



**Dory Willer is the founder of Beacon Quest Coaching** based in the San Francisco Bay Area of California ([www.beaconquest.com](http://www.beaconquest.com)). A certified life purpose coach and business success coach, Dory is a nationally recognized expert on aligning people with their passions. Co-author of four published books, a popular international speaker and frequent radio guest, Dory was named the 2003 International Coach of the Year. Founded in 1998, Beacon Quest Coaching specializes in business success, career and life renewal coaching.

**Dory, how did you first learn about Robert Middleton and Action Plan Marketing? What led you to contact him?**

Prior to going out on my own, I had been a V.P. of Human Resources working for two Fortune 100 organizations. Having grown up in the womb of being a corporate employee, I discovered it was way different than creating and running a business on your own. That is why I was led to Robert's materials. I had no clue on how to market and was literally doing it by trial and error. I was really intent on getting my hands on whatever I could.

**What were some of the marketing challenges you were facing at that time?**

Designing a marketing plan. I had done many other plans - - strategic plans, budgets - - but putting together a marketing plan was really different. I had the network. I had the social contacts and the great referrals. Robert really helped me focus instead of diluting myself, spreading myself too thin and going with whoever was connecting with me. I got involved with some of his classes and applied myself. Robert introduced me into the concept of getting into groups. I guess it was back in 2001 when I joined one of his Marketing Action Groups.

**How did the Marketing Action Group help you? What did you find you could do that you couldn't do before being a part of that group?**

Getting paid for my speaking. I had been a speaker for the corporations I worked for, but of course that was unpaid. So the real strategy I learned was to get myself out there and then get paid. I remember Robert telling me I could get paid to market! Very seldom do I do any speaking engagements now that are not paid unless I choose to do them pro-bono. After every speaking engagement I've received clients.

I knew I could coach anyone but Robert helped me see I was the best person to coach executives. That's where I came from. I had no passion for any other group but I resisted initially. He helped me focus into that niche. He also asked me, "How much do you want to earn?" That was easy. Then he asked me, "How much do you want to work?" He taught me how to "back into" how much you want to earn by how much you want to work.

In 2003 I was awarded the International Coach of the Year recognition, and I earned it through principles I learned in marketing to help me sell myself for the nomination and ultimate selection. I also have two executive coaching contracts with global companies where I am one of only 50 worldwide executive coaches authorized to coach the top senior level executives. Those individual engagements average around \$40K each a year. And now at this point, almost 70-80% of my clients come from referrals.

**So in other words, your return on investment has been huge?**

Yes. I hit six-figures pretty quickly, but I wanted to be back to what my salary was as a corporate employee executive and surpass it. That was my goal that year. The Marketing Action Group helped me get there. My income has far surpassed the former VP salary and more importantly, I'm in a position to select my roster of clients and the number of hours I want to work. I have some of the best corporate groups which give me pure pleasure in my work.

**I'd like to ask you a little more about your experience with the Marketing Action Group, Dory. What other benefits did you experience as a result of being part of this group?**

The amount of synergy that occurred within the group members. Everyone was interested in each others success. I learned the concept of once a client, always a client and to keep track of the packages I put together for my clients.

Another great strategy I learned was to cultivate what you've already done with people. We were able to determine when my slow months were and came up with "Dory Tune-Ups." These "tune-ups" would fill my calendar during the slow months. They worked really well. I also learned to create a calendar of when corporations were planning and releasing their budgets which helped me determine when I was going to get into the "Marketing Ball" game. It helped me zero in on my marketing efforts to maximize that time period of opportunity.

Another tactic I learned was when you are speaking, talk about your client's situations - case studies and stories. That was big too. I was taught the easiest way to get a testimonial was to listen. When I was working with a client and during the dialogue and they would say something I might be able to use as a testimonial, I'd write that down and at the end of the session I would ask them if I could use that in a presentation. I thought that strategy was brilliant.

**Obviously you have been a fan of these materials and have been using them for many, many years. Have you found you've been able to go back and use them over and over again?**

Yes, absolutely. I use the first base, second base, third base [Marketing Ball] all the time. I need to remind myself where I am [on Marketing Ball] with my prospects, especially when I have disappointments. I had one this year that was mind boggling. I wondered what happened. I went over it again and again. But what I learned and what I left them with was the feeling of increase. Even though the whole deal was closed off, I left a big door open. I gave them something they normally would have had to pay for so I can stay in the game albeit a 'delayed game'. I trust that the game will pick back up if I keep courting them appropriately and stay on 'base'.

**It appears a big underlying theme with these materials is adding value. Is that a fair statement?**

Yes. Robert taught me what I've been calling the Win-Win-Win triangle. Of course there is something in it for the client (Win#1) and there is something in it for you (Win#2) but we had to look at who was getting the greater value - the bigger picture of our work together (Win #3 and that's where my focus amplifies). I became a client of Robert's because of the relationship he built through his marketing newsletters. He was always giving away something free, something of value. He built a relationship with me. So when the Marketing Action Group came along he made it easy to say yes. He walked the talk of adding value and it made it easy to follow his examples and do the same with my marketing.

**Is there anything else you believe people should know about Action Plan Marketing or Robert's materials?**

You need to be ready to make the commitment to do what it takes. And naturally a program like this will hold you accountable. You don't want to show up to a session without doing your homework because you are the one the benefits from the review and input.

Over the years I have experienced incredible media exposure -- TV, radio show host, print -- and am quoted frequently in papers like the Wall Street Journal. Even after 9/11, I flourished as an international speaker, landing paid speaking engagements in 8 different countries the next year when others were moaning and groaning about the economy. How did I do it? I changed up my hook and benefits of my presentations to fit the current gloom of the economy. Robert's guidance and processes helped me create the thriving practice I enjoy today.

To me, it's all about having a plan and putting feet under it. Ala, Smokey the Bear's phrase: Only YOU can prevent forest fires! I say, Only YOU can light your fire!