

# **Brand**

# **YOU<sup>TM</sup>**

## **How to Build A Successful Coaching Brand At Little or No Cost**

**Brenda Bence  
September 26, 2011**

# PLAYING TO THE EDGE

SEPTEMBER 24-27 2011  
ICF ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA



**SMARTER  
BRANDING**  
WITHOUT BREAKING  
THE BANK

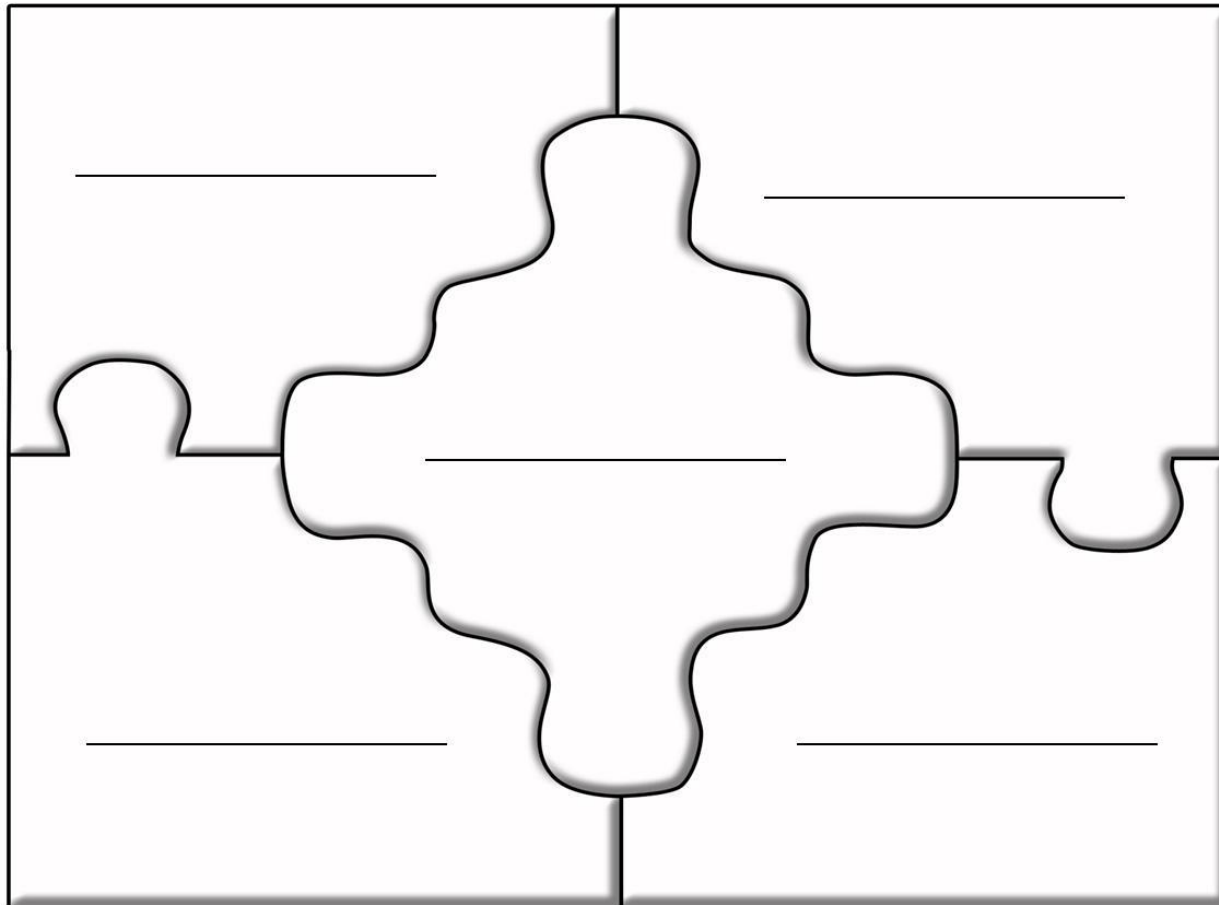


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IDEAS

ACTION STEPS

**Inexpensive-But-Effective  
Branding Assets**  
*You Already Have!*



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## Six Core Elements of a Brand Positioning

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Target Group



Needs



Competitive Framework



Benefits



Reasons Why



Brand Character

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1) Target Group

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2) Needs

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3) Competitive Framework

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4) Benefits

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5) Reasons Why

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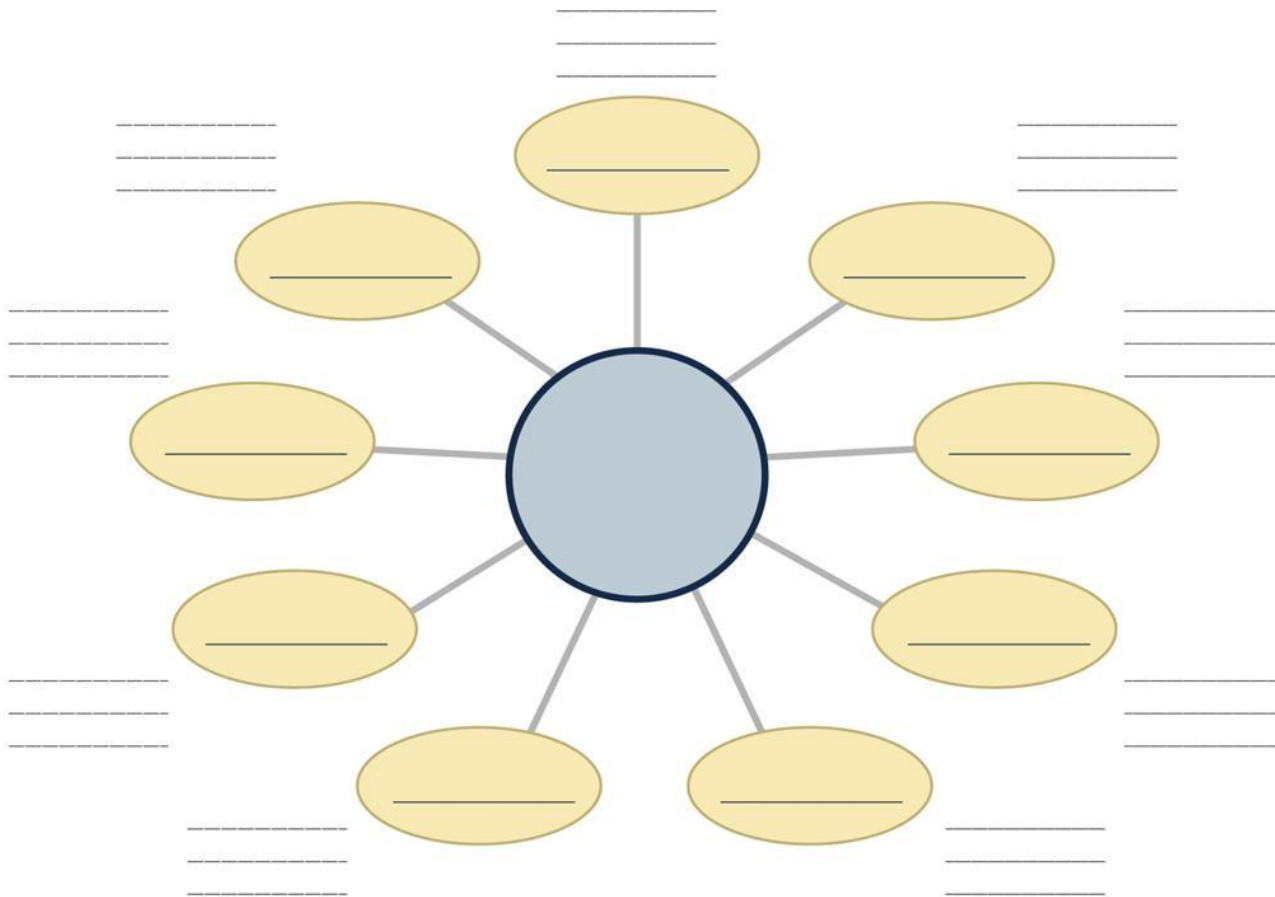
6) Brand Character

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## Growing Your Team Worksheet



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### Action and Accountability Grid: Lights, Camera... Action!

Activity	By When	Success Looks Like...	Who's Responsible	Sponsor/Accountability Buddy

## ELEVATOR BRAND INTRODUCTION

by **Brenda Bence**

You have no doubt heard of an “elevator speech.” Well, I like to think of it as an “elevator brand introduction.”

Imagine this: You enter an elevator on the 20<sup>th</sup> floor and push the ground floor button. As the elevator reaches the 19th floor, it stops, and a person gets on and says, “Hello.” You think this person could be an interesting potential coaching client. At best, you have about 20 seconds to speak and introduce your brand. What are you going to say?

I personally learned the hard way about not being prepared for this kind of situation. It was 2008, and I had just launched my first book. In fact, the book had just been released two or three days before. I was at an author’s convention and was carrying a copy of my book around with me. I got into an elevator, someone bumped into me, and the book fell out of my arms and onto the floor. A woman bent down, picked up the book, looked at the cover, and said, “Wow! Interesting title. Whose is this?” as she looked around the packed elevator. One glance at the woman, and I instantly realized who she was — the head of a major publishing company!

“It’s mine,” I replied.

Turning to look straight at me, she said, “Tell me more.”

I was dumbstruck! I hadn’t had time to think about my elevator brand introduction, and here I was facing this incredible opportunity. I remember fumbling through a general statement — I’m sure it wasn’t particularly eloquent — and unfortunately, nothing ever came of it.

Tough lesson learned! You can bet I’ve never let that happen again. I sat down right away and perfected my elevator brand introduction for that particular book brand.

You never know what could come from an opportunity like this, so make sure *you’re* prepared. Being ready with a concise and meaningful way to describe your brand is key.

### **Taking Your Brand Introduction on the Road**

This type of brand introduction isn’t only for elevators, of course. Think about the first question someone usually asks when you meet them: “What do you do?” If you don’t have a fast, engaging, crystal clear answer that communicates your coaching brand, you’ve missed out on a potential chance to engage a new client or – at a minimum - to bring another marketing member onto your team.

Here are the top 10 most important points to remember when creating your elevator brand introduction:

1. Keep your elevator brand intro short and concise — 20 seconds or less is best.
2. Don’t just state your job title. Instead, describe what you do in a compelling way. “I’m an coach” doesn’t do much for your brand; in fact, it makes you sound just like everyone else – and that’s no way to stand out in a crowd!
3. Describe *who* you do it for. Who are your ideal customers/Target Group?

4. In your opening sentence (to grab the person's attention), describe the value, benefit, and quality that you bring to your clients in quantifiable terms – i.e., don't just say that you help your clients grow their businesses; for example, if you're a business coach, you might say that you have helped XX number of clients grow their businesses by XX% in a 12-month period. In other words, offer an example of what you have done for one or more clients.
5. Try to include information that will differentiate your coaching brand from your competition. Using your brand positioning statement, focus on the Benefits section. That's most likely where the potential client will be interested.
6. Don't use industry jargon in case the other person is unaware of the "lingo," and avoid vague words and long sentences. Keep it snappy, short, and concise!
7. After you have described what you do and for whom, ask the person a question that requires more than just a "yes" or "no" answer to stimulate further conversation. For example, don't say: "Is having a better work-life balance important to you?" (The only possible answer is either "yes," or "no.") Instead say, "How important is work-life balance to your own personal definition of success?" (There is a wide range of answers available to this question.)
8. Keep it conversational, and be careful not to sound like a salesperson.
9. Always end by asking if you can contact the person to talk about their needs further or set up a meeting. If this person isn't a great target for your brand, give him or her a couple of extra business cards and ask them to share those cards with anybody they think would benefit from your coaching services.
10. Practice your elevator brand intro until it rolls off your tongue and is so natural to you that you could repeat it in your sleep. Be careful that it doesn't sound rehearsed, though. Ask a friend or colleague to listen to make sure you don't sound like you've memorized it.

## Examples:

Here are some sample elevator brand introductions for coaches:

**Family Financial Coach:** "I help families find ways to save money so that the kids can go to university and the parents can enjoy their retirement. I'm happy to say that my coaching has resulted in helping more than 25 families saving thousands of dollars annually. How about you - do you have children? ... How many?" After receiving the answer: "I'd love to set up a time to talk with you about how my coaching services could help you create a successful financial future. How helpful would that be to you?"

**Small Business Coach:** "I help small business owners gain better work-life balance while reducing costs and improving their bottom line profits. How well would you say you are doing on balancing work and life while running your own profitable business?" After receiving the answer: "I feel confident I could help you find ways to improve your business outcomes. Could I get your card? When would be a good time to contact you to talk about how I could help you find ways to improve in these areas?"

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**Women's Leadership Coach:** "I help women in leadership positions feel more confident by exploring the challenges they face and eliminating the underlying barriers to improvement. How about you – what areas of your own leadership story would you like to improve on the most?" After receiving the answer: "I'd love to offer you a free 30-minute trial session so that you could experience my coaching style and decide if it's right for you. When could we get together?"

## **Creating Your Elevator Brand Introduction**

As you sit down to write your own brand introduction, start by thinking about the benefits your brand provides your clients. Remember that the person you're talking with is interested in how you can help him or her. Awards and accolades (your Reasons Why) may be impressive, but they don't offer a tangible, quantifiable benefit.

Make note of what you've delivered to your current clients, and use these in your elevator brand introduction if. Where possible, use quantifiable information in your opening sentence in order to grab the listener's attention.

Be prepared for different answers to your open-ended question. Know your products and services inside and out so that you can spontaneously adjust your answer to the needs of the individual you're talking with.

Finally, test your brand intro to make sure you won't get a "So what?" response. Is it exciting enough? Have you shown exactly what you can do? Do you deliver it with passion? How will what you've said directly build the brand image as a coach that you are working toward?

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*Questions? Feel free to contact:*

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**BUILDING SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP BRANDS  
FOR COMPANIES AND EXECUTIVES**

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