

BUILDING A GREAT
Coaching
Business

THE COACHES LIFELINE

NEIL ESPIN

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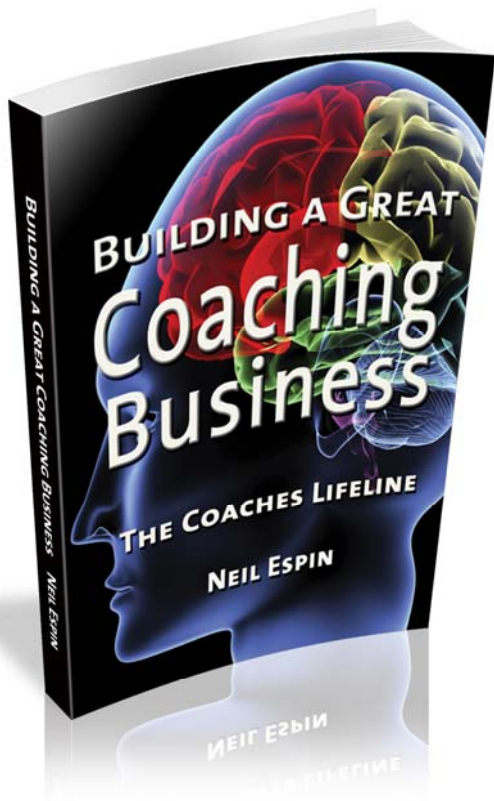
THE COACHES LIFELINE

Neil Espin

presents

Building a Great Coaching Business The Coaches Lifeline

With many people entering the coaching profession not knowing what to expect and failing miserably, it is time for a book that is practical, humorous and thought provoking, and this is that book! With real examples of success to help show coaches where they are going wrong, Neil Espin gives readers the confidence to become their own boss and run a successful coaching business.



With other 18 years experience coaching in many diverse industry and business sectors, Neil knows everything there is to know about coaching. Neil trained as a coach in 1990 and then, along with his wife Vicki, founded their award winning coaching organisation, the Corporate and Executive Coaching Organisation Ltd, which specialises on three main areas - One to One Executive Coaching, Team Coaching and Coach Training. Along with Vicki, Neil is also the author of "77 Habits of Highly Successful Coaches".



"I wish Neil's book had been around when I first started my coaching business! It's full of really practical and easy-to-do tips for business success. I'm definitely going to put quite a few into practice myself!" Sarah Urquhart – Corporate and Executive Coach, Author of 101 Ways to Love Your Job and columnist.

For more information about Neil see www.cecoach.com

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by Neil Espin

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**Building a
Great Coaching
Business:**

The Coaches Lifeline

Neil Espin





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Neil Espin asserts the moral right to be
identified as the author of this work.

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Each and every one of my clients and coaches who unwittingly laid the seed for this book

Chris Day Filament Publishing for his help in bringing this book to fruition

And to Vicki who supports me always.

The Corporate and Executive Coaching Organisation Ltd.

The Corporate and Executive Coaching Organisation Ltd. (CECO) is a specialist executive coaching provider founded by Neil Espin and Vicki Espin.

CECO's aim is to raise the level of professional and personal development through the executive coaching solution of people inside organisations. Working at senior levels within client companies on;

executive coaching

leadership

teams

change

careers

performance

cultural change

In house bespoke corporate and executive senior management coach training.

professional coach training

These are just few areas of expertise CECO specialise in. The Institute of Leadership and Management have recognised CECO's coaching programmes and have awarded the Level 7 Certificate and Level 7 Diploma in Leadership Mentoring and Executive Coaching, The ILMs highest award as well as endorsing CECO's High Impact Coaching for Business Leaders Coach Training programme and Coaching for Success.

The feedback on the quality of our executive coaching programmes is second to none.

Neil Espin and Vicki Espin have between them over 36 years corporate and executive coaching experience and are widely acclaimed as the most experienced executive coaches in the UK and probably Europe.

Professionally trained as Corporate and Executive coaches they now tutor on this subject and have delivered this coaching knowledge to over 5000 individuals who wish to move into the executive coaching arena. And to their corporate clients who are looking to introduce either a coaching culture or strategically develop a coaching mindset in the organisations 'way of doing business'

With the use of their expertise as professional coaches, Transactional Analysis, MBTI and NLP techniques CECO deliver a unique blend of executive coaching solutions.

CECO are winners of The Training Journal Award for the Best Coaching Programme 2008 which is based on The ILM Level 7 Certificate in Leadership Mentoring and Executive Coaching.



“In matters of business take this as a maxim,
that it is not enough to give things their
beginning, direction or impulse;
we must also follow them up and never
slacken our efforts until they are brought to
a conclusion”

Francesco Guicciardini (1483 – 1540)

A Personal Message to you

I want to say thank you; unusual before you have bought this book I know. You could have picked another book to help you achieve what you want to do in coaching, but you didn't. You picked up this one. I invite you to go the next step and make this purchase. I also wish to say thank you for taking this step, because when you buy any book, you are putting your trust in the author, in so much as you believe you will take something from the text that you will want and need.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil', with a stylized, cursive script.

Neil

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Introduction

The single biggest fear for most people who are starting out on their own can often be, “I’m on my own now. Where do I start?”

This book is aimed at giving you a flying start. It is jam packed with practical things that if you choose to put into practice will actually work.

A new coach needs the opportunity and time to establish his/her professionalism and their ability to successfully work with an organisation’s management team. This can be portrayed as complicated but I firmly believe that it isn’t as complicated as many people would have you believe.

***“Coaching is the universal language
of change and learning... and values,
cultural complexity and difference”***

CNN

Let me introduce you to Fred

I will share a piece of information with you having purchased this book you will have helped me to quieten down my version ‘Fred’.

Fred is a character who is brought into many aspects and situations in this book and you will find out where and

how to deal with your Fred, as you move through the various chapters. We all have our own version of Fred and yes that means you too!

Fred – otherwise known as my internal dialogue – has been telling me for a while now that I haven't the time to write a book. At times, he has told me I couldn't possibly do it either and even if I did who the heck would want to buy it anyway? I mean who would want to hear from me? Now, rationally I know that Fred is not giving me factual information and that his statements are just not true. I know this because thousands of people have heard me speak about coaching and I have had great feedback from both open programmes and those designed to run inside organisations.

I have developed a successful business for myself, not once but three times. In between I have built successful operations for blue chip companies before I decided that I just wasn't put on this earth to be an employee.

The Corporate and Executive Coaching Organisation Ltd. Founded 1996 (or CECO as it is better known) is the business I currently own, manage and founded with my co director and wife Vicki. Professionally trained to coach in 1990, we have many years coaching experience inside organisations. Along with all the tutorials we have done, I reckon this puts us firmly in the forefront of executive coaching in the UK and probably Europe. I know what you may be thinking,

“So just how does this impact me? “What’s in this for me (or WIIFM)?”

The benefits of this experience and sustainability to you are simply this. What you are about to learn is from practical knowledge of what works and what doesn’t. I will identify the most common pitfalls and show you how to avoid them. The likelihood is that I have done what you are about to do, or are currently doing. I know it has been painful at times.

The principals in this book are not based on academia; they are certainly not theoretical and are most definitely not book-learned. I understand that you may want to adapt some of the principals to match your own unique style but the basic ideas are a core foundation for you to work with.

The whole basis of this book is;

- To keep things simple
- To take the easy path rather than attempt to push water up hill with a stick.
- Simple and practical examples and ideas to help you succeed.

As one participant on a programme said.

“If you want to learn in a short space of time what it took Neil 30 years to figure out, and have some fun at the same time, go on one of his programmes.”

Peter Law M.D Media Foundry

This book is written in plain language and it will blow away many myths and enable you to understand how things made complex can be really quite simple.

It is about the simple way for coaches to gain clients. All the intricacies, ('smoke and mirrors' that surround building a business and 'selling' your services) have been stripped away.

The intention is that you will understand what you need to do without having to spend your time and money on attending sales courses to learn something that you already know how to do.

Chapter I

Getting Started – Doing it Right

Ensure your business is built on firm foundations!

Here are a couple of scenarios that you might just be able to relate to.

You have decided to take a new career step to build yourself a new life. You figure that as you have been in business for many, or even just a few successful years, you will use this knowledge to launch yourself into the world of coaching by building your own coaching practice. By the way this used to be called a coaching business. Therefore we should refer to your business as a business, by doing so you will put a different emphasis on your activities and how you view yourself as a successful business person. I assume that because you are reading this book the business you are building is in coaching and to be precise, executive coaching.

You may have taken a redundancy, or have been made redundant, and have chosen to see the great opportunity that now lies before you in the next phase of your life. There is a well worn saying that springs to mind. “This is the first day of the rest of my life” It is still true for me because I chose to look at life in just that way and have never ever looked back, except perhaps in

disbelief that it took me so long to come to realise that I hadn't taken the amazing leap into this world of freedom before. You may of course have decided that you want personal freedom and have chosen to set up your own business, or perhaps you want a new direction in your career.

Maybe you are just returning to work, there are countless reasons; however, I am certain of one thing:

The question many people ask, having decided to take the leap (and sometimes it can be a leap of faith in your own abilities) is "where on earth do I begin?" The routes into coaching can seem endless and so varied, with dozens of people offering so much advice (often conflicting) that it can be very confusing. Throughout this book my aim is to bring a little clarity and to illuminate the process you may choose to go through.

Option 1.

You can read a few books to understand the basic coaching frameworks and just get on with it. Coaching is just about asking questions in a structured way and nodding in the right places, isn't it?

I mean, how difficult can asking a few questions be?

Option 2.

This doesn't seem enough somehow. Perhaps I should listen to some audio on this, but then who do I listen to? None the less, you choose who you think will help you, now you are ready to get clients. By the way these used

to be called customers. After all, if the authors and published coaches can do it then so can you, right? Wrong!

So many published experts can write about the subject. Some even talk about the subject. However the key question is can they actually coach? Believe me some just can't.

Great coaches are hard to find and the trouble with great coaches once you find them, is that they tend to make coaching look simple. Here is the rub. If you are familiar with the learning curve, the great coaches are at the level of unconscious competence. This means they are good at what they do and they don't need to think about it anymore. It's something they now do naturally. The steps before this ultimate stage of development are;

Unconscious Incompetence,

I don't know what I don't know. Therefore this looks easy. Let me at it!

Conscious Incompetence,

I now know what I don't know, I am now learning something new about this and I am not sure I can do it. Don't be surprised if your learning and even your confidence takes a dip in this stage. Its normal and all part of your personal growth to the next stage, which is

Conscious Competence,

I now know that I am good at this and I know why. I may have to think about it but that works for me. You may even think that you sound a little wooden and the coaching

isn't flowing how you would like it to. Focusing on this is the last thing you need to do. Your client probably won't even notice. They will be too occupied processing and answering the question you have just asked them. Trust yourself until you get to the next stage, which is of course

Unconscious Competence,

I am good at this and I don't have to think about it anymore. It just becomes a natural state to be in. I certainly find that sometimes I may not feel ready to coach. However as soon as I meet my client, it is like throwing a switch and the coaching just begins to flow all the time, every time. I never question this or ask why it is so, it just works. Always. It will for you once you are at this stage of your development.

'Many Industry sources now state that the global business demands for coaching is almost doubling each year'

B. C. McGraw Hill Education

Not a bad business to be in is it, if you are great at what you do.

This is further backed up by **The Harvard Business Report** which states;

'In the USA the estimated spend on Executive Coaching is \$1 billion p.a.'

It is anticipated that in the UK the spend on Executive Coaching in The City alone is estimated at £40 million p.a. So here in the UK we still have a way to go. I often hear the same question on opportunity and amount of available business from new coaches.

“When will we reach saturation point?”

Looking at the above figures, I wouldn't even concern yourself with this at all. Become a great coach and you will probably never need to worry about a lack of opportunity.

Some coaches won't have invested time in learning the basics of the profession, or the underlying principals of what coaching actually is. They may think, “I know the GROW model” after all, the GROW model is the most well known so I will be ok right?

Wrong !

I met a business leader who recounted this tale to me.

Q“I drive to London to meet my coach I sit and talk to the coach who religiously writes down what I say, never asks me any questions or challenges what I say and what I need in order to achieve my aims. I do this for an hour or so and then drive back a round trip of 350miles .What do you think?”

This was easy;

A “Is this helping you achieve your aims and objectives, because if it isn't, then I'm not sure what it is, but it sure isn't coaching?”

I gave a 30 minute taster coaching session there and then and he asked:

“What was that?”

“Coaching”

I gained the business.

So ensure the coach in this example is not you, and it never will be. In addition to reading about coaching and so on, you have decided to attend a comprehensive training programme, not just a course, and you have invested your hard earned income, as well as time to ensure you get the best possible grounding in coaching, and probably even an accreditation to give you that little extra confidence and a huge amount of credibility.

Congratulations. This puts you in the top 3%-4% of people in this country who are prepared to take on this form of personal development. This is a staggeringly low percentage of people who are actually prepared to invest in their own professional development.

You are on the right track and ready to think about the next stage. Here are some key points that you need to be satisfied on before selecting your training provider;

Ensure your training company of choice is well recognised and gives you a full account of what you can expect in return for your custom and investment.

Ensure your training company of choice is well recognised and gives you a full account of what you can expect in return for your custom and investment.

Ensure the tutors are successful coaches, are credible and can walk the talk.

Ensure your aftercare to protect your investment is comprehensive, tangible and is in place. Test it out.

Ensure the organisation can answer all your questions. This will count when you are working with your clients/ customers and the inevitable questions you will face from them and you may just need some help with answering.

Ensure there is someone who can answer these questions with experience and authority. You simply must have access to someone who understands the issues you face away from a classroom and can answer them for you or in true coaching style help you find your own solutions.

Accreditation will count when you are talking to prospective organisations who will want to know that you can coach and have been professionally trained. How is this accreditation recognised? Is it self appointed by the training organisation or has it been recognised by an external organisation?

The professionals inside organisations with whom you are looking to do business might not ask you outright about your credentials; however purchasers of executive coaching are not easily fooled by expensive looking brochures, gloss and clever sales techniques.

You are likely to find when you are obtaining business that organisations in the main are well past the novelty of 'wow what is coaching?' It is now more along the lines of 'Coaching? So what? I receive a dozen calls a day from people trying to sell me coaching'. You need a different approach to stay ahead of the game and to keep your company and your offering fresh and vibrant.

The hardest work you will ever do is on yourself.