CHAPTER 16: FOR COACHES AND HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONERS

Although I've written this book primarily for women in sales, this material can easily be applied to coaches and healthcare practitioners. If you are a coach or healthcare practitioner, you most likely think of yourself as a healer, which, of course, you are. But you are also in sales. The livelihood of your practice depends on your ability to enroll clients and patients into your practice. If you can't enroll them, you can't help them. If you can't help them, you can't keep your doors open. It's as simple as that.

By now I'm sure you've absorbed my message that sales is about service. Hopefully, this will help dispel any fear you may have about sales. The moment you engage with a prospective client who is considering your programs, you are serving them by determining whether your program is a good fit for their needs. If they enroll, your coaching or healing services are a continuation of that initial conversation.

Just like I have outlined, your initial enrollment conversation should be approached in a spirit of discovery and curiosity. Remember, the most important thing you can do is to ask impactful questions. The point of the questions is to determine exactly what the prospective client needs and to form an emotional connection with them. If they can't connect with you emotionally, they won't enroll in your program. Before you meet with your prospective client, outline your key questions in the following ways:

- Ask how they heard of you and what brings them in to see you.
- Ask follow-up questions to each answer they give you about the issue they're struggling with so you can get a sense of the underlying root cause.
- Ask how that issue is affecting them (i.e., what is the financial, emotional, and physical impact of this issue).
- Ask what they've tried up until now to resolve it.
- Avoid the temptation to offer your services too soon. Keep listening and remain unattached to whether they sign up with you.
- Avoid the temptation to tell them how to address the issue. This will amount to free advice that they won't value and won't apply. If you do give free advice, they'll think this is all they need rather than signing up for your service.

You can help them see what the issue is, without telling them how to address it. As a simple example, imagine that your prospective client is describing digestive health issues. You know that the issues are indicative of imbalanced gut flora (this is the what). You also know that this can be addressed with antimicrobial products, probiotics, and dietary changes (this is the how). Do not go into detail about the how (the supplements and dietary changes). This will either overwhelm the prospect, or they will think they can take that advice and try it on their own rather than enrolling in their program. Then they'll go home, make a halfhearted attempt at this regimen, and possibly make the issue worse.

After you help them see what the issue is (without saying how to resolve it), reflect back to them, in their own words, to show that you understand how they feel and how this is impacting them. If applicable, also refer to the prospect's results from a quiz, questionnaire, or lab test as evidence of what the issue is and how it correlates to how they feel. Black and white on paper can be a very powerful visual tool to help your prospect see the picture you're presenting.

If your program is indeed a good fit for the prospect, briefly tell them about it. Don't focus on the features of the program (such as the number of sessions or price). Instead, focus on the benefits and results they can expect to derive from the program. How will they feel as a result of the program? What will their day-to-day life look like? Paint a vivid picture while recalling the language and examples they presented to you earlier.

Provide testimonials from other clients or prospects with whom this prospect can identify. Quote specific statements from those clients. Again, paint a vivid picture.

You may or may not feel comfortable offering a "fast-action" discount if they decide to enroll in that moment rather than taking time to think about it. (Many business coaching programs will recommend that you offer this.) While it is true that incentives to "reward" decisive action can be helpful, if it doesn't align with who you are, don't do it. Always be true to yourself.

If your prospective client does need time to think about it, do agree on a specific day to follow up. Consistent follow-up is always key, regardless of whether you're a dedicated salesperson, a coach, or a healthcare practitioner. Remember that people get busy and overwhelmed. And a confused mind doesn't buy. So present them with a clear offering and agree on a specific time and way to follow up.

Don't be afraid to uncover objections or hesitations if you sense them. While you remain unattached to the outcome, you can use gentle curiosity to uncover the hidden doubts and fears you sense in your prospective client. Use gentle phrases, such as "I'm sensing I haven't answered all your questions. Is there anything else you're wondering about?" or "I get the feeling I didn't do a thorough job explaining the benefits of this program. What else might I have missed?"

Above all, as the coach or practitioner, you are the leader in the conversation. Your questions will create a safe container where the prospective client can share their challenges and how the challenges have affected them emotionally. Your job is not to solve those challenges in that initial conversation; instead, your job is to show them how your program (services) will bring about the outcome and feelings that they desire. As you do so, remain attuned to their emotional state. Help them to feel understood by reflecting back to them using the same words and language they use.