

## Writing a Winning Proposal Can Boost Your Executive Coaching Business

As an executive coach employed by a human capital consulting company, I did not have to think about developing proposals that would win new business on my own.

I had the benefit of working with top producing business development executives and project managers in a team atmosphere where everyone contributed to the proposal development process. We also had professionally designed marketing materials, coaching program benefits documentation, case studies, client evaluations, an industry track record, trusted advisor relationships with key influencers in decision-making roles, etc.

When I started my coaching business several years ago, I started working with clients based on an hourly rate. While this is the approach used by most coaches, I quickly began to understand that as long as I established my fees based on an hourly rate, I would never be able to build wealth - other than to work more hours.

With this revelation, I decided to carefully build a new client base and design a winning proposal format that would be based on a project rate versus an hourly rate.

### **How do you develop an executive coaching proposal that guarantees client acceptance?**

First, decide what to include in a proposal. Developing an outline that takes the potential client's needs into consideration is the best approach. Often, coaches include items in the proposal that shows the coach in the best light. So, we include a bio, a great photograph, our web site, our mission statement, a list and description of our services, cost structure and so on.

I submit that most potential clients don't care about any of this information. What potential clients need and want to hear from the coach in a proposal is:

What are the benefits of engaging in coaching? Examples of similar successful coaching engagements.
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These items focus on the client's major question: **WIIFM – What's In It For Me?**

The final consideration for the coach is how to present the package. The easy way is to email a brightly colored, very slick looking proposal. However, I recommend that the coach present the proposal in person in a very simple outline format. This will allow the opportunity for the potential client: to ask questions; mutual objectives and goals can be reinforced or refined; expectations can be discussed and the coach has another

opportunity to identify not only the presenting issues but also the opportunity to uncover the hidden client needs.

Developing a proposal process that focuses on the client versus the coach will assist you in growing your coaching practice.

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