (hire a professional if not sure)
- Don't subscribe people to your blog/newsletter without their permission. (Don't assume that having a business card is implied permission). Don't keep people on your marketing list if they asked you to be removed.

## Contracts

- Create the habit of writing a contract every time you engage a new client even if pro-bono.
- Offer various options to the client e.g., platinum, gold, silver options.

