

3 Pillars to Becoming a FULLY BOOKED COACH



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Introduction

The Fully Booked Coach framework that I use with my clients is a tried and tested 12-stage process that I have been refining and tweaking since I became a full-time coach in 2005. In other words, it's time-tested and battle hardened by somebody who is time-tested and battle hardened.

More importantly for you in your desire to become a fully booked coach, **it works.**

It doesn't offer any shortcuts, it won't have you fending off clients with a long pointy stick before the end of the week. And it does require some hard work.

If get-rich-quick schemes are what you are after, then there are hundreds of people on social media looking to sell you a Unicorn.

But, I'm not one of them.

So, when your Unicorn arrives looking suspiciously like a donkey with a traffic cone duck taped to its head you may want to come back to this book prepared to put the work in.

You have decided to join what I refer to as the most competitive industry on the planet not called porn.

And I'm not joking.

The pandemic turned what was already a highly competitive marketplace into one that is utterly saturated.

People who had toyed with becoming a coach were given the nudge they needed by either losing their job, or realising just how vulnerable they were working for others.

If you fail to treat your coaching practice as a serious business just like any other, then you will almost certainly fail.



When I walked out on a 6-figure sales role in 2005 to become a life coach I was riding a wave of enthusiasm, hope and belief.

I knew that all I needed to become a fully booked coach was to be a great coach.

Er, well that was all a bit wrong.

On several occasions I came close to going back into sales because I had insufficient paying clients to meet my bills and no clue what the fuck to do about it.

And that was working full-time and with a LOT less competition than is the case now.



This book is not designed to take you through all 12-stages of the fully booked coach framework.

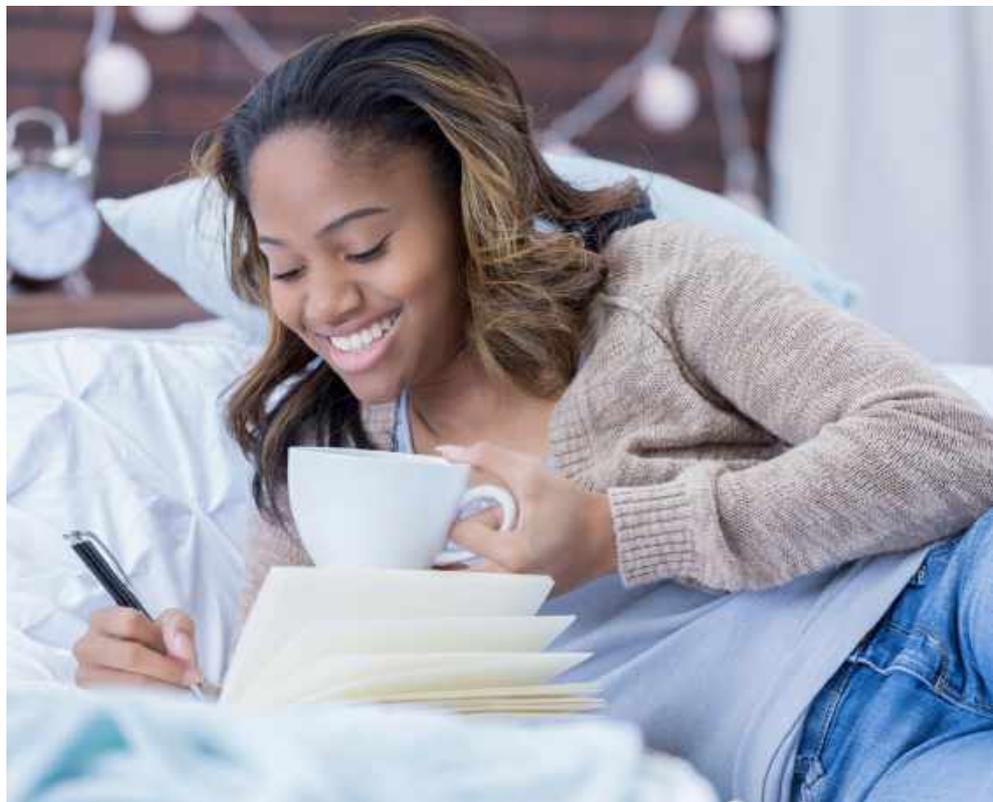
For that you will need to either read every email I send out, take my course, enrol on one of my masterminds, or **hire me**.

And call me biased, but I highly recommend all four.

However, it will explain 3 of the pillars you need to build to become a fully booked coach and that form the foundation for the full framework.

These 3 pillars are not enough on their own. But, if you understand and implement the underlying principles, you're well on your way to saying to a friend who has a coaching referral for you...

**'Another client? Oh darling
I couldn't possibly, I'm fully booked'**





Pillar 1
GET A NICHE

GET A NICHE

It's crucial you set aside any beliefs that reducing the number of people you appeal to will limit your opportunities to become a fully booked coach.

The exact opposite is the truth and here are five compelling reasons why:

1. **You can charge more**
2. **You will look like an expert**
3. **It's a lot easier to produce content people will want to buy**
4. **You can find your ideal client online more easily**
5. **You can build relationships quickly and effectively**

I understand that you may well be perfectly equipped to help many people with many different problems.

But you cannot market your services effectively to many different people with many different problems.

This is about your ability to market yourself and get fully booked, not your ability to coach.

WHAT IS A NICHE?

There is no literal definition of what a niche is other than it's a subset of a market. Which doesn't tell us a fat lot.

So, for your purposes don't give that too much headspace and think of it like this:

'I help this kind of person solve that kind of problem'

A weight loss coach for example could work with middle-aged men (*this kind of person*) who has gained weight over the years and is starting to get gassed trying to keep up with his kids (*that kind of problem*).

A career change coach could work with professional people working in the corporate sector (*this kind of person*) who is unfulfilled and unhappy, but unsure where to go for help, or what to do next (*that kind of problem*).

For me, I help coaches (*this kind of person*) who haven't got enough paying clients (*that kind of problem*).

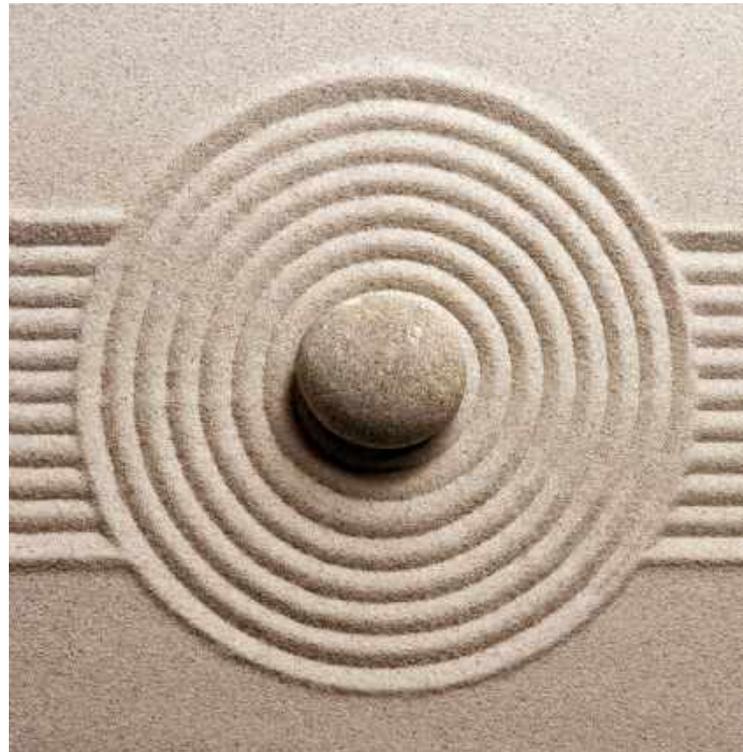


This is why calling yourself a life coach, a mindset coach, or even a health coach is problematic at best. It doesn't speak to one person about one problem.

Let's take a look at those titles and do some fine-tuning so that we can get them to fit into the *this kind of person with that kind of problem* model.

The aforementioned mindset coach is something that has grown in popularity exponentially in recent years.

I am probably seeing more people asking to join my Facebook support group for coaches ([click to join](#)) who call themselves mindset coaches than I am life coaches as I write this in September 2022.



Unfortunately, the title is popular with coaches rather than people searching the internet to hire one.

I'm not exaggerating when I say there are more people calling themselves a mindset coach than there are people searching for one on Google each month.

And yes, I have done the research to back up that claim.

It doesn't fit any one person with any one problem.

People don't see their mindset as their problem, even if you do. And even if it is.

However, if we add the word golf into the equation and say we are a mindset coach for golfers, then we have a niche that speaks directly to one subset of the population.



As a mindset coach for golfers you help for *this kind of person* - serious golfers - with *that kind of problem* - getting the mental aspect nailed down so they don't buckle under the pressure.

A few billion people identify as female so it's most definitely not a niche saying you're a life coach for women.

If though, you said you were a life coach for women navigating a divorce then you immediately have a niche.

Women getting divorced (*this kind of person*) and aren't sure how to manage their life (*that kind of problem*).

What about health coach?

It's closer to being a niche, but as 99.9% of people want to be healthy there's no real *this kind of person*.

And as different people measure their health in different ways it's also very vague when it comes to *that kind of problem*.

That all changes though, if we decide to become a Vegan Coach.

A vegan diet and the lifestyle, in general, has gone way past a fad and is increasingly appealing to people who previously loved to eat a dead cow or two.

With vegan we definitely have a *this kind of person* (health conscious people who may well be concerned by animal welfare and/or the environment)

And *that kind of problem* is wanting to adopt a vegan lifestyle but are unsure what that entails, and/or need accountability.



If you have a niche for you in mind now, run it through the *this kind of person with that kind of problem* template and see if it fits.

If you don't have your niche yet, or it just doesn't fit, worry not because more help is coming your way.

How do I figure out my niche?

If you have done more than a handful of consults, then you will know that some have you pumping the air with delight barely able to contain your excitement.

And I mean because you really want to work with that person, not just because you want to get paid.

So let me ask you this:

If your phone were to ring right now and it was a potential client that had you super excited and thinking please, please, please hire me, what would they be saying to you?

If you haven't done any consults yet, or maybe only a few, just close your eyes and use your fucking imagination.

- **What kind of person are they?**
- **What did they say?**
- **What type of language did they use?**
- **What problems are they encountering?**
- **What are they itching to achieve?**
- **What keeps them awake at night?**

Is there a niche lurking in there?

Could you be helping *this kind of person* solve *that kind of problem*?

What about clients you have worked with?

If you're already coaching there's no need to just think about consults, you can think back to client sessions, whether paid or pro bono.

Which were the ones that really had you super engaged, loving every moment and ended with you and your client excited and looking forward to the next session?

Again, look for commonalities that will move you toward your niche.

If you haven't done any consults or client sessions, or are just still are not sure, let's ask three questions.

1. What are you good at?

What skills have you learned, or experience acquired that may be valuable to others?

Do you have some serious sales expertise?

Have you successfully worked your way up the corporate ladder and know the ropes?

Could it be that you are a highly proficient writer with published books to your name?

Or, perhaps you have soft skills. Or, just an overall wealth of life experience that others could benefit from.

2. Are your skills meaningful, relatable or valuable to others?

Would your skills, experience and knowledge give you instant credibility and help build trust with others if they knew about them?

Having the ability to balance 3 live otters on your head at once is indeed impressive. But sadly, otter balancing skills aren't seen as meaningful, relatable and valuable...even to otters.

However, if you have worked as a senior executive in a Fortune 500 company, then the experience and the skills you acquired would be highly desirable for anybody looking to climb the corporate ladder.

If you once weighed 250 kgs and then got your weight down to 110 kgs and you're now ripped like a side of beef, then people looking to do the same would be impressed.

And if you have struggled as a coach, but figured things out and built not one, but two, highly successful coaching practices, then that might be interesting to a struggling coach. Yes, yes, of course, that's me.

It's important to understand, I'm not suggesting you turn to consulting, or advising (unless you want to), this is to help your marketing.

Being an effective co-active coach does not require you to have experience and/or skills commensurate with your clients, but it makes becoming fully booked exponentially easier.

3. Who are you passionate about helping?

And finally we come to the question that so often gets overlooked and which is probably the most important element of all.

Everything in this book is a waste of time if implementing it is going to make you miserable.

I not only want you to become a fully-booked coach, but I want you to be passionate and happy doing what you do.

I moved from a financially very successful career in sales into coaching.

It would have made perfect sense for me to have become a sales coach because my knowledge and skills would have been meaningful, relatable and valuable to other salespeople.

But whereas I still enjoyed the sales process, I was sick of the sales industry and whiny salespeople (like me at that time).

I'd have been as miserable as Eeyore after realising Winnie the Poo had stolen his life savings and gone on a honey eating bender (the bastard), as a sales coach.

It doesn't matter how skilled you are, how much experience you have, or how much money you can make in one field, if you're not passionate about it, don't fucking coach it.





Pillar 2

WHY COACHES NEED TO BE BE ABLE TO TELL STORIES

Why Coaches Need to Be Able to Tell Stories

Primarily, we don't make buying decisions based upon logic, we make them based upon emotions.

We then rapidly use logic to justify those decisions afterwards leaving us with the impression we used rationale.

Think of a time you were having a heated disagreement with a friend and you suddenly remembered a killer fact that you knew would end the discussion there and then in your favour.

You no doubt grinned inwardly as you prepared to deliver your stunning coup de gras to your poorly informed adversary.

Only when you did, the other person ignored it, belittled it, or claimed it was irrelevant.

They then carried on regardless leaving you stunned and shocked and wanting to stun and shock them with a cattle prod.

We've all been there.

But more shockingly, we've all been the other person too.

As a coach, you hopefully know that a strong belief is not the same as a fact, but many people don't.

And even when we do know at an intellectual level it can still be incredibly difficult to question our own beliefs.

We often give significantly more credence to something we strongly believe than we do demonstrable facts.

Few topics create such vehement opinions and polarize people quite so effectively as religion and politics.

But much of the polarization is based not upon verifiable facts, but strongly held convictions of faith.

But why?

Why do we not demand scientific proof that the religion we are aligned with is the one and only true religion?

Or, incontrovertible evidence that the politicians we support really have our best interests at heart?

It's because of stories.

Beliefs are built upon the stories that we tell each other and ourselves, not on facts.

The first cave drawings didn't depict recipes showing how to barbecue a woolly mammoth using a combination of 27 different herbs and spices.



Rather, they were stories of how the tasty beast was tracked down and then killed whilst fighting off a rival tribe.

I'm guessing you've never stalked a prehistoric animal whilst beating off people who grunted a lot and wanted to kill you. Yet even so, you can relate to a story about people who did.

Your own woolly mammoth may be a successful career as a coach that you are searching for.

And the enemy tribe could be the naysayers telling you that you will never succeed. Or even, other coaches taking your clients because they are good at marketing.

Compare the following two intros to a blog post I could have written.

Ok, ok, we both know I **did** write the shit first intro for a post many years ago.

1.

In this post I'm going to share with you 16 ways you can avoid stress.

I have used most of those methods at some stage in my life and found them all very useful and I think you will too.

2.

I slumped forward and put my head on the steering wheel.

My heart was racing, my hands shaking and my head throbbing. I just needed time to think.

I knew things couldn't go on like this, but I had been saying that for five years and things were very much going on like this.

Here's what in all probability will happen if you read the above two intros if you managed to stay awake during the first one.

Intro 1.

You will probably scan the page to look for anything that jumps out at you as being interesting, novel, or that you disagree with.

If there is something, then you may hang around to read it. But if nothing grabs your attention you will hit the back button.

You will not have connected with me as a person on any level.

Intro 2.

You will probably read on. You will be curious to know what on earth had preceded that situation and how was it going to end.

Most people hate not knowing the end of a story.

It's why TV series (especially dramas) can get away with leaving endings wide open. They know that the initial disappointment will soon be replaced by a desire to know how things climax.

I've had four blog posts that have gone viral over the years.

The most successful, *20 Motivational Quotes You Have Never Heard Of* generated close to one million page views.

That's a lot of traffic and had me very excited until my web host shut my site down for fear of crashing the server.

But, do you know how many clients it generated?

It's not always possible to quantify these things exactly, but I'm fairly confident it was **zero**.

All four were list posts and whereas list posts are fabulous if used correctly, they don't engage like a story does.

We connect to stories and we connect even more to stories that move, excite, humour, inspire, scare, fascinate, or resonate with us.

Steve Jobs soon learned that he wasn't going to turn Apple's fortunes around by talking about the superior technical specifications of the Mac compared to a Windows PC.



Instead, Apple told story after story about how cool it was to own a Mac because most people like to think they're cool.

When Jobs rejoined Apple in 1997 after a 12-year absence, they were little more than a yappy dog snapping at the heels of Microsoft.



At the time of writing, Apple has a market cap of \$2.7 trillion and Microsoft is at \$2.1 trillion.

Nike are far and away the world's biggest sports shoe manufacturer and they spend tens of millions on perfecting their shoes.

However, they know that few people care about carbon-fibre, self-lacing technology, or self moulding heels, they care about winning, improving personal best times, or just looking cool.

So, they ignore the technology in their advertising and tell stories about incredible achievements performed by athletes using their products.

You should regularly tell stories in your newsletter articles, in blog posts and on social media.

And your About Page **MUST** be a story. Not a list of food you like, puppies you own and countries you have visited.

Go and look at my About page

I've literally called the stuff about me that has no relevance to coaches like you, **Boring Stuff** and buried it at the bottom of the page.

As I mentioned, there is a time and a place for list posts.

They can be brilliant from an informational perspective because they allow people to scan for information that's interesting and useful to them.

They can also help with SEO (search engine optimisation), be very shareable and are usually easier and quicker to write.

Nevertheless, they will not allow you to connect emotionally to your potential clients.

And if you can't connect emotionally to potential clients, then you won't become a fully booked coach.



Pillar 3
DEVELOPING A
SELLING MINDSET

Develop a Selling Mindset

Sales is a dirty word to a great many people wanting to become fully booked coaches.

It conjures up images of fat, sweaty men in ill-fitting suits, trying to convince you they are about to lose money on the car you're interested in buying.

However, you're selling on an almost daily basis and I'm not just talking about coaching, or any related services or products you offer.

You may have to sell the idea of a well-deserved vacation to a partner reluctant to take time off work.

Or, promote the importance to your kids that they eat their greens and never pour vodka on their cornflakes no matter what they see you doing.

At this very moment, I'm selling you the idea that you're already a salesperson.

And I'm going to sell you on the principle that if you're selling anyway, you may as well go into it with the right mindset.

Fortunately for you as a coach, the 4 main skills you need to be a good salesperson are exactly the same ones that you already possess as a coach.

How cool is that eh?

It means you're already well on your way to being a great salesperson.

It's fist bump time Tiger!

They are....

- 1. Building rapport**
- 2. Being able to ask good questions**
- 3. Being able to STFU and listen/observe**
- 4. I'll tell you in a minute**

I've worked with hundreds of coaches either one-on-one, or through the over 30 courses and masterminds I've run.

How many do you think loved sales?

One.

Me.

And I'm weird as fuck.

The reality is almost nobody enjoys selling who isn't working in sales.

And there's also a lot of people who work in sales who don't like sales. They just like the money it can bring in.

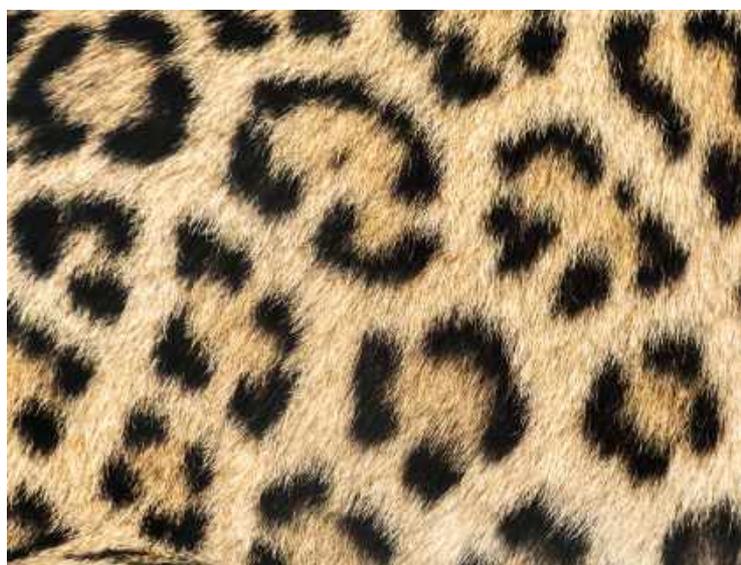
The problem with selling is that it can be like being the drunk in a bar desperately asking everybody who walks in for a date.

You're going to encounter a lot of rejection and probably get asked to leave.

And we humans hate rejection.

In days of yore, it could have meant expulsion from the tribe and starvation.

Or even your untimely demise at the hands, or more likely teeth, of a malevolent sabre-toothed tiger.



You know consciously you're probably not going to starve to death if somebody doesn't hire you to coach them.

And getting ripped to pieces by a fucking great cat with unfathomably large fangs is even less likely.

But the unconscious part of your brain doesn't know that and it's thinking of evacuating your bowels and hiding under the bed when it encounters rejection.

As we both know that it's your unconscious running the show, we need to be a bit more cunning than using logic to persuade it to stop being silly.

We're going to help you get comfortable with selling by using some lovely cognitive reappraisal to develop the correct mindset.

Or, as you probably know it, **reframing** which is the fourth skill and can be used to control your mindset.

Reframing is the foundation for CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy) and is insanely powerful.

Reframing is never about positive thinking or denying reality. It's about taking back control of situations by choosing how we think, and thus, feel about them.

When I was in sales, reframing not only earned me a lot of money (objection handling is done most effectively by reframing), but it also kept me relatively sane.

Reframe number 1

You're there to help, not sell

Ethical selling is not about trying to coerce people into buying products and services they don't need/want, nor can afford.

That's a win/lose.

Nor is it about you slashing your prices to such an extent that people will roll the dice on hiring you.

That will leave you with an unsustainable coaching practice.

That's a lose/win.

Professional selling is always about creating win/wins.

A.L.W.A.Y.S

For my last decade in sales (the financially successful years), I seldom went into a sales meeting with the attitude that I was there to sell.

Instead, I told myself I was there to help.

I was there to understand what a prospects needs and pain points were to see if I had a solution.

Note:

The word prospect is merely short for prospective customer/client

If I did, then I could suggest it.

If I didn't, I could thank them for their time and leave.

Consider consults as opportunities to see whether you can help somebody.

It just so happens that the more people you help the more money you can earn.

Reframe 2

Rejection isn't about you

Nobody sees a kid fall off their bike and worries about looking foolish helping them up.

Nobody offers food to a homeless person and is embarrassed if they decline.

And nobody worries that they are going to piss the person off already in the elevator if they hold the door open for somebody else rushing to catch it.

When we get anxious it's because we are focussing on ourselves.



What we look like, how we will come across, what opinions people will form of us etc.

In the above three examples our first concern is to the injured child, the homeless person and the one rushing to catch an elevator.

Not ourselves.

We're not worrying about the fact we have odd socks on, our hair looks a mess, or that we're really struggling to wrap our head around superstring theory.

If you remind yourself before every consult and every conversation about coaching that you're there to try and help another person, then you will be good to go.

It will take some practice and there will be some internal resistance, but you can do it.

Reframe 3

You're a human being

I want you to remind yourself that you're a human being.

You have great days, okay day and fucking awful days.

I'm guessing that's fairly easy for you.

So now remind yourself everybody else is a human being too.

They have great days, okay days and fucking awful days.

I'm asking you to do this so you can understand somebody not hiring you is almost never about you as a person.

They don't fucking know you!

There are 1,229 reasons why a sale may fall through.

Oh, I just thought of another, so make that 1,230.

I can't list them all here, that would be silly, so let me share some samples.

She just had a text informing her that Tony her pet Tortoise has passed away in his sleep at the ripe old age of 149. She is sad because she had a big party planned for his 150th.

She just got rejected for a promotion and it went to that bastard Todd, and she is angry because everybody knows Todd's a wanker. AND he wears shit shoes.

She just remembered she forgot to pick her kids up from school 3-days ago and she is slightly anxious.



Get the message?

External events impact our emotions and emotions have a monumental impact on our decisions to buy, or not to buy.

Remember we talked in the storytelling section about how emotions drive our decision making.

Unless the prospect views what you're selling as a solution to an overwhelming negative emotion they're currently experiencing, they are highly unlikely to buy from you.

Of course, they aren't the only reasons sales don't happen, you could have just fucked up.

I have worked with some world-class salespeople and they all fuck up deals from time to time.

Sales (like coaching) is a skill and an art, not an exact science.

Reframe 4

I'm learning shit here, woo-hoo!

I When I used to lose deals, and it happened regularly, I always used to ask myself one question.

It wasn't *Why did that utter bastard not buy from me?*

Nor was it *Why am I such a loser?*

Rather, it was something along the lines of:

What can I learn from this to make me better equipped to close a deal next time?

Every time you fail to convert a prospect who you genuinely believed you could have helped, into a paying client, is an opportunity to learn.

Reframe 5

Somebody else gets the chance to work with you

When you get that *no*, and after you have taken away any learning opportunities for next time, say to yourself.

Fabulous, now I have chance to focus on and help some other lovely person who will really benefit from my coaching, and who I may not have had the time to help.

Reframing, like anything worthwhile, takes time and effort to get good at. But you can get good at it, and you can get good at selling, so go and practice.



Conclusion

Of course, there is more to all these 3 Pillars than I can squeeze into this book.

Your niche goes hand-in hand with your client avatar to become fully effective.

Storytelling still requires a structure to be 100% impactful.

And there is a technical element to sales that is needed for you to take things to the pro level.

Plus, you still need to wrap your head around branding, building and maintaining a newsletter, social media, website conversion and a bunch of other things to make becoming fully booked a foregone conclusion.

However, if you implement everything you have learned in this book it will undoubtedly have you speeding in the right direction.

And make no mistake, it's the **implementation** that really matters.

The saying that *knowledge is power* is wrong.

It's the implementation of knowledge that is real power.

So implement it!

If you want to go deeper on these topics and the rest of the Fully Booked Coach framework then the Fully Booked Coach course may be a brilliant next step for you. You can read more about it and the start date for the next one [by going here.](#)

If you prefer one-on-one help and would like to tap into my 20 years sales experience, 18 years coaching experience and get some serious help on your journey to becoming fully booked you can [go here](#) and book a consult with me.

Best of luck!

Cheers
Tim

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Course details [here](#)

Book a Consult [here](#)