

## Coaching Practice

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So you've gotten the coach training certification, made up your business cards, and started your web site. You've discovered your niche, and you have been marketing – aggressively even!

But still, no one's exactly beating a path to your door. Kind of make you wonder what you're doing wrong.

Chances are you're doing everything right. The only thing that may be missing is a broader chance for the public to really get a taste of which you are. You need to build relationships with these folks. Yet, how can you do that without actually coaching them first?

Enter the big solution: workshops.

Holding workshops targeted to your niche is an excellent way to give your larger audience a real taste of what you do. The full 3-hour, or full-day format of a workshop gives your audience a chance to sit back and observe you at work. Not only that, if you've shaped your workshop to fit your niche, you'll find yourself with an excellent database of interested potential clients. You'll also be able to test the drawing power of your niche quite graphically, and learn the most effective ways to reach these folks. One psychotherapist I know in New York City built a thriving practice simply by leading three workshops about Jung and dream analysis.

An added perk: when you lead workshops, you get all kinds of terrific stories you can use in future articles, books, and speaking gigs. Three best-selling self-help authors I know actually lead workshops for this reason alone.

That said, there are a few key things that must be in place to turn your workshop the client magnet that it can be.

1. **Give yourself and your workshop a brand name.** Some of the most successful I know of are "The Ezine Queen", "The Comfort Queen", "Marketing Shaper", "The Publicity Hound", "Authentic Promotion", and "The Grok". These are ownable, distinctive names that let people know who you are ... (well, maybe not The Grok.) One thing's for sure... these folks, especially the Grok, are not easily forgotten.
2. **Teach with your heart on the line.** The teacher who cares the most wins ... so come prepared, give it your all, and don't say good-bye until literally everyone in the group has had some kind of breakthrough.
3. **Hand out plenty of handouts.** Class notes, additional resources, your own articles, forms, great quotations, etc., are essential marketing tools. Every one of them should have all of your contact information on them, including your brand name, email, website, all phone numbers, and fax. Put them in a snappy folder with a sticker on the cover that bears, yes... your brand name ... and website. Then staple your business card to the inside of the folder. And

be sure to include a well done one-sheet or brochure about your coaching services.

4. **Give away a free coaching session** during the break. Simply pass around a hat or jar to collect business cards as folks come in (they can also substitute name and email on paper.) Then draw your winner just before the break, which gives you the opportunity to give your coaching a discreet plug. This technique is especially helpful if you're doing your workshop in a venue where you have not done registered the class, and you lack contact info for the group. That nice jar of business cards gives you fodder for your database.
5. **Don't oversell your coaching.** Just mention it a few times lightly, and let the truly interested approach you. Better yet, instead of selling it, tell some stories (protecting confidentiality, of course) from your practice that demonstrate what you do. That gives you the power of attraction, as opposed to the stink of the hard sell. If you do your job effectively, they will come.
6. **Stress the importance of getting support** at some point in your presentation. Support is one thing that most people really deny themselves, yet that is so critical to success. And what better support is there than coaching? Seed it lightly but firmly in your talk.
7. **Continue to do your workshop** in any appropriate market. Nothing builds a base of clients like consistently getting out there. Your name gets heard, and your brand registers each time it does. You can travel locally or globally with this. But make a point of researching different markets to find your perfect group. I do this by seeing where other comparable workshop leaders are doing their thing, and I observe how they market themselves to these groups. Then I set up comparable tours.

**Long to lead your own creativity workshops?** You can with Suzanne's [Joy Facilitator's Training](#) – the turnkey program that helps you create, book, fill and lead your own creativity workshops! Based on her best-selling creativity books, from Ballantine.

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