**BUSINESS BUILDING ACCOUNTABILITY GROUPS**

**Purpose**

ICF New Mexico Business Building Accountability Groups are designed to support coaches in growing their coaching practices. This is accomplished through monthly meeting with other coaches where progress against individuals’ goals are shared and questions regarding business building strategies are discussed.

**Format**

* Monthly 90 – 120 minute facilitated meetings
* Group sizes of 8 – 10 are optimal
* Must attend a minimum of 4 meetings over 6 months and inform facilitator if you can’t attend
* Google Spreadsheet used to track and share progress against individual goals
* Will be conducted via Zoom

**Meeting Protocols**

* By at least the night before each meeting, group members update the Google Spreadsheet.
* Every meeting has a trained facilitator and timer. Timer sets an alarm everyone can hear.
* Meetings start on time.
* One person talks at a time and provides opportunity for everyone to participate. Consider raising hands to determine who has the floor during discussions.
* Suggestions for how to alter meetings to better meet member needs are proactively offered and discussed as agenda items.

**Meeting Agendas**

* Meetings start with each person taking 2 – 3 minutes to share
  + Goals worked against and progress made
  + Up to 3 positive high points
  + Struggles and business building questions/agenda items
  + Goals for upcoming month
  + Group members may suggest related agenda items but no coaching occurs in this section
* Discuss agenda items
  + Facilitator or scribe reads the questions/agenda items and group prioritizes them
  + Each item is discussed for 5 minutes maximum. The person who raised the item kicks off the discussion. After each 5-minute block, if the group feels the item deserves more attention, an additional 5 minutes can be allocated.
  + Coaching can occur in this time if the person raising the agenda item wants to be coached
* Optional – In depth focus on a specific topic
  + If desired by the group, a portion of the meeting can be devoted helping each other with specific business building tools. For example, a demonstration of how to use a specific social media tool; give elevator pitches and get feedback from group; discuss proposal making strategies; etc.
  + Generally, these will be added to the agenda of a future meeting, a presenter/format will be determined in advance and prework may be assigned.
  + If the specific topic will take more than 30 minutes, the facilitator can bring the topic to the Business Building Committee to discuss whether this is something for which we want to create a independent program.

**Selecting Business Building Goals**

Individuals will choose the business building goals that are appropriate for their business. Consider the following when creating your goals.

* What overall business goal are you striving to achieve?
  + Increased income, decrease working hours while maintaining/growing income, get hours/clients needed for a certification, enter a new niche, expand the geographic reach of your practice, develop a new coaching skill set, etc.
* What actions will help you achieve this and how quickly will they impact your business: short, medium and long term?
* What do you need to track to assess whether an action is yielding results?
* What do you want to learn from this action and what do you need to track to learn that?
* What results are important for you to track: count, efficacy, time investment, etc.
* How do you want to prioritize these activities and over what timeframe?

**Google Spreadsheet**

The purpose of this tool is to

* Articulate and track what actions you will take to grow your business
* Assess which strategies are most impactful for your business
* Encourage follow-through by knowing that your actions are being watched
* Gain inspiration by seeing how others approach their goals

Caution: When you are looking at someone else’s worksheet, if you change anything make sure to reverse the change by using the undo button.

Spreadsheet format

* Each accountability group will have a separate and confidential workbook.
* Individuals will have 1 sheet within the workbook
* Individuals format their sheet as they desire. The questions in the goal section can help you determine what you need to track.

Example,

* Increase LinkedIn and facebook profile views from 23 to 200 by March 1. Long term will contribute to expanding client base beyond current region.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action: Weekly Blog Post** | Week 1 - LinkedIn | Week 1 – Facebook | Week 2 - LinkedIn | Week 2 – Facebook |
| Views/likes/shares/comments of 1st blog post |  |  |  |  |
| Views/likes/shares/comments of 2nd blog post |  |  |  |  |
| # interactions with others’ posts |  |  |  |  |
| Total time spent on this activity |  |  |  |  |
| Views of profile |  |  |  |  |
| # new connections |  |  |  |  |
| # personal messages generated |  |  |  |  |
| # coaching inquiries |  |  |  |  |
| # sample sessions generated |  |  |  |  |
| # new clients generated |  |  |  |  |

Key Learning

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Questions for Group

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**BUSINESS BUILDING ACCOUNTABILITY GROUPS**

**TRAINING**

**Facilitator**

Responsibilities

* Start and end meeting on time and keep agenda running within agreed upon times.
* Keep track of attendance and speak with members who aren’t attending regularly.
* Make sure each meeting has a timer and, if desired, a scribe to capture agenda items. Train these individuals.
* Make sure everyone has an opportunity to participate in all parts of meeting. Purposefully check if people who have been quiet have something they’d like to share.
* If someone’s behavior is disrupting the group (interrupting, not following protocols, dominating the discussion, etc.), if possible, speak with them privately to address these concerns, if necessary during the meeting remind the group of the meeting protocols, ideally without singling any individual out.
* Provide updates to Business Building Committee Chair regarding attendance, group concerns and ideas, and what if any additional support you need.

**Timer**

Responsibilities

* Use an alarm that can be heard by everyone when timing.
* Verify before individuals start sharing how much time each individual is allocated and set the alarm accordingly.
* When the alarm goes off, let it ring for 5 seconds or so and then turn it off.
* Determine ahead of time with the facilitator who will remind the person (and how) to stop talking if they continue to talk more than 15 seconds or so after the alarm goes off.
* For agenda items set the alarm for 5 minutes. At the 5-minute mark, if the discussion is robust, ask the group if they’d like to allocate an additional 5 minutes to that topic.
* If the group has designated a portion of the meeting for in depth discussion of a specific topic, alert the group when it’s time to switch to that portion of the meeting.

**Scribe**

Responsibilities

* Capture any notes the group wants to convey to the Business Building Committee (such as future education topics).
* Capture agenda items and who offered them. Closely related items can be grouped together if so desired by the group.
* At the start of the Agenda Topics portion of the meeting, read the agenda items, have the group prioritize them, and then announce the appropriate agenda item and who raised it at the start of each 5-minute period.