

THE FUTURE OF
HEALTH & FITNESS COACHING

COACHING ONLINE

FIVE STEPS TO DOING
IT EFFECTIVELY

DAY 4



COACHING ONLINE:

5 steps to helping more people, getting better results, and living + working on your own terms.

By John Berardi, Ph.D.

Most people working in health and fitness want to take on more clients while still delivering amazing results — without having to work 100-hour weeks or being a slave to their clients' schedules. Could coaching online be the answer? Here are the pros, the caveats, and — most importantly — 5 steps to creating a successful online coaching business.

Most people working in health & fitness eventually ask themselves:

Isn't there a better way to do this?

More specifically, they're asking:

How can I maximize client numbers and income while still maintaining control of my schedule and helping people get the best results?

And a lot of them wonder:

*Is **coaching online** the answer?*

If you've ever considered whether it's possible to handle more clients while still giving them a high-quality experience... or wished you could work fewer hours from wherever you like while still being a great coach, this article is for you.

In it we'll talk about:

- **The problem with traditional health and fitness coaching and how we solved it.**
- **How online coaching is a great option for growing your business, working less, and becoming a better coach... if you do it right.**
- **5 systems that are crucial to taking your coaching business online (these will be the difference between success and failure).**

Before digging in, however, I wanted to let you know that our industry-leading coaching platform — **Precision Nutrition's ProCoach** — is opening soon.

Tested with over 100,000 clients, ProCoach makes it easy to deliver research-proven nutrition and lifestyle coaching to anyone who needs it... from paying clients, to family members, to co-workers, to loved ones.

It'll help you grow your business while working less, getting better results, and living life on your own terms.

In summary, ProCoach delivers — to your clients, on your behalf — a total coaching solution, complete with daily lessons, habits, check-ins, and more.

Plus, as their coach, you'll support them by answering questions, offering encouragement, and tracking progress through special ProCoach software.

When you enroll, you'll be able to use this ground-breaking software and curriculum in *your* business — with *your* clients — and easily, quickly, effectively deliver the habit-based coaching you learned in the PN Certification.

Want to coach in-person? Online? Or a combination of the two? Whatever fits your ideal lifestyle, it's all possible with ProCoach.

And, speaking of online coaching...

Loving what you do doesn't always pay the bills.

If you're a coach in this field, you probably got started because you're passionate about health, fitness, and nutrition.

For starters, that's awesome. Important too.

However, at a certain point, you have to accept the fact that your business is also a business. It has to be run professionally. It has to be sustainable.

And sustainable means it provides you with a decent income — enough to meet your wants and needs — *without* requiring you to work 100-hour weeks and sacrificing your own health, your relationships, and your sanity.

Unfortunately, for many health and fitness pros, life looks more like this:

- Working a ridiculous number of hours each week.
- Getting sick a lot, missing your own workouts and wishing you had time to take care of your own health.
- Feeling like you have no “life.” Vacations? Out of the question.
- Hustling your butt off, yet *still* finding it tough to pay the bills.

If you can relate, here’s what you need to know:

This problem is *solvable*.

And there are a host of ways to solve it.

Online coaching, when planned and executed correctly, just so happens to be one of my favorite ways because it allows you to:

- help more people,
- help people outside your immediate area,
- work more efficiently,
- save time,
- make more money, and
- enjoy a more flexible lifestyle.

I know this because it's the exact approach we've taken at Precision Nutrition.

Each of our 20 in-house coaches works with, on average, 300 online clients a year. They do it while working from locations all over the world with flexible schedules that allow them to do things that are important to them outside work — like traveling, attending interesting events, or spending time with loved ones.

Plus, they accomplish all this while **working less than they did as in-person coaches and while still delivering amazing results.**

Of course, online coaching isn't a quick career fix. It's no magic bullet to solve your problems. Great coaching, online or in-person, takes hard work.

But hard work isn't enough.

Success also requires the right mindset and the right systems.

Is online coaching right for your business?

Wondering if online coaching is for you? Here's what you can expect:

Pros

- **Money.** Let's be real: Money's an issue for many coaches. In that 40 – 60 hour per week model, there's only so many people you can work with and only so much money you can make. But, without the limitation of "hour-long sessions," you can expand your client base. Instead of only being able to coach 20 to 40 people, that number may become 200 to 400. Of course, this depends on your ability to both sell and deliver great service. But the capacity is there when you're not bound to the side-by-side model of coaching.

- **Varied and/or niche clientele.** Not limited by geography, you can coach *anyone* — from an athlete in your own town to an out-of-shape middle ager halfway around the world. This gives you access to two smart business strategies: 1) broadening the number of people you help; and/or 2) zeroing in on a niche market that you're uniquely qualified to serve.
- **Control over your schedule.** When your clients are online, you're not forced to schedule meetings at odd hours — before or after the times most people are working. You can do your job when you want to, which gives you a lot of opportunity to plan your life around your desires, rather than around the schedule of others. You can also be much more efficient with certain aspects of your coaching, meaning fewer hours overall with no drop in results (actually, most online coaches' results improve).
- **Lifestyle flexibility.** When you work online, you can do your work anytime, anyplace. You get to arrange your life and work around what's most important to *you*. For some, this means living life on a tropical island. (Forget the beach screensaver — these folks have the real thing as their daily backdrop.) For others, it means walking their kids to and from school each day. Some use the freedom to indulge their wanderlust and travel the globe. Others use the time to write books, participate in athletic competitions, or enjoy waking up without an alarm clock. Truly, any lifestyle is possible with online coaching.

Caveats

- **A flexible schedule requires a new way of working.** It's wonderful to be able to work from wherever you like, whenever you like. However, if you don't carve aside time (and a physical location) for uninterrupted work, you'll struggle. Many people

who go from structured work environments to remote/virtual work find this out the hard way. To help avoid it, be prepared by reading up on virtual work dos and don'ts. From there, begin to develop a plan for how you'll govern your workday and create an ideal working environment *for you*.

- **You'll need to set clear boundaries.** If “work” is now done from your laptop or mobile phone, your “workplace” is everywhere and anywhere. If “work” is now done online, every time you're online you're “working”. That's why, to succeed in remote work, you have to set clear boundaries for yourself and clients. Yes, your clients will reach out when it's convenient for them. (That's as it should be). However, to avoid overwhelm for you (or annoyance from them) set expectations on when you'll work (and won't) each day, and when clients will (and won't) hear back from you.
- **Take care with your admin setup.** If not properly managed, you can spend a ton of time on administrative tasks for online clients: program writing, record keeping, email responses, phone calls, and other routine client management tasks. If you don't decide to outsource this, then plan to spend a few weeks on your initial business configuration. Then be prepared to iterate on it over time. Your first draft won't be your last.
- **You'll have more to keep track of.** Once you take on more clients, it's easy to start forgetting the details, like who's on what program, what each client's goals and challenges are, etc. If you're setting your online coaching business up on your own, you'll need to put a lot of thought into the nature of your average client's needs, and a good system for managing all the details. Dedicating time and resources to this up front will be crucial to your success.

There are more pros and more caveats. But hopefully this gives you a good sense of what you're getting into before you begin.

5 success systems for coaching online.

At this point, if you've decided that you're ready to take your coaching business (or a portion of it) online, you'll want to consider the following success systems.

System #1.

Centralizing your daily work and communications.

You'll likely use all the basics — calendar, spreadsheets, emails, even texts. But you'll want to organize and integrate those tools so you can be more efficient, personal, and responsive in your interactions.

First, decide which tools you'll use. You need a centralized suite that includes email, calendar, documents, spreadsheets, and perhaps instant messaging/texting. Choose one (Google? Microsoft?) and stick with it.

Next, integrate the tools. Make sure your calendar is connected to your email (for automatic updates); your calendar to your computer and phone (for meeting reminders); etc.

Next, clearly communicate with your clients how to get in touch with you, and when. Should they email you? Text? Call? When should they expect a response? When and how will you reach out to them?

Finally, stick to your system. Hold firm to your plan so there's never any question of how or when you'll work. You can't work on your own terms if you're reinventing the wheel every day.

(Although, to the last point, your first draft will likely require iteration as you learn more. So, if something is not working, keep tinkering until it does.)

System #2. Automating repeatable tasks.

If you can set yourself up to automate recurring tasks, you can save yourself loads of time, while still delivering a great coaching experience.

Here's the 4-step formula we originally developed to coach more people to better results in less time. (It's also the formula that underpins ProCoach, which you can use in your business too.)

- Take a look at where you're spending your time. Look for your "time wasters". (Ask yourself: *Am I reinventing the wheel every time I write a workout program or a nutritional plan or answer an email about peanut butter?*)
- Automate every "time waster" you can. (For example: gather samples and templates of all your emails, info, FAQs and other repeatable tasks and keep them in a handy file.)
- Now that you have templates and automation, you can personalize things when required. (For example: adapting a baseline program to a particular client's needs; adding a personal line or two to a standard email.)
- Put your saved time toward "time warriors" (and a long-awaited vacation).

For more on this 4-step system, including an exploration of "time wasters" and "time warriors", check out: "[How top-earning health and fitness coaches save time, increase their effectiveness, and work + live on their own terms](#)" in the Resources section of Day 4.

System #3.

Managing clients and tracking results.

How are you going to keep track of your clients, their goals, their status in your program, and their progress?

For example, at any given moment, you'll want to know:

- Are they practicing the healthy habits you discussed with them?
- How consistent have they been with their exercise program? With their nutrition practices? Have there been any recent changes?
- What has their overall engagement with their nutrition and fitness program been? Have they been active and responsive? Or are they checked out?
- What previous discussions/interactions have you had? What questions have you answered for them in the past? What are their concerns, goals, and challenges?
- How have they been progressing? How are their measurements changing? What do other indicators, such as energy levels, mood, or habit consistency, tell you?

Assuming you're doing this manually (i.e. without coaching software), you'll need a way to collect and organize the data (i.e. spreadsheets for notes and measurements, organized folders with their nutrition/workout program specs, before/after pictures, etc).

For more on how we do this at Precision Nutrition (hint: our method is totally automated), check out [“How Precision Nutrition coaches, and how you can coach this way too”](#) in the Resources section of Day 4.

System #4. Attracting new clients.

If you're used to working in an in-person environment, chances are you'll have to up your client acquisition game... big-time. This is the top thing people miss when trying to go online! When you're working from a beach or mountain cabin, clients don't just saunter in looking for a coach.

So, yes, you're going to need to learn marketing.

A good marketing plan has three components; I call this the "Tripod Marketing Formula".

Assuming you know who you want to serve, it's quite simple:

Step 1: Know what your audience really wants and needs.

What are their main problems/challenges? How can you help solve them — even before they start paying you?

Step 2: Do something awesome to deliver that solution.

You might put together a free nutrition course, or a collection of articles that addresses your target audience's main challenges. Or you may even create your own content — articles, infographics, posters — to really stand out from the crowd.

Step 3: Go out and tell everyone (in your target audience) about it.

Where are the people you're trying to reach? Find them and tell them what you're up to.

System #5.

Becoming a world-class coach.

Online coaching is most effective when it's done around a carefully planned, cumulative curriculum.

At Precision Nutrition, our curriculum involves 50 weeks of habits/practices. Clients practice each one for 2 weeks. And each new one builds on the last.

These habits/practices are:

Simple: When we ask a client, “On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you can do this every day for two weeks?” — we want the answer to be a 9 or 10.

Segmental: The practice breaks a larger skill down into its component parts.

Sequential: The practices should take place in an appropriate order, starting with “thing 1”, then onto “thing 2”, etc.

Strategic: Our practices leverage the client's' strengths to address the barrier that's in the way right now.

Supported: We provide teaching, coaching, mentorship, and accountability around the habits. So the things we need them to read/do/practice are automated. And our coaching is in place to support that.

With a great (and automated) curriculum in place, coaches can pour their energy into being more client-centered.

This means having time for deeper exploration into the client's wants and needs, meeting the client where they're at, and collaborating on next actions.

For more on how we integrate client-centered coaching and curriculum, check out [The Precision Nutrition Formula: 3 keys to building a scalable, world-class health and fitness business \[Infographic\]](#)

You can bring your coaching skills to an online environment. You just have to do it right.

Online coaching does require the development of new skills, skills that each coach must learn as they make the transition from in-person to online.

Everything from marketing and sales, to time management and admin are different enough that you have to look before you leap.

With that said, online coaching is similar to in-person coaching in that it demands that you to bring your best coaching skills to the table.

(It's one of the reasons why we only offer ProCoach to PN-trained Level 1 Certification students and grads.)

Interestingly, as some coaches consider the transition, their #1 worry is whether online coaching will have the same satisfaction as in-person coaching.

In my experience, it does.

Most online coaches I've met say it's even more satisfying. Because online coaching allows you to help with your clients' nutrition, exercise, sleep, stress, and more. As a result, you become much more invested in the big picture of your clients' lives.

Couple that with more freedom and flexibility in your own life, and it's a win-win.

Ready to work on your own terms?

If you're looking for an all-in-one solution for taking your coaching business online, Precision Nutrition's **ProCoach** includes all the systems discussed in this article — and much more — in one place.

ProCoach includes the exact software and curriculum that's been used to guide over 100,000 clients to better results over the past 15 years — all while the coaches work whenever and wherever they want.

The cool part is that now you can use it to deliver the same curriculum to your clients, with you as the coach. In less time. With more effectiveness. From anywhere in the world.

Visit this link for more information:

<http://get.pn/procoach>

