



From CoachVille.com

Lesson 16

Using a Sales Letter

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Should you use a sales letter?

Some coaches love the idea of sending a sales letter (or sales email) to their networks and others will cringe at the idea.

Welcome to the Baskin-Robbins of Full Practice. My basic theory is that if you fully/properly use 10 or 20 of these 100 strategies, you will have a full practice within 2 years.

Which means, you can afford to NOT use 80 or 90 of these strategies and you can still do pretty well.

That said, all 100 strategies do work, depending on the coach, their focus and their marketplace.

Why a sales letter?

In my view, there are 3 reasons to use a sales letter to get the word out about your coaching services:

1. To educate your network on what you provide as a coach.

Most people don't really know what a coach does/provides, much less what YOU provide as a coach. Use this letter to expand their understanding of coaching and of your services.

2. To get the recipient to respond to an offer in that letter.

Well, after all, it IS a sales letter, so you want the reader to buy something, even if it's something that's free.

3. To inspire the reader to want a lot more in their life.

This is key, really. You want to sell the reader on themselves and their life possibilities, not so much on coaching or on yourself. Because folks usually only hire coaches when they have a compelling need to. This letter can help the reader find that compelling need.

I went for all 3 outcomes in the sample sales letter I include below.

Sample sales letter

Let me be clear. I've never used this letter. In fact, I just wrote this letter today, specifically for this Full Practice lesson.

But I would use this letter if I was new in coaching and wanted to educate my network.

Free feel to use, personalize, customize or totally ignore this sales letter. At the very least there should be some phrasing that you can use on your brochure or in your conversations. No attribution of any kind is needed -- although it's only for your use as a participant in the Full Practice Program. If someone else wants to use/adapt this letter, they need to join CoachVille and pay for the upgrade to take this Full Practice 100 ecourse. Just direct them to <http://www.coachville.com>.

Dear Friend:

I offer a free professional service to everyone who asks for it.

The process takes about 20 minutes and I am told -- repeatedly -- that it's a significant turning point in the lives of the folks who take advantage of this free service.

What can I do in 20 minutes that can make this type of difference?

Simple. And it's a single-but-powerful thing.

I can help you become more successful by helping your figure out the top 3 ways that you define success for yourself.

Please let me introduce myself. My name is ... and I'm a professional coach. I work with individuals who want a perfect life. Not just a great life, or an ideal life or a rewarding life, but rather a perfect life. (Yes, it's possible. It's challenging work and it's what I what I do for a living.)

One of the things that I've learned in my years of coaching individuals is how important it is for them to simply, richly and perfectly describe how THEY define success.

- Not how their parents defined success.
- Not how their company defines success.
- Not how their culture
- Not how their neighbors define success.
- And now how they USED to define success.

But how they define success today.

Why does this matter?

Because until you're clear on how you define success, success will be defined for you.

I was speaking recently with a reporter for large metropolitan daily and she asked me "So, how would you coach me in the next 20 minutes?"

In the past, I would have blundered and bluffed my way through this process by asking her a lot of questions, offering some observations and speaking really, really fast in order to cram a couple of years of coaching into 20 minutes just to impress her.

After trying that about a dozen times in the past 5 years, I realized that it was not the cleverest of approaches.

Fortunately, I now ask THE question to get the reporter -- or anyone - thinking about themselves and their life in a very personal way.

I ask:

How do you define success...

...and would you let me help you tweak that definition?

(That latter part gives me the permission I need to coach and the freedom for the other person to be really honest with me.)

Within a second of asking this question, I can hear them thinking because it's probably the first time they've heard this question posed this way...

After they ponder the question...

After they ponder the question for a bit, the first of several definitions pops out and then the others follow.

Typically, they say things like:
--My family is important to me.
--I need to be successful at work.
--My health matters to me.

These are definitely important areas! But their first-cut at the answers is rarely powerful enough to make much of a difference in their lives.

So, then I start to help...

The coaching kicks in as I help the person to articulate what they most mean. And, believe me, they mean more than what they first said.

After about 20 minutes a back and forth discussion, they usually get very specific and the light bulb flashes on and they NOW know what's most important to them in their lives. Because they've gotten specific -- really specific about it.

And, once they are clear, the first thing they usually do is to spend more time in their life making sure that they can do more of that.

As a result, their success occurs naturally. It pulls them. They stop pushing it. This is a significant -- and pleasure -- change in one's approach to life.

Before and after...

Here's a typical set of before-and-after answers to the How do you define success? question. Again, these are just examples of how ONE person came up with to define success after our 20-minute discussion.

Before: My family is important to me.

After: I know I'm being successful with my family when we look forward to spending time together.

Before: I need to be successful at work.

After: I know how successful I am by how much I am enjoying what I do, not how much I am accomplishing.

Before: My health matters to me.

After: I know I'm being successful by how much natural energy my body has.

Why does it matter to "get it right" when identifying how you define success? Because until it's been specifically articulated and personalized, it doesn't do much good. It's just a cliché' or a vague answer until you've zeroed in on what REALLY matters most to you.

And getting to this level of clarify is where I can add value in this process. That's where the coaching happens.

Why does this 20-minute process work?

This "How Do You Define Success" process works because it provides...

1. Automatic prioritizing

You now know what is MOST important to you. This process automatically lowers the priority of the many things that could or should be important to you.

2. Excellent filtering

You now have an automatic filtering and screening system that protects you from the distractions of interesting-but-diversionary goals and ideas.

3. Instant meaning

Your search for meaning in life has just been successful. A benefit of this process is that you can connect the dots between success and meaning. An vital connection that has been, for many, rather elusive.

Intrigued?

I am available at 1.555.555.5555 to you and to anyone you know who would like to take advantage of this completely free offer to help in this area. Or they can email me at x@ to schedule a 20-minute chat for this process.

For someone new to the whole idea of coaching, it gives them a real-world way to experience coaching and leaves them with something worthwhile that will expand -- not diminish -- over time.

This Defining Success process is one of scores of tools and coaching services I offer (just email me at x@ for a complete list via instant auto-responder if you're interested).

NOTE TO COACHES: OPTIONAL PARAGRAPH

Finally, I'd like to offer you and anyone you know a free guide to

Defining Success. Just email x@. This instantly-available guide goes into the Defining Success process and provides lots of examples. It's a great resource and I make sure that all of my clients receive a copy of this --and you if you would like one.

Warmest,

Your name here
phone number
email
website

And insert testimonials of folks/clients who have gone through THIS process with you.

The upside of this sales letter

Here's what's good about this letter:

1. It's highly specific vs being 'about coaching.'
2. It educates the reader on something interesting.
3. It positions you as an expert in at least SOMETHING specific.
4. It offers something for free that doesn't sound cheap.
5. It gives examples of before-and-after.
6. It offers an ebook-guide for free which will allow you to capture the person's email address for later follow-up.
7. It fits for the reader AND the folks they know.
8. It points out the specific benefits of this process
9. It points out you can do/offer other things as well.
10. It's adaptable to for ANYTHING you want to offer, not just the Success Definition thing.

The downside of this sales letter

Here's what's limiting about this letter:

1. It may be too specific for your marketplace.
2. It's a sales letter. Sales letters work well for some markets and not for others.
3. The Success Definition thing won't not appeal to everyone. Most people are situationally-oriented (problems, dilemmas, opportunities)

Bonus

Several items for you...

1. Success logo.

Feel free to add this to your site. (Place cursor over logo, right click and download to your hard drive.)



2. Link to personalizable mini poster (pdf file)

<http://www.aperfectlife.com/successlistblankentrypdf.pdf> (acrobat reader required to read/view.)

3. Training Transcript

This is a transcript from the training we did for CoachVille Study Group Hosts on the topic of defining success.

Training Host Training Session
December 5, 2001 - 1:00 p.m. EST
Thomas Leonard, Session Leader

TJL: Welcome; who's joined us? (participants check in). let's get started - we're having the call transcribed but not real audiotaped. We're going to talk over the next 45 minutes about one of the particular micro-modules- how to help you clients and people coming to your upcoming events on how to be successful. I'll be talking non-stop for the next few minutes and get some of the points I want to get in, then we'll open it up to questions. Welcome to you all.

First, I'll give you an update on this concept - how to help your clients define the measure of success. I got a call from a CoachVille member who was attacking me - I almost never get this kind of call - and one of the 3 things I'd set for myself a couple of years ago was to be a nice person. Normally, I would've gotten my hackles up but I didn't and remained calm. We wound up having a 30-minute conversation and she ended up apologizing because she realized she was wrong.

Three years ago when I was deciding if I wanted to be Tony Robbins, I talked to someone who helped people in that position - a PR expert. One of the questions she asked was, "Haven't you ever defined success for yourself?" I hadn't, and I've now become a believer. The 3 measures I've set for myself are - which I've defined by using the phrase, "I know I'm being successful by how much....." (It's important to work through it with your client this way; you can re-phrase it later, but this will really help the initial phrasing.)

1. I'm enjoying my creativity.
2. I'm being nourished by my relationship with God.
3. nice a person I'm being at any given moment.

I came up with these within 2 hours of talking to this person, and these have stuck with me for 3 years and seem to be true for me. By defining these measures, I'm less distracted and less pulled away by other items that could've previously captured my attention. Having these 3 measures is a bit different than defining your values - values are often determined externally, while these measures are completely internal.

By defining these, you know when you're being successful, prioritizing what's important to you in your life. I could've said "By reading 100 books that have been read by 1 million people." That's more of a goal. I could've said "Believing in God", but that wouldn't really define my relationship with Him. I know how things are going by these 3 things, and it's greatly simplified my life. When I look at a new idea or project, I can see what's off track - they guide me as I move forward in life.

That's the end of my lecture - I'd like to spend about 5 minutes answering questions or taking comments.

XXX: From your point #2, is "I'm being nourished by my relationship with God" the correct wording?

TJL: Yes. It's not how close I am, how God-like I am, and so on, but how nourished I am - that's what makes it personal for me. It's not so much sharing this micro-module with people, but it's to work with people to share with each other.

Sue: I learned this by having learned this from you. It stops people in their tracks because it's something totally different. It's been phenomenal for people to explore themselves.

TJL: Yes, it's different than goal-setting. Thanks for that.

Allison: Is it necessary for there to be 3 items in the "formula" or can there be fewer or more?

TJL: I think it can be however many you want, but start with 3. If people have more, they generally add 2 more, or have one less. If they just choose one, sometimes people feel they're not being successful if that one thing isn't working.

Warner: I noticed that in "...being a nice person", there's the up and down of it. Right now, I'm in the down mode, but I think having something like this gives you the motivation to get back up.

TJL: Yes, women particularly don't want to use this because they're so conditioned to be nice already! What I've found is that once you've articulated the 3, I think the universe tests you to see if it's right and if you're getting it. One cool by-product is that you will find that you will change your life so there's a greater chance of success of these 3 things happening. For example, by coming up with being nice, I had to change a couple of relationships and lost a few friends because of this. This was so important to me that I wanted to make sure that my environments were geared to this. Even looking at certain vendors I work with, some are really expensive, but they do such a good job that it helps me to be nice. I'm unwilling to not be nice, and am willing to pay to make sure I have a chance of succeeding a lot with these 3 measures. They're more than just a game plan; they're an excuse to make changes in your life.

XXX: The cost of that vendor would cost you in different ways.

TJL: Well said. It will cost you success as well as happiness. As you see the underlying and hidden costs, it almost gives you a justifiable reason to change.

Sue: Did you, when you did this exercise, look back on your life and ask yourself how you've lived successfully to that point or look forward and say how do I want to live successfully?

TJL: I simply asked myself if there were 3 measures, what would they be.

Sue: So whether you were living that way or not was irrelevant?

TJL: Not irrelevant, but just not there. This prompted me to phrase things in a way that worked for me; even though I didn't do a personal inventory, it was an intuitive response, and that's what I recommend.

Sue: Great; thanks.

TJL: You can start with the 3 things that come out of your mouth and tweak it from there, or scrap them all and start over. This process is a new approach, and it may take discussion with several people to get better at this process. Who's next?

Karen: Do you believe that this is a further definition or clarification of people's values?

TJL: I look at values like - it's one thing to have a value and another to express and enjoy that value. This may provide a bridge between the two. I don't have it figured out yet whether it's an expression of a value or not - I don't think so; I think in your experimentation, you'll come up with a good segue or connection - when you do, let me know.

Sue: Don't you find there's an internal joy or clock that speaks to you when those 3 things are true?

TJL: No.

Sue: I don't even know how to describe it.

TJL: It's almost an absence of. Think of electricity that goes through your home - you lose something through the distance between the power plant and your home, but as they get better at transferring electricity, as you get better and more efficient, there's less reaction, less anything - it becomes a wonderful void in which things are happening. It's almost the absence of the feeling that's richer than the feeling. Anybody else?

Warner:
What you just said, kind of takes me to a new level.

TJL: Yes, you don't get worried about the semantics, it just IS it. There is a getting to know yourself process though, where people will need to experiment with the first 3 they come up with. Let them know that up front - that it may take months or years of trying it out to see if it truly fits. Set it up that way - don't set them up for stress in a "pass or fail" situation, but let them know they'll be playing with these for a while.

Allison: Would you say that success is a part of what you do when you're living your dream life?

TJL: You're looking at the connection between success and you dream life?

Allison: Yes.

TJL: It is a little confusing - we have a Perfect Life program, then we have an Absence Of program, tolerations, etc. What I've found is to hold each of these programs and projects separately and let them find their own connections. Rather than just choosing one, look at it like a diamond. It's the richness of that variety that is enjoyable, and I'll let them figure it among themselves how they should be connection. That wasn't a direct answer - I don't think there is one.

Warner:

Is there any specific order these items should be in?

TJL: I don't really know; I think, in retrospect, my 3 are in their natural order for me. I didn't plan it that way, but it did come out that way. Not that many people are using this particular technique, so in many ways you'll be the pioneers in sharing this with your group and they in turn sharing it with their clients.

Anybody want to be a volunteer where I help you tweak a couple?

Warner:
I will.

TJL: Remember, it's important to use that phrase exactly as I've described it. So, Warner, give us the one-liner.

Warner:
Basically, I know I'm being successful when...

TJL: Wait. People have the tendency to add stuff to it or take away from it - remember, impress upon them the need to be clean and straight.

Warner:
Okay, I know I'm being successful when people around me are excited.

TJL: Okay, good. We're going to rephrase it to get to the ... "by how" or "by how much".

Warner:
I know I'm being successful by how much people change positively around me.

TJL: Change in what way?

Warner:
In their attitude.

TJL: To what?

Warner:
Negative attitude versus positive attitude.

TJL: One of the things you can do is leap beyond on the process and focus on the end result. For example, "I know I'm being successful by how positive people are around me." That may not be what you said or what you want, but I'm just throwing out that example.

Warner:
Okay.

TJL: There's no need to identify your role in the process. By the way, Warner, I think it's an excellent one. The simpler the better. If I can ask you, how did what I said, how has that changed how you're looking at this?

Warner:
The starting point - I either use the back end or the front end and this

isn't dependent on me or the other people.

TJL: Very good. Really what you want is positivity, whether you've caused it or not. It's easier to have people that are naturally positive, rather than you having to make them that way.

XXX: It's a universal statement.

TJL: Well said. Anyone else?

Allison: I know I'm being successful by how much time I have to travel.

TJL: Good; clean and simple. Why do you want to travel?

Allison: For me, it's a spiritual experience because I define spirituality by the extent to which I learn and experience other environments and cultures.

TJL: Good. Does this ring true for you or do you want to work on it?

Allison: No, I think this is perfect.

TJL: You can see by the way I asked that question that I could tell this made sense to her. In some cases you want to clean it up and simplify it, and in other cases, this is it. You need to listen to how the person is phrasing it - their voice. Maybe Allison will tweak it on her own, but it's a great first start. As you see, I asked her why that was significant so you can find out why it's significant and why it was one of their 3. Who's next?

Karen: I know I'm successful by how tranquil I feel on my spiritual path.

TJL: One can be tranquil on a path?

Karen: Yes.

TJL: Which means the most - spirituality or tranquility?

Karen: Spirituality.

TJL: Where does tranquil fit in?

Karen: As I'm growing and learning more and being connected more, it calms me and brings me peace.

TJL: So it's a byproduct of being spiritual. Is that path always tranquil?

Karen: No.

TJL: Do you want it to be?

Karen: Yes!

TJL: Some people actually don't mind paths being stressful, error-prone, etc. They actually like the travel process, where other folks want their process itself to be a model of tranquility.

Karen: Right. I have other paths that give me enough of that - I don't need it on this one! (laugh)

TJL: Great! (laugh) that's one thing you can do with coaches that attend your event. What I've done with her is taking an interest - I'm not only trying to get it right for her, but also make sure I understand it. Maybe then I can contribute something back. You really want to be curious and understand better the whole choice she's made. I'm going to slightly rephrase.... "I know I'm being successful by how tranquil my spiritual path is." That's different than by how tranquil I'm being on my spiritual path.

The first thing is about the path being tranquil versus you being tranquil. From what I heard from you, the path being tranquil isn't enough. People are going to want this to be more than a passing good idea, and lock it into something they're not going to forget. If it isn't truly you, it's going to lose its value.

What did you learn from this?

Karen: I learned that the 3 pieces that I have here; I really hadn't thought about some of these things until you brought it back to me. I want the path to be tranquil, and by the change, there are other pieces I'm incorporating into that.

TJL: Yes, some people will constrain their feelings in order to be a higher end being. They're spiritual but they die young. Great example. We have about 5-6 minutes left, and I'd like to de-brief. What have you learned from this session?

Katherine:

I learned, don't add to what people are saying; let them be the final judge.

TJL: You can intro a different way of saying it, ask for clarification, etc. you can do a lot to add value, but adding on top of it adds to the confusion.

Sue: What you've done, it takes it to a new level and made it an evolving process.

TJL: The experience is a process, rather than just answering the question.

Sue: Exactly.

TJL: There you go. Who's next?

Pat: I saw how important it was to find the important point in what they're saying.

TJL: I would've thought spirit more important than tranquility, but for her that's not the case, that's why it's important to be open. Who's next?

Warner:

I learned a lot, but the most important thing is to really keep myself focused, I need a starting point.

TJL: Focused in terms of working with others?

Warner:
Just in life.

TJL: There are so many different definitions of success, we're being bombarded with so many pre-defined measures that this is the first time they've defined it for themselves.

XXX: As the client knows they change and grow, their measures may change and grow.

TJL: Yes. Anybody else?

Lois: I really like the connection between the internal and external values. That was really helpful for me.

TJL: People don't know quite where this fits in, but it's kind of like the real world interacting with people.

Gail: Very much that you were doing serious questioning and not imposing what it should or shouldn't be, but trying to understand how she felt.

TJL: It works both ways. There are certain times when clients say things that don't ring true, that it's good to bring up and say you disagree. I bring up views that don't seem consistent or ring true, and that's my way of bringing things to the table. There's a different school of thought in how much you lead your client. Based on my life experience in coaching and being willing to take risks, I'm willing to bring up things that may make no sense based on my intuition. Anybody else?

Allison: I think the biggest thing I got today, is that it's got me excited to start my own study group; it seems to be so valuable, and I want to share this within my community.

TJL: I'm glad to hear you say this. Some people are afraid that starting a group may be an enormous amount of work, when just stimulating conversation gets a group to take on a life of its own and takes the stress off of you. Thanks for joining - I'll get the transcribed notes to you shortly.

Improvements?

What would you like to see added, expanded or clarified about this Full Practice Step? Please email your suggestions/requests to julie@coachville.com. Every suggestion is carefully read but please understand that we cannot reply to individual emails or provide tech support.

The Full Practice Program is available exclusively to members of CoachVille.com

