

BNI & Coaching

I've been in BNI (Business Network International) for a year now after avoiding it for years (by mistake in my opinion).

I've become a strong supporter of the BNI way of doing business and marketing for coaches. I've even included it in my CoachingBusinessEssentials Ecourse

Here are my current thoughts on BNI

Benefits for a coach:

- Focuses their marketing - too many coaches come in offering "full services" and not enough on tangible results and benefits. BNI training helps with that.
- Sharpens their marketing message - BNI trains you on how to be a good member and how to deliver your message so that people HEAR it. As a book I'm reading talks about "It is not what you say, but what they hear that matters"
- Become comfortable speaking to a group of people about what you do
- Become a better networker
- Become a better business person (for some this means acknowledging that they have a business and need to act like it)
- Provides a regular professional & social engagement every week for you to get out of your office, which is important especially if you coach by phone.
- Expands your network - people need to know that you exist. People need to know what you do. People need to know how they feel about you before they refer to you or buy from you.

Things to know about BNI and coaching

- You Are Your Business - (see my free coaching business essentials ecourse for more info) which means how you show up, interact, dress, follow through, connect, and respond/react all impact on others opinions of you and your business.
- Coaching is a high end intangible product as you expressed. It is very much like financial planning, real-estate agents, and car dealers. For all of these trades their business is based on relationships. For all of these trades all it takes is one sale a year to make it worthwhile.
- Because it is high end intangible you MUST create trust and relationship with people before they will refer to you.
- 1-to-1 sessions with group members is extremely valuable to building the relationship and trust.
- It takes time. I've been in my chapter since it formed last April. I've had 1-to-1s with everyone in the group now and only recently have referrals been coming in. I've received 5 quality referrals in the past 11 months 2 converted and 2 are on the edge. Just one client pays for my membership fees and dues for the year.
- Remember the value of the sale is not the immediate sale, but what is the annual income generated from that one client.
- BNI in many respects is the coachlike way to sell and market. Be yourself. Share resources. Attract who you want to

work with.

Last note:

- BNI's motto is GIVERS GAIN If you are only in it for yourself and how many clients you can get - don't join. If however your operating mentality is to share resources with people and connect, and to help people find solutions then focus on that and your clients will come.

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