



# **Most Common Mistakes Made By New Consultants**

By Joey Fehrman

## **Introduction**

Being a consultant can be a great lifestyle, once you are successful. It can often take first-time consultants years before they reach that point though. Here are some of the most common mistakes they make. Avoid these to shave significant time off your learning curve so you can get results a lot faster.

### **1. They try to help everybody**

If you try to help everyone, you will deliver mediocre results. Focus is the key. When you focus, you will deliver better results for your clients. The work will be easier since you will be solving the same issues over and over again. And it will be easier to get clients when you have a narrow marketing message that speaks directly to your dream clients.

### **2. They don't pick a narrow niche**

People don't want to hire a generalist; they want to hire a specialist. When prospects know you focus on just their problems, they feel more confident you can help them. Specialists can charge more money. When you focus on a narrow niche, you become the go-to person. Most first-time consultants think they will miss out on other business if they narrow their niche, but the opposite is usually true. As one coach said, "I spent 1 year and \$100,000 learning I needed a niche". Learn that lesson now rather than later.

### **3. Their value proposition is boring and generic**

"I help businesses increase sales." "I help people feel less stressed." These are examples of generic value propositions. You want your value proposition to be specific, measurable, and time-bound. Better examples are "I help manufacturing companies increase their sales by 33% within 4 months," or "I help first-time mothers reduce their stress in half within 4 sessions of working with me." The more specific you get, and the bigger the problem you can solve, the easier it will be to get clients.

### **4. They don't have a marketing plan**

You can be the best coach in the world and deliver great results for clients, but if no one knows about you, you will be broke. That is why every consultant needs a sales and marketing plan. There are plenty of sales methods described on the Internet. Try several of them and see what works best for you.

## **5. They lack confidence**

Mindset is very important in business. If you are constantly telling yourself that no one wants to hire you, or that you're not good enough, or that you can't do it, this will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Instead, think positive thoughts. Confidence comes from competence, so always be learning and improving your skills.

## **6. They don't study their craft**

There are countless books, webinars, gurus, and courses on how to be a better coach and grow a coaching practice. If you aren't constantly learning, you will be left behind.

## **7. They chase too many shiny objects**

As a solo-entrepreneur, it is easy to get distracted with all the gurus teaching you their methods. There will always be another "get rich quick" method that someone will be selling. While you always want to be learning new things, you want to focus on only a couple marketing techniques and become masters of those, rather than being mediocre at dozens of marketing strategies.

## **8. They stop before trying enough**

First time consultants will often learn about a new marketing technique, try it once, not get results, and conclude it doesn't work and move on to the next shiny object. But ask yourself, when in your life have you ever done something perfectly the first time you tried it? To become good at anything, you need to do it over and over again.

The same applies to marketing. People will try cold-calling and say it doesn't work. However, they only made 10 cold calls, and they probably sounded nervous on the phone. To really know if cold-calling works, you need to make hundreds if not thousands of dials, while trying new scripts along the way as you get feedback from your prospects. Don't conclude that a sales method doesn't work after trying it one time, try it multiple times over an extended period of time before moving on to the next. You need a statistically significant sample size before you can conclude something does or doesn't work.

## **9. They stop after getting success**

Surprisingly, consultants will stop doing things that work. Let's say you try a marketing technique and you got good results; you might be tempted to not do that anymore. It is a weird psychological trick the mind plays on us. Perhaps we feel like we want to quit while we're ahead, or we are worried that it won't work again. Don't fall for this trap. If something is working, keep doing it! There was one coach who sold her checklists online and made \$10,000 profit, but she didn't do it again. Don't make that mistake.

## **10. They don't have processes**

Big businesses have systems and processes for everything. You don't need a lot of processes, but you should have some at least. A process for prospecting, following up, onboarding clients, coaching sessions, etc. When you standardize things, life becomes easier. You are then able to outsource these processes to other people so you don't have to do them, and you can tweak these processes over time to make sure they are always getting better.

## **11. They don't have an agenda for each coaching session**

Your main job is to deliver results for clients. Some consultants don't know how they are going to do that. They don't have a system for getting results for clients. They go into each session winging it. Your clients are paying you a lot of money and just winging your consulting sessions isn't fair to them.

## **12. They sulk for too long**

It is easy to get discouraged while building a coaching practice. When you try a dozen things and none of them work, you will be tempted to run away from it all and watch movies or surf the internet. The key is to get back on the horse as quickly as possible. "Never give up." "Try try again." "It's not how many times you get knocked down that counts, it's how many times you get back up." These might be overused clichés, but they are still 100% true. Every "no" you hear brings you one step closer to a "yes".

## **13. They don't follow up**

"The fortune is in the follow up." When a prospect tells a consultant or coach, "let me think about it," or "I can't afford it right now," or "not at this time," the consultant moves on, never following up with that prospect again. That is a mistake. Sometimes it takes people a while to warm up to the fact that they need a coach, or they might be in a better financial situation a few months from now. The easiest way to keep in touch with people is to add them to you

email list. Send out emails to your list on at least a weekly basis. The emails should give helpful tips, talk about success stories your clients have had, and occasionally promote your own products and services.

#### **14. They don't know their KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)**

What is a good ratio for closing clients? What is a good cost-per-lead when running Facebook ads? What percentage of a room should take you up on your free coaching session after giving a speech? How many hours per day should you spend prospecting?

If you don't know numbers like these, how will you know if you are doing a good job? It is important to measure your results and see what results other people are getting so you know what you need to improve.

#### **15. They don't follow a proven model**

There are lots of successful consultants out there. Pick one that you like, who has a style you feel comfortable with, and model what he/she is doing. Don't hop from one "guru" to the next. You need to stick with one for a while before you start to see results. That guru didn't get instant results and neither will you. Stick with their model until you master it.



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