



Clients choose coaches using their head, heart and gut. Firstly, they use their head to select coaches with proven experience in the area they need help. Then they meet a few of the coaches for chemistry sessions to understand how they coach and feel in their heart how the relationship will be. After the chemistry sessions, they reflect on the experiences they have had. This is when they listen to their gut instinct to pick the right coach.



Head

Logically from the coach's point of view, the chemistry session is a sales meeting. However, adopting a selling mindset is wrong. To the prospective client this feels pushy, which is the antithesis of coaching. Incidentally, this is the reason why most coaches hate marketing and selling. They are not naturally pushy people. Ergo, they are not very practised in it, so it feels clunky and awkward and is received by prospective clients as such!

Adopting a selling mindset is aimed at one thing: winning the business. If someone wins, then someone loses. Shifting this to a commercial mindset recognises there is a commercial transaction under consideration *and* a special collaborative relationship under consideration. Adopting a commercial mindset acknowledges there is a problem that coaching can help (Demand), a coach who can help (Supply) with a unique proposition tailored to fix their problem (USP: your Unique Selling Proposition). Your USP is that special something that sets you apart from the other coaches they are speaking with. When you adopt a commercial mindset, you move away from a 'win/lose' selling mindset to a 'win/win or no deal' commercial mindset.



Heart

Perhaps the chemistry session is not a sales meeting at all. You want the chemistry session to build a connection. However, if you only focus on the heart, there is a risk you forget the selling aspect all together. You have a great chat and build rapport. You leave the session hoping the prospective client liked you more than they liked the other coaches they were seeing and could envisage working with you. They leave the session thinking "they were nice." But nice isn't what they are looking to buy. You have missed the opportunity to win a new client.



Chemistry

Rapport-building alone only pays attention to the relationship. This is a very important part of a coaching contract; indeed it is a part of many a commercial contract that is so often overlooked, however in itself it is not enough to secure the client. In a chemistry conversation that maximises your chances of securing the client you must pay attention to the outcomes, the process and the relationship.



The best way to do this is to work through all the elements of adopting a commercial mindset: demand (know your customer and their problem), supply (who are you as a coach and what do you offer) and your USP. And then develop an approach to the conversation that brings it all together.



Chemistry checklist

Preparing for Chemistry checklist:

1. Understand the demand for your coaching.
 - What market or sector are you in?
 - Who is your ideal client?
 - What is the problem they have that they are prepared to pay somebody to fix?
2. Understand what you are offering. Remember: clients do not buy coaching, they buy solutions.
 - How does your coaching help them fix their problem?
 - What are your fees?
 - Prepare a written coaching agreement that you both will sign that sets out how you coach.
3. What makes your coaching unique? You need to be able to articulate:
 - Three things they need to do to fix their problem.
 - Who you are as a coach, your coaching philosophy and process.
 - The benefits of working with you.



Next steps

Tip: Draft your Golden Sentence

The structure can vary. Broadly speaking, you are looking to create your elevator pitch that goes along the lines of, "I do [something you need] for [these types of people] so that [they achieve this]."

Start with the following format: "I [describe what you do without using the word 'coach'] with [describe your ideal client] so that they [describe the benefits they get from working with you]."

Example: "By acting as a critical thinking partner, I transform aspiring IT professionals into influential leaders."

Develop your approach to the chemistry session!

Once you have these elements in place, you might consider joining my online Masterclass to create your own playbook for navigating the chemistry session. The 90-minute masterclass session costs £60 per delegate. [Express interest here](#)