



SPI 302

Coaching vs. Teaching — What I've Learned Investing in the Art of Coaching

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Pat Flynn: All right. In this episode, you're going to hear about the difference between coaching versus teaching, what I've learned since investing in the art of coaching, the seven questions you need to ask when you're coaching people, and why this is important for you and your business whether you're just getting started and you're trying to get your footing in the online business space or maybe you have a business already and you want to take it to the next level. For now, though, let's cue the music.

Speaker 2: Welcome to The Smart Passive Income Podcast where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. Now, your host. His voice over guy is one of the best in the business. Hey. Thanks, Pat. Pat Flynn.

Pat Flynn: All right and welcome to session 302 of The Smart Passive Income Podcast. Thank you so much for being here today and taking time to listen to me. I appreciate that because I know your time is valuable, especially as we are starting the new year here and you are making progress toward your goals. Hopefully this episode can help you do that because today we're going to be talking about the differences between teaching and coaching and why that's important. The analogy I want to give you to start out with to share this difference is imagine that you're speaking in front of a classroom and you're teaching them something, I don't know, AP history or whatever. You have 30 students. You're teaching them about history and they are learning as you are talking. You're writing outlines on the board and you're handing out worksheets and all that stuff. That's teaching. You're sharing information, content, in a way that hopefully a person will be able to understand and do well on their test. Coaching is that moment when you are working with an individual student or maybe a few students, a group of students come in for office hours, for example, and they're asking you for help because they're getting the information from you in your regular classroom, but they came to office hours because they're struggling a little bit. They aren't effectively learning or they just want a little bit more individual time with you. That's coaching.

Coaching is an incredibly useful way to help people develop their

skills and their abilities and, here's the big one, boost performance. Yes, there's crossover here obviously between teaching and coaching, but here's the big one. When you're a teacher, the focus is on you, your knowledge, your experience, and your style of delivering whatever that content is. A coach is all about the student. It is student-centric. It's helping that person, that individual, or that group of individuals take that lesson that you've taught them and actually apply them into their life. Teaching is a one-way communication. Coach is a two-way communication. It's collaboration. It's individual feedback. There's kind of a co-creation of results. A teacher shares content one time and then that's it. A coach will interact. They will be a mentor. They will guide. They'll have essentially trainees under them that they can keep track of. Of course, every person is different in their results. Teaching is very impersonal. Coaching is very personal. This is why coaches can charge more than they can for an online course. That's basically the breakdown.

When you see somebody offering various solutions to different problems online, you'll see somebody offer something at a very cheap price. Then they'll offer something that's a little bit more expensive. That might be more of an online course. Maybe there's some group collaboration in there or some communities involved. That's the online course. Then, usually on top of that, there's some sort of coaching component for fewer people but more expensive. The reason why I wanted to talk about these differences today and specifically coaching, I'm actually going to give you some strategies to help you as you begin to incorporate coaching into your business, is to show you that you have options here when it comes to online business.

You can definitely deliver content for free. You can obviously deliver content in a packaged situation where it is semi or mostly automated in an online course sort of platform such as Teachable, for example. You can sell that in a semi passive way. But then there's the non-passive but very profitable and, more important than that, very fulfilling, especially when it comes to the individuals' results because the percentages of people who complete online

courses and get the same results are far less than those who if you were to work with them individually because you're actually helping them through a lot of their individual roadblocks and their particular situations. You can help less people make more money, but it's definitely not passive. That's the big thing here. It is very active, but it's very fulfilling.

I thought that, when I started my online business back in 2008, I would never ever want to do coaching because I wanted to stay away from actively creating something that were if I stopped, then I wouldn't make money anymore. I found that over time, especially as I've grown as an authority in my space, that there's some people who need that coaching. I've actually found it very, very, very rewarding to coach people on an individual basis. I've started out with just students here and there. Now it's become a little bit more formal in my show Ask Pat where every week on AskPat.com, and you can look up that podcast and subscribe to that, by the way, because it's awesome, but every week I take a person who's going through an issue and I coach them through a process. These are people who have listened to my show, who have downloaded my content, who have watched my videos, who have listened to the podcast, yet still need a little bit of help. That's going to be the truth. There's going to be people out there who will want further help. Through the 20 to 30 minutes per episode, I've been able to have massive changes happen right in front of my eyes or right in front of my ears through the coaching process. It's just amazing.

A lot of this episode is about encouraging you to step out of your comfort zone, because I definitely had to do that. I'm an introvert. Speaking to people scares me, but I do it anyway because I know it can be very rewarding. That's why I go to conferences. That's why I get on stage. This is a whole new level because you're helping an individual based on their specific problems that they have and it's not something that you can exactly predict or plan out. That's the hard part about coaching is that every person that you're speaking to or group of people that you're speaking to, they can all respond differently to the questions that you ask them. They might all have a different set of problems or they might have different setbacks

that you're going to have to, as the coach, help them through. Now, I've been able to help myself, not just through doing, although I think experience is the best teacher for sure, so by forcing myself to coach. Through my show Ask Pat, I've already become a better coach, but I've also helped myself through reading a particular book that really set my mind in the right frame for what coaching actually means. I'm going to walk you through what I learned in that book right now.

That book is called *The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More, and Change the Way You Lead Forever* by Michael Bungay Stanier. This was my favorite business book of 2017. I actually did a YouTube video review about this book. It was titled *The Best Business Book of 2017*. I'm going to include the YouTube video in the show notes for this episode at SmartPassiveIncome.com/session302. I'm going to walk you through what I've learned. There's a few things I've learned in this book that I now apply through my coaching on Ask Pat and a lot of the higher level coaching that I'm going to do in the SPI Accelerator Program, which I'll mention and I'll talk more in detail about at the end of the show for those of you who don't know what that is yet. This book covers the seven questions that you should absolutely be asking people you're coaching. They go in a specific order and I'll reveal those questions in just a minute.

Even before that, there are specific things I learned in this book beyond just these seven questions, but mainly just best practices for coaching. For example, the first one was just to ask one question at a time. Even with being a podcast host, this is something that I know that I can do a little bit better. I actually was going back into some of my favorite episodes of 2017 and listening to them and critiquing them. This is something that I do with all types of content that I create. From blog posts to videos to podcasts to even speaking on stage, I critique myself. One of my own critiques about myself through the podcast was that I could do a better job of asking questions and just letting that person answer. Sometimes I'll catch myself asking like three questions at once or even butting in there as a person is answering with some other thoughts that I have. I typically do a good job but sometimes I step on that

person's toes a little bit by trying to also share how awesome of an experience I had or a thought that I had in addition to what that person was saying. Ask a question and then you just sit back and listen. That's the first thing.

The second thing is to just, when you're coaching, and this is very similar for podcasting too. I also saw a lot of parallels between how to be a great podcast host and also how to be a great coach. The second thing is to cut the intro. When you're coaching somebody, you want to forget all the fluff and just get right into it. A person needs help, you go and you see what you can do to figure that out. Then, finally what I learned, and I definitely was doing this in the beginning, is that I was offering advice that ended with a question mark. For example, somebody needed help with traffic, I would often say, "So, are you trying social media yet or have you tried this yet or what about this?" That's not really coaching. Yes, coaching is asking questions, but when you try to give advice but then just put a question on the end of it to make it seem like you're just asking questions, you're basically just telling that person what to do in the form of a question. That's a bad coaching habit. You do not want to do that.

Those were some of the basic foundational items I learned about being a great coach. I definitely highly recommend you check out this book, *The Coaching Habit* by Michael Bungay Stanier. We'll put a link to it in the show notes, of course, but for right now, I want to go over the seven questions that you need to be asking a person and why those questions are important. This is for you if you are going to be doing formal coaching or you're getting paid for this. It's for you if you are doing a podcast interview, for example, and you're just trying to coach somebody through a process and you're just recording that. It's also for those of you who are a coach in your own life, even outside of online business. Truth is, we are all coaches in one way or another to all different kinds of people. If we have employees who work for us, we are a coach for them. If we have kids, we are a parent. A parent is a coach to help that person to become a better version of themselves and a better version of us, I feel. If you have students of any kind, a teacher, then you are a

coach also, more than just a person just regurgitating information, you should also actually be coaching those students too. We're all coaches, which is why these questions are very powerful.

Let's start with question number one. Question number one is, "What's on your mind?" Literally, a simple question that just cuts the intro, gets right into it, and I've used this on each of those Ask Pat episodes. It works really great because a person will be able to then reveal what is going on in their head without any sort of framing from you. Even better than asking, "So what's the problem here?" or, "What's the issue?" you're asking, "What's on your mind?" This just opens it up to whatever that person has in their brain to come to you so that you can make the right decisions on how to help that person through whatever it is that's on their mind. That's number one.

Number two, this is a big one and this is perfect for those of you who also are doing podcast interviews too. The question is, "And what else?" It's the, as he calls, the AWE question. "And what else?" This was very surprising to me. I didn't think that this question would be as effective as it actually is because when a person answers the question, "Well, what's on your mind?" typically you would think that that person's going to tell you everything that you need to know for you to help them. Well, that's never the case. You're going to get a surface level answer and the gold, the money, the valuable things that you can help that person through are through these followup questions such as, "And what else?" Every time I've asked that question, a person has said, "Well, you know, there's this other thing," and I go, "Oh my gosh. I wouldn't have been able to catch that unless I asked this question. And what else?"

If there's one question out of these seven that you should be trying out and experimenting with in your own life right now, even outside of online business, but inside your personal life, try it because, I mean, even with a spouse. So, you know, your wife or your husband comes home from work and they're having issues. You go, "What's wrong, honey?" They tell you and then you ask, "What else is on your mind?" That will help you understand really what is at the

root of these problems. This is a way for us as coaches to be able to make sure that we're solving the right problem. Sometimes, at this point, you'll be able to determine, well, now we've gotten to the real problem but in that person's words, we need them to say what is the problem. They're going to say a lot of things when you ask them, "What's on your mind? And what else?" You want to understand what the real challenge is. That's actually what question number three is.

You want that person to tell you what the real challenge is because you can make guesses. You kind of know what it's about now, but you aren't still understanding what does this person actually want. Number three, you ask, "Well, now that you've told me that, what's the real challenge here for you?" This helps a person frame, "Well, yes, all this stuff's going on in my head." As I've told you many times before, our brains do a good job of just coming up with stuff but a terrible job of organizing it, which is why I love Post-it notes. This is why I also love this question. What's the real challenge? Now you're able to filter all that muck out that that person just said to you and they're able to now tell you, "Okay, this is actually what's bothering me here. This is the real challenge. How do I blank?" You're able to then really hone in on how you can help them solve that problem. Again, this helps make sure that you're not just sharing advice, but you're also not helping a person and coaching them through a problem that isn't actually the real problem. You want them to tell you what the real challenge is. That's question number three.

Question number four is, "What are you looking to achieve? What do you want?" This is what Michael calls the foundation question. This is really what it is that you can do to help them because they're going to guide you now. It's so interesting to me that coaching is asking the right questions. When I think about times that I've been coached properly and times in my life where I've been helped the most, I think about, for example, when I wrote my book *Will It Fly?* I was really struggling through that and I hired a coach. His name is Azul. You can find him on CoachAzul.com. He also has a podcast as well. He, I remember, when he was coaching me, I found it so interesting that he was just asking me questions. At first, I was

like, “No, Azul, you need to tell me what to do.” It was interesting because, through the questions that he was asking me, I was able to tell myself what I needed to do. He was kind of just pointing my mind in the right direction.

That’s essentially what these kinds of questions do. They help the person who you are coaching come up with those answers. It’s almost like Inception, right? It’s one thing to just tell a person to do something, but when you can make them believe they’re the ones that came up with that idea, which, of course, when you’re coaching, is going to be true. In Inception, it’s kind of you go a dream within a dream within a dream to help them find an idea. Anyway, that’s a whole nother story, Inception, that is. It is an awesome movie for sure. When you have that person come up with the answer to their problems, it becomes a whole new ballgame. They’re more motivated to do it because they came up with those ideas. That’s the whole purpose of the Inception factor. I call it the Inception question, although it’s called the foundation question in his book.

The next question is called the lazy question, which is really interesting. This is kind of a, it’s interesting because it’s really, I mean, for me when I first heard this question when I was reading this book, I was like, “Really? Isn’t that obvious?” But it’s not because, again, when I’ve asked this on Ask Pat and when coaching people now since reading this book individually, it is truly powerful because you’re able to now hear from them what you can do for them because they know you, they’ve hired you for coaching or they’re on your show for coaching or they’ve pointed their problems to you to help in a specific way, and now they’re telling you how can you help them. Question number five, the lazy question, is, “How can I help you?”

If I’m coaching you right now and I go, “How can I help you?” that now, after all those other discussions that we’ve just had about what the problems are, what the real challenges are, what are you looking to get out of this, now it’s framing ... The reason it’s called the lazy question is because now I don’t have to think. I don’t have

to think about what I can do to help you. You're telling me what I can do to help you. I love this quote right at the beginning of this chapter in this book. He goes, "In which he discovered a question that will make you more useful to those you manage while working less hard and you decide that being lazy is a good thing after all." By asking this question, "How can I help you?" you're becoming more useful to those who you are helping and you're working less hard. You're going to cut right to the chase.

Now, let's keep talking about this question because as you begin to ask this question, there's different responses that you can get and how you reply or respond to those responses are going to be very important, because let's say for example that you ask somebody, "How can I help?" and they say, "Oh, I need you to do this thing for me." How do you respond to that? Because they've just told you what you could do for them. They want you to do more work. They want you to basically rescue them by doing that thing that they're struggling with. There's a number of different ways that you could answer. You could say yes. You can always say yes, but you don't have to say yes. That's probably where your source of anxiety is for asking this type of question. Another way you can answer is obviously, "Well, no. I can't do that." Instead of just saying, "No, I can't do that," you can always say, "Well, I can't do that, but here's something that we can do in the middle or here is perhaps a way to help us through that problem instead of just piling it on me. Let's work through this together."

Again, this, "How can I help you?" Question helps you understand really what that person is looking for so that you can find that right answer. There are times when you're coaching where you're going to have to, obviously, give advice, but the goal is to try and get them to come up with those answers. You can ask further questions. If you were like, "Hey, how can I help you?" and they were like, "I just don't have any money. I need your budget. I need you to lend me some money so I can do this thing." You go, "Okay. Well, no. I can't do that, but how else might you be able to raise funds for this? What might you be able to do to decrease the price of this? Is there any way that you can do this without actually having to spend

that money?” See how you’re kind of coaching them by asking questions related to that problem that they had and that initial solution that they wanted? That’s part of what this whole process is.

Now, there’s one more particular nuance about this particular question because a lot of times people might not give you an answer, but they’ll ask you a secondary question that might be like, “Well, what do you think I should do about blank?” You ask them, “How can I help you?” They go, “You know, what do you think I should I do about this?” They’re asking you a question about what you think they should do. This makes it almost impossible to get out of that advice giving mode, which, like I said earlier, the whole point is to have that person come up with the solutions as much as possible. Yes, there are times where it’s going to make sense for you to give advice, but even in a situation there’s a way that you can structure this in a way where you’re still helping that person figure out the answer to this solution and coaching them to help them find an answer that makes sense for them. The moment you say, “You know, I would do this,” they’re going to go and do that and that might not be the best solution for them.

If somebody were to ask you, “Oh, well, what should I do about this?” You can say, “Well, I have a few ideas but I’d love to know first what you think you might be able to do first.” That’s a way to get around this sort of mousetrap, as the author calls it. Then if they give you an answer, you can say, “Try that. That’s actually not a bad idea,” or you might even be able to ask, “Well, and what else?” Have them keep going down until they find something that makes sense for them. Because, again, they’re coming up with those ideas, it’s going to make more sense and be more meaningful to them. The five questions that we’ve asked so far, just to recap. Number one is, “What’s on your mind?” Number two, “And what else?” Number three, “What’s the real challenge?” Number four, “What are you looking to achieve? What do you want?” Number five, “How can I help you?”

Number six, the next one, is, “If you’re saying yes to this,” so we’ve come up with a solution for them or they’ve come up with the

solution for them and they're going to do something differently or they're going to start something new, "If you're saying yes to this, what are you saying no to?" I absolutely love this question because the truth is when you say yes to something, you're also saying no to something else. When you can determine what those yeses and nos are, you're creating boundaries for yourself. This is why it's really important to start saying no to things because when you say no to things, you're also saying yes to certain things that should be more meaningful to your life. This is essentialism. This is the one thing.

When it comes to coaching, when you ask, "Well, okay. If you're saying yes to this, what are you saying no to?" You're helping them create boundaries to help them and guide them to helping them get their goal. They've dumped all this stuff on you. You've helped them through asking these questions determine the right path to move forward with, but more than just, "Okay. Here's what I should do next. Here's what I also shouldn't do next," this is where this question comes into play. Let's frame this a little bit more deeply. Again, you're saying yes to something but what are you saying no to also? No in respect to what work items, what projects, what people, what relationships, what patterns and habits and beliefs, limiting beliefs. What do I need to say no to that has always held me back now that I'm saying yes to this new thing? Really, really important stuff.

Then, finally, this one, initially when I read this question, I was like, "This is kind of a selfish question," but it's actually really helpful because it helps you understand what worked, what didn't, and to make sure this person actually understood something from the conversations that you had. This final question is, "What was the most useful for you? Out of this conversation, what was the most useful thing that we talked about?" This is a way for you to understand what this person learned from you. This allows you to collect feedback. It allows you to just understand what people are going through. I would imagine that as you continue to coach many people, you're going to find that people are going to find certain things the most useful and sort of a pattern. That becomes

something that can tell you, wow, people need help about this. Let's create an online course about it so I can help those who can't afford my coaching.

Now, there's a lot of different ways to ask this question. "What was the most useful for you?" You could say, "What were your key insights? What was the thing that you learned the most?" "What was the most useful for you?" helps you in many ways. It helps, first of all, it basically frames that the conversation went well and it was useful. It asks them to identify the most useful thing. It helps make it personable. What was the most useful for you? It also gives you feedback, like I said. It's also reminding people how useful you are to them. This is a big one too. If you're coaching, you want people to continue to want to get coaching from you. If they're paying a recurring fee or if there's a chance for them to renew the coaching that they have with you, asking this question helps that person realize that they got value from you, that they actually did get something out of that conversation and will likely want to continue to do that moving forward.

Seven questions. "What's on your mind?" "And what else?" "What's the real challenge?" "What are you looking to achieve?" "How can I help you?" "If you're saying yes to this, what are you saying no to?" "What was the most useful for you?" Those are the seven questions from *The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More, and Change the Way you Lead Forever*, a book that I highly recommend. A link will be available in the show notes. Don't go yet because I have a few more important announcements to share, one of them being that if you want to listen to me actually asking these questions to real life people in real life coaching calls, well, that's exactly what's happening in two weeks starting in February on Ask Pat. If you go and subscribe to Ask Pat, which I highly recommend you do, it's another podcast, this is where I actually take live coaching calls from people who have applied on AskPat.com and you can apply too if you'd like to get coaching from me in exchange for it having been shared on a podcast.

I have recorded several of these episodes already and I use this

exact coaching framework. You'll actually hear me use these exact questions. "What's on your mind?" That's how I start the show. Just incredible results from this. I want to just encourage you to see how you might be able to add more coaching in your life whether it's online business and you charge for it or you do it in a format similar to mine where you're doing it for free in exchange for just building that authority and helping people get excited about potential coaching programs that you might have. For example, the SPI Accelerator Program, which I'll talk more about in a minute. Or, you know, as a parent or as a teacher, these questions will matter to you and how helpful you are for others. Obviously, when you serve others, when you help more people, you're going to be rewarded for that too. Go to Ask Pat, subscribe, and get ready because in February, we're going to launch with a splash with the first set of coaching calls. It's going to be a lot of fun too. Thank you all for that.

Also, I want to talk about the SPI Accelerator Program and what that is. This is a higher level coaching program. It does cost money. It's premium and it's only for people who are making over \$100,000 a year. This is something I've wanted to do for a very long time to serve those who are a little bit further ahead in their online business journey because a lot of them have been asking me for help and, currently, for the last few years, I've been focused on and creating courses and creating content both paid and free specifically for those who are just at the beginning. Those foundational courses are set and I still am helping those people. I'm not taking anything away from what I'm already doing. I'm only adding this as a limited group of people for a higher level mastermind situation where we're going to be meeting together quite often, both in person and online. I'm also going to be able to help you individually through coaching processes like this, but on a more higher level, because there's definitely a lot of differences between people who are above the 100k mark and already kind of at that space versus those who are just starting out.

You know, I'm really excited because a lot of the people who are at that level already are already over the mindset barriers. They've already taken the action. They've already gotten started. Now, they

just need some more tactical and very strategic advice to help them to five, 10X their earnings. That's my plan for those who join that group. It's going to be limited to just 50 people. There's going to be more information on the show notes if you want to go and check that out and apply to it. Again, you have to be earning over 100k already because that's the kind of level we're going to be at. There's also going to be other solutions for people who are just starting out too. For example, my online courses and also obviously the podcasts and the free coaching calls that you're going to listen to on Ask Pat and all the blog content that's coming out. I mean, none of that stuff is going away. Again, just adding this for those who want a little bit more help who are at that level. I'm really excited about it.

I'll talk more about it on the sales page and on the information page and through the application process for that. For those who are interested, just head on over to the show notes if you want to check it out. The show notes for this show, everything I just mentioned, and everything that was mentioned on the show, including a link to the book *The Coaching Habit*, are on the show notes page at SmartPassiveIncome.com/session302. Again, that's SmartPassiveIncome.com/session302. All right, guys. Thank you so much. I appreciate you for listening to the show and subscribing because we got some great stuff coming up. For example, next week, we're talking to two guys who started a loan signing agent business kind of by accident and now are generating over \$30,000 per month and a lot of it is now headed toward that passive space and passive business and passive earnings, which is really fun. Make sure to subscribe for that. Thanks again. I appreciate you. Again, my name is Pat Flynn. I'm here to help you make more money, save more time, and help more people too. Cheers. See you in the next one. Bye.

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