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Excerpts from Global ICF Speaker Proposal
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As an Executive Coach, Registered ICF Mentor Coach, workplace mediator and trainer, Susan works with diverse organizations throughout North America and Europe. In addition to serving as president of Swan Consulting Group www.swanconsulting.com, she is an adjunct faculty member for Johns Hopkins University, Notre Dame Maryland University, and the University of Maryland. Susan is a Certified Physician Leadership Coach through the Physician Development Institute and her certifications in mediation were awarded from Maryland Institute for Continuing Professional Education of Lawyers (MICPEL) and the Baltimore School for Mediation. Susan is also one of eight people who finalized the ICF written exam currently in use; and just submitted her application for MCC status through ICF.

Session Title

Building Your Business: Diverse Strategies from Successful Coaches

The following are excerpts from a proposal focused on business development

Starting a business? In the process of expanding a business? Looking for ways to provide coaching without marketing/selling to each client? This takes you through the “story board” from day one, through the 10th year anniversary (2011) of an executive coaching company. The company was launched on June 1, 2001 and within three months, the events of September 11, 2001 threatened to throw the business off course. Overcoming significant obstacles such as this will be just one of the topics addressed. Details will be provided on each of the following, and the session will end with participants developing at least one action item related to a primary goal:

- The business Case
- Financial commitment
- The first three months
- Significant obstacles, real (9/11), or imagined (internal fears)
- Staying the Course – Conviction, Clarity, and Courage (book chapter will be provided)

This book chapter summarizes the first five years:

<http://www.swanconsulting.com/articles.html>

- Volunteerism
- Do Anything you are good at – for pay; for a minimal amount of time/week
- The first 16 months
- Proposals – Make it Easy on Yourself
- Contracts – Make it Easy on Yourself
- Revising the Model
- Finding the right people / Finding the right company



- Setting rates / Negotiating rates
- Managing the People
- Maintaining relationships
- The Next level of growth
- Volunteerism

Brief Overview of Each Component

1. The business Case

Determining the services that leverage your strengths, and meet the need of the clients. Some research will be required to determine saturation levels in geographic areas.

2. Financial commitment

Determine required income for personal livelihood per month. Multiply that amount by a minimum of 30. Determine what amount of savings will be allocated to building the business, and explore options for obtaining a business loan. Obtaining a business loan will require the preparation of a formal business plan (sample business plan will be made available).

3. Significant obstacles, real (9/11) or imagined (internal fears)

A major interruption in business is possible at any time. Advance creativity, and creativity in the moment will be required. If you have given the business a pre-determined amount of time (e.g. 30 months) to become profitable, re-evaluation may be necessary. A back-up plan will assist in determining what additional amount of time can be allotted to achieving profitability. Revisiting parts of number two above will be helpful. It is equally as important to be aware of irrational internal fears. Examples of simple cognitive restructuring exercises will be shared.

4. The first three months

This is a tough time. In order to get new business, purchasers will ask about previous experience. Be ready for many “no’s” before getting that initial “yes”. Strategies for avoiding personalizing of rejections will be provided, and at least one will be practiced in the session. Capture every aspect of what you deliver in the engagement, as it will become part of future proposals.

This is where the three C’s: Conviction, Clarity, and Courage (see book chapter <http://www.swanconsulting.com/articles.html>); and Volunteerism come in. There are numerous ways to begin building name recognition. If you are building a business where marketing will be directly to the purchaser, it is highly recommended that someone representing the business is comfortable with public speaking. If not, attend Toast Masters, or work with a public speaking coach.

Accept invitations to serve on panels, boards, committees etc. And if they are not offered to you, go get them. There is no such thing as a professional association that is



not looking for volunteers. Examples of volunteer positions that lead naturally to additional business will be shared.

The approach will look somewhat different for individuals looking to align with one or more coaching companies as a subcontractor. The primary target market is coaching firms vs coaching clients. Several coaching firms will be cited as examples, and suggestions regarding how best to approach them will be explored.

Audience Participation The audience will be asked to think about the four questions posed below. Six volunteers will be invited to come forward; 3 representatives from coaching firms, and three coaches who subcontract to one or more coaching firms. The presenter will serve as MC, posing two initial questions to the two groups of volunteers. The questions posed will be:

Coaching Companies:

- i. What are the top three criteria considered when hiring or contracting with coaches?
- ii. How do you go about finding your coaches?

Coaches

- iii. What strategy do you consider successful in order to gain the attention of, and potential offer of contractual work with coaching companies?
- iv. How do you go about determining with which companies you want to be aligned?

5. Do Anything you are good at – for pay; for a minimal amount of time/week

If you are not certain about all the things you are good at; try! As an example, the presenter was asked to take 1,800 pages of deposition and cull it down to 20 pages; something never even considered in the past. It was done, and done well. Never having done something in the past does not equate to an inability to do it.

It is critical that ample time is available during each week to continue to stay the course of focusing on the business. Allocating more than 20 hours a week to the income-generating (non-core business focused) work will significantly reduce the time and energy needed for the business.

6. The first 16 months



- Proposals – Make it Easy on Yourself (sample language/format will be made available)
- Contracts – Make it Easy on Yourself (sample language/format will be made available)

7. Revising the Model

Many coaches/consultants reach a point in their business when they are interested in working less and making more. In the presenter's case, this is when building the bench of coaches, consultants and trainers launched. Critical steps in order to assure success include:

- Finding the right people
- Setting/negotiating rates
- Managing the people
- Managing the engagements
- Maintaining relationships

8. The Next level of growth

9. Volunteerism

Closing Exercise

The following outline will be made available to all participants. Participants will be encouraged to use the exercise as a start to building their own Individual Development Plan.

Goal:

Strategy:

Action Step:

Participants will then be encouraged to find a person in the session to serve as their accountability partner. Exchange of contact information will be the first step. The next step is to agree on when they will talk next, and for what they will be holding each other accountable in the call. Examples will be given.

Susan is available to facilitate the above session for ICF chapters. Other opportunities through Swan Consulting include:

- DiSC Train The Trainer workshops (email smhahn@swanconsulting.com for dates)
- Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI) certification trainings (email for dates)

For a brief amount of time, you may request a link to take the *Entrepreneurial Dimensions Profile* (EDP) at no cost. This is an instrument that compares your profile (personality and skills) to that of internal managers and entrepreneurs. It was developed and recently launched by Eckerd College and the Center for Creative Leadership. The only thing we ask in return is your input on how you would envision the instrument being utilized.

