

The Coaching Wizards Series
Dan Janal Interviews Karen Armon

Dan – Welcome to the Coaching Wizards session. This is Dan Janal, the Founder of PR Leads. I can't tell you how happy I am every Thursday at 2:00 when I get to do what I consider the highlight of my week. I get to interview people who are doing really, really well in their businesses and they get to share their tips and tactics and hidden treasures with everyone on the line who has a coaching business or a consulting business or really any kind of personal business. I've found these tips to be very, very useful.

My guest today is Karen Armon. I first became introduced to Karen through Vicky Sullivan who's one of my all-time gurus. She said, "You've got to watch this person coming up the line. Karen Armon is the real thing." Well, if Vicky says so, that's all I needed. I've gotten to know Karen over the last couple of months as a PR Leads client and through lots of discussions and interesting times. I'm sure we'll have a good time and a lot of good information here. Welcome Karen.

Karen – Thank you for inviting me. I am so honored to be able to give you any information that you all need today.

Dan – Thank you very much. Karen, a lot of my clients are multi-taskers and they just can't listen to a telephone line without looking at somebody's website so why don't you tell them what your website is and I'm sure they'll look over there with one eye and keep one ear on the phone here.

Karen – www.AllianceResources.net and I also have a blog that you can go over to and it's called The Challenge Ready Leader.

Dan – Let's get acquainted, Karen. What is the focus of your coaching practice?

Karen – I really do two things. First of all, I help executives position themselves as top leaders and move their careers forward in the Creative Economy that we're in right now. I also help those executives create their farm teams of future leaders and prepare their leadership pipeline for the challenges that are ahead in this Creative Economy. How I do that? First of all, I work with these executives to identify their personal legacy and help them draw new opportunities to them in this Creative Economy. I also pinpoint their executive legacy and drill it down into the organization to prepare those next-generation executives to take on the C-Suite as they move forward.

Dan – What is the primary benefit your clients receive?

Karen – I thought about this. My clients receive really two-fold benefits. First and foremost what I do is I provide them with insights in the Creative Economy. The world has changed out there and I help executives and business leaders understand how to shift their thinking; understanding what this Creative Economy is requiring. Then, the second benefit that I provide is that I prepare them for that economy. The most important thing that we all need, though, is we need to drill this down into what's the return on our investment. How do I make that translate into my own

pocket? One of the things that I do is I help my executives, and I help business leaders, really maintain that investment that they've had in their careers and in their leadership. One of the returns on investments that I can promise is that we can get you up and running in about 9-18 months. That shift can just be tremendously tough, but it also can be wonderfully exciting as people move into this new economy.

Dan – How long have you been a coach?

Karen – This is probably something everybody on the call can think about and nod. We all have been an informal coach almost all our lives. Informally, I've been a coach for I'd say 18 years. I've always been a teacher and an instructor at heart—but formally, where I got paid for it; it was only in about the last four years.

Dan – Why did you want to be a coach?

Karen – I didn't really set out to be a coach and I'm not too sure I like to position myself as a coach. No offense everybody. What I really do is I provide that thought-leadership expertise through a coaching delivery model. I think that's really the more acceptable way in which executives want to think about my expertise and so that's why I say I am a coach. What I really wanted to do, and why I am allowing myself to be called a coach now, is because I want leaders to learn how to actually lead. They've got to quit managing and just managing the organization. My passion is to help them understand what leadership is and move away from that management model. Coaching is the way in which they can accept that.

Dan – What is the most rewarding part of being a coach for you?

Karen – The most rewarding part of being a coach is working with the brightest, most talented people at the executive ranks who are really providing tremendous value to organizations. What they don't really know is they don't know their own value. They don't know their own personal leadership legacy. They don't know their own value proposition. What I get a real jazz in doing, and what I really like to help executives and business leaders learn, is why they're here on the planet and what that has to do with businesses. That's really the most rewarding part, when they can stand on their own two feet and understand it isn't about managing; it's about being a challenge-ready leader and leading organizations through to Blue Oceans.

Dan – What is the most frustrating part of being a coach?

Karen – Probably the most frustrating part of being a coach—and I've read some of the transcripts from some of your other coaches, and I have to just say the same thing—is working with people who don't want to change, and want everybody else to change except for themselves. They say they want to change, but it isn't a heart change. They blame their companies, they blame their colleges, they blame the government, they blame their cities, and they blame their leaders. They do everything else but look at how they need to shift who they are and what they are to become the kind of leaders they are meant to be. The worst thing is when I spend six to nine months with these individuals who really -- where we've defined the goals that we want to get; where we really work toward having them execute them; when we drill down

and have them imbedded in the organization -- and then when I track back with them three to six months later and they're not doing any of it. It's so frustrating to spend all that time with people. When the accountability is gone, all that new information just goes out the window. I call these people tactical achievers and not success learners. One of the things that has been very, very frustrating, and one of the things that I have learned to define in my coaching practice, is to identify those success learners and just not deal with tactical achievers anymore.

Dan – Good for you. That's important. Let's take a step back and remember back to the days when you started your coaching business about four years ago. What were you doing before then and how did that help you become a good coach?

Karen – I come from a long line of entrepreneurs. I grew up in a home of entrepreneurs. One of my family members created the rocket symbol that was on the Oldsmobile, so I come from a long line of people like that. My dad made the first four-track tape that was supposedly, one of the competitors against the eight-track tape for the Ford Mustang. My father lost out because they thought that bigger was better and what we found was the four-track tape was the better delivery method. My grandpa created the soil-testing tool, when you drill down into the soil, and come up and find out what the soil is like. My grandfather created that. So I come from a long line of entrepreneurs. I think, in my years of working for other companies—I just didn't fit very well. When I was laid off twice in one year, in 1992, I said that's it and I took my corporate training director role that I'd had into my businesses and started developing my firm in 1992 as an organizational consultant. During that time, I worked with not only the people-side of the business, but also the technical-side of the business. I think I was one of the first people out there that combined the TQM Six Sigma model and the people side of the sure models (the person who was the human capital person), and brought them together. I did that for a long period of time from 1992 to just about 2002. What happened with a lot of the things that I had done before, I had found that I was informally coaching, so it wasn't really much of a switchover when I realized that the world was much more digital than analog and so coaching just really fit when I moved over from that background.

Dan – How long had you been a coach before you started making a full-time income from coaching?

Karen – Like I said, it was informally; since 1992, I've been coaching. When you're doing organizational consulting, when you're changing the whole business model of a business and transforming it, you have to work with these top executives. I would coach them all the time what needed to happen to be able to have their employees take over and change to that new leader model, so I had really been coaching for a long period of time. When I flipped over to the paid piece of coaching, it was right around 2002.

Dan – Let's talk about how you marketed your business in the early stages. What were some of the biggest mistakes you made when you started your coaching business and how did you overcome them?

Karen – When I really first started my business in 1992—that's way back before the Internet—I didn't even have a business card, I didn't have letterhead, I didn't have anything. I'd just go out

there and make connections and write my number on a piece of paper and thought if you want to get a hold of me, you will. But I think what that biggest mistake I made is that I thought of marketing as selling, and it really isn't. Marketing and selling are two different pieces. Marketing is somewhat of an art, but it's also a science, as well as selling is somewhat of an art and a science. Both of them are really not about a process-focused delivery that makes the distinction. Also I've come to find, and one of the biggest mistakes I made, was actually focusing on that process delivery method saying that my process was making a distinction in the marketplace. It's never the delivery that provides the distinction. It isn't the solution, it isn't the differentiator, and it isn't the thing that's going to make you different than every other coach out there. What's really important is you've got to identify who you are in this Creative Economy, not what you do, because what you do can be fairly common.

Dan – What were some of the best moves you made regarding your marketing in your early days?

Karen – In the early days, some of the best moves that I made was when I came out of that place of who I was. People connect with you because you resonate with them. Whether I had some elegant kind of business model or not, people trusted me. If I said something they understood that was something that they needed. That was really the genesis for understanding what marketing really is. It's a matter of finding out what your strengths are. Another piece that I really made some mistakes about is I tried to fit in. I tried to be like everybody else. I tried to follow the crowd. I tried to look to everybody to tell me what the answer was and what it meant to market myself. I realized over long periods of time and many mistakes that I couldn't do that. My strength is in my thinking. My strength is in who I can connect with. My capability of identifying as a thought-leader to thought-leaders was what I had to understand. It was what made me distinctive and different. Again, it's the business model that makes you different. It's who you are that makes you different.

Dan – Let's talk about the administration and the management part of your business back in the early days. What were some of the good things you did and what were some of the bad things you did?

Karen – The mistakes that I really made in administration is first of all trying to do it all—I still struggle with that—and finding great talent that can work with me virtually and having the same passion that I do and commitment to my business is really tricky. I've gone really slowly in the administration of my business and I keep pretty much to myself. I am building some connections with some key people and some talented people who can help me with by black box, but I move very slowly with that, because there's just not anybody else that can have the same kind of passion. What I've learned to do in the administration piece is to become really organized. I find when I talk to people that I work with I'm more organized than anybody else. If there's anything that your people on the line should think about is to take some steps to get yourself organized. Don't try to be become everything to everybody, but also understand the things that you're going to hold, you've got to do well at. Just continue to find ways to do it better and better.

Dan – That's such good advice. One of my other interview subjects told me that he had offloaded a bunch of his stuff to his webmaster and I called up his webmaster and now I'm offloading a

whole bunch of stuff to him as well. You're right, as a solopreneur, I think we do take on too much because we think we can do it all, and then before you know it there's no time left in the day and you're spending your time doing skat level work that other people would love to do at much lower rates than we would charge. Speaking of rates, let's talk about how you price your services in today's economy. How do you set your fees? Are they hourly or by project or by something else?

Karen –I'm going to go back to something I wanted to say and then I'll come back to that if that's okay. One of the things that I misunderstood in right about 2000 was I didn't see the cues fast enough and I didn't adjust fast enough to the shift from the Producer Economy to the Creative Economy. This is leading up to the pricing so stick with me. The middle market is gone. As of 2000, anybody who is actually in that middle space, you are quickly becoming a commodity price.

Dan – What do you mean by middle market?

Karen – The middle market—it doesn't mean you have to be a small or middle-sized business. It isn't about size. It's about what you provide and your branding in the middle market. In other words, you're either going up and becoming a boutique, thought-leader, specialized, high-value priced coaching package, or you're going down to commodity pricing and selling on price only. If you're in the middle space, one of the things that I realized in this Creative Economy is you must be innovative to be able to sell high-value fees. If you're not creating innovative ways in which your clients can actually leverage in the Creative Economy, then you've actually become a commodity.

A commodity has a price-point place. For instance, if a lot of the coaches that are on the call today end up finding that people will say to you, “XYZ Coaching Company only sells it for this amount of money,” and the implication is drop your fees to everything to be the same as someone else, you have not created a value proposition in an innovative economy that people see that they need to get. You have forced yourself in an hourly or fee-based situation. You need to understand what it is that you're pricing. I sell in a project value-based space. What I provide is so innovative to my marketplace that they're willing to pay those fees. What I do is I provide a custom project for those that are high-end who want to work with me and really move themselves into a thought-leadership position in the coaching part of my practice. I'm not talking about the consulting part of my practice. But in the coaching part, the one-on-one where I work with executives, I have that custom project. I let that be a long lead-time sale. I position that custom project work against what those executives have invested in their careers throughout the career.

For instance, a top-level executive MBA program costs anywhere from \$40-120,000 for somewhere between 18 months to three years. Most top executives have not invested in their careers in 10-15-20 years. They haven't gotten new information on how to actually operate in new ways. I position myself against that as long as I have determined that the return on investment fits their need. Then I have a couple of other pieces which are more flat pricing for Private Coaching as well as a Semi-Private Group Fees for the more price conscious individuals.

My target market is executive Baby Boomers. There are people within that group that either want the customized work who have the money to pay for it within their company or for themselves; or they want the more affordable pricing where they can do it themselves. I find that's where Baby Boomers are—they either want the custom work, they want you to do a ton of work with them and they're willing to pay the fee for it; or they want to run it themselves and they want you to give them the information but they want to run out there and apply it for themselves. I've accommodated my fee structure to fit those needs as well.

Dan – Let's talk about how you handle objections because a lot of people have never heard of value-based pricing. What do you say to them to justify your fees?

Karen – I begin, first of all, by providing a 30-minute free consultation. That's nothing new. The free consultation is not to provide them necessarily with new ways of thinking. I use it as a qualifying call. I ask them, "How long has it been since you've invested in your executive career? How long has it been since you've done anything different with your career? Send me what you think your value proposition is to your company and tell me what isn't working anymore. What is that you want to receive in your career and in your business? What kind of significance do you believe that you need to bring into your company? What's your passion and how do you want to change the world?" I never quote prices until we've gone through that. Once we go through that, then they're above the buy-line then. Then they say, "What is it that you charge to do all this?" That's the cue that says, "I'm willing and ready to buy. Now what is it that it's going to cost me?" I tell them I am not sure yet, but "let me send you more information on the project before we go into price details."

When it comes to customization, I end up having to do a little bit more information delving before I can price out what their fee is. They say, "Well, what's the difference then between a lower end fee and a higher end fee?" I would say to them, "The amount of work and readiness you have to be able to shift." Once they receive all the information, then we have a follow-up phone conversation where I drill down even more into what they've done within their career and how they need to shift. Once we get to that place, when I close the deal, the objections are pretty much gone away.

Dan – Thank you for going into so much detail on all of that. I'm sure people are busy writing notes about this so they can practice it in front of a mirror to get comfortable with it. Let's talk about how you're growing your business today. How do you get new business?

Karen – That's been probably the one thing that's been a little different than I've seen from some other kinds of models. I really practice what I call "the co-partner marketing model." What that is really execution with intention. What I'm trying to do is I work with partners who are channels of distribution in reaching my target market. First of all, what needs to happen is, with co-partner marketing, you must understand where your target market collects. Well, the first problem with that is executives don't collect in any one place. They don't actually come together in to one spot like maybe the Chamber of Commerce or some kind of professional association. In fact, with my target market, most executives wouldn't set foot in a professional association meeting because everybody from beginners to top leaders are part of that association and they just aren't going to spend the time there.

What I do in co-partnering is I look for places where they can't be all things to all of their customers and executives. For instance, let's use Oracle. Oracle is one of my co-channel partners. They have an executive portal called "Executive Summit" – it's their executive information portal. What they're doing is they're putting together this portal from the Profit Magazine, but they don't have enough content (sic "for the web). They can't reach enough people to give them strategic thinking content. I use a Trojan horse approach to infiltrate that channel based on my own personal value proposition and provide that depth for them. They target executives. Guess what? That's my target. Instead of trying to out build my own list of names, I partner with people who already have executives within their channel and provide more content and depth and thought-leadership into that channel.

Dan – How do you keep your current clients?

Karen – I keep my clients by providing thought-leadership insights. I know I keep coming back with the "one-note Charlie kind of thing." Executives always want to know the new stuff that's coming on the horizon. One of the things that I do in my business model is I really kind of am upside down—I spend a lot of time modeling the thought leadership approach. I spend a lot of time in thinking and a lot of time in writing and communicating. My clients, whether they're current or past, like to stay connected because I end up being the voice of things that they can't say. I stay connected with them with a lot of different kinds of ways—my blog, my website. I do webinars probably just about three of them a month. I do my own teleseminars also that are sponsored by my partners. I continue to write thought leadership articles for them. I follow up with them to I connect with them. Whenever they have an issue or question, I always answer them fairly quickly so they know that I'm a resource for them no matter what happens to them in their career or in their business.

Dan – Do you think you run your business differently than other coaches?

Karen – I've thought about that, and I'm not too sure if I run them differently or not. I don't want to sound like I'm uncaring, but I don't really look over my shoulder to see what someone else is doing. It really wastes a lot of my energy and my focus. But I do think that, as a thought leader, and especially if you're targeting executives, thought-leadership is the key. You really have to be willing to cut a new path that was never there before. I'm always looking out there at what's happening in the marketplace and within this creative economy. That takes up a lot of my thinking time. If I have to kind of this about this; I'd say I have an upside down business model to most coaching firms.

Dan – By "upside down" what do you mean?

Karen – I mean that I spend a lot of time—I spend a big portion of my time thinking, writing, creating, and communicating. My delivery is much less. I spend a lot of my time reading and processing stuff. I've got probably 15 books going on at the same time. I read a gazillion blogs. I read a lot of eZines that I come across. Then I analyze and synthesize that for what that means to executives today. That's what I mean by the upside down model.

Dan – You just touched on this for a second, but what roles do advertising, websites, ezines and blogs play in your business? Can you go into a little bit more detail there?

Karen – Yes. Advertising, I've found—and I've never done this—is really a waste of money. I don't do a lot of the gimmicky stuff like trying to do search engine optimization or any of that kind of stuff. I am the face of my business, and that's been the key. Whenever I invest in any of the websites, ezines or blogs, I really put myself into that brand. I really tell it like it is and I really stand for something within those things.

Whenever I create my website, my e-letter or my blog, my speeches, the work that I do, I do play a heavy role in that, and I use it as a resource for my co-channel marketing. It becomes the center and the source of that. Whenever I do write in ezines or in my website or in my blog, which I use very heavily, I really push the envelope. I say things very, very strongly, again, with the idea of that middle space. Just look at General Motors; who is in real trouble. The fundamental ways in which people are leading businesses now -- whether it's their own business or whether that's a large business -- we've really got to change. Unless someone like me is in an executive space to teach, to say things differently, there's going to be a lot more careers and businesses lost and destroyed. We've got to become authentic and real. I'm probably getting a little bit on my soapbox here, but I'm tired of phonies and I'm tired of plastic people who call themselves leaders. I use my tools of communication, just to get in their face about that, and I'll even do it with my co-partners. I will let them know that I stand for something and I am going to push the envelope because I'll tell you what we've got to do to shift the world and how we need to lead. What I'm finding is that as my passion leaks out—and it resonates with that target market. Who they are and who I am are kind of the same. Again, I just say it like it is because it isn't just the website, it isn't the ezine, it isn't the blog; it's what's in it that really counts.

Dan – What about referrals? How do you stimulate referrals for your business?

Karen – I've got a couple of stories on that. It really is a big piece of my business. For some of the people on the line today, referrals may be something we would like to have and we don't necessarily have. Referrals come because your word of mouth campaign has really kind of amalgamated and created an engine. Let me give you an example. I have a guy that I talked to just yesterday. He's a supply chain executive for a large company. He hasn't even purchased from me yet. He listened to me in a webinar and I'll tell you what, he's taken my name and he's just told everybody that he knows that he's not only a raving fan, he's a rabid fan. He's been talking about me to other people that I have no idea who they are because the concepts are different. They're resonating. He finally talked to me yesterday and told me this story, that he's just spread my name to everybody. The referrals are a huge part of my business. Some of that I think is from the health of the economy. I think over the years, because the economy is now kind of morphed and moved and then this year is kind of a good one, I think there's a lot of business out there now. But it really has to do with the kind of value of the delivery that I provide.

The second story is that there's a company up north here in Longmont and some of the executives are being laid-off with a buyout and they're trying to find some new places to go, which is where the economy is right now. This one guy purchased one of my workbooks and he read it. After the first few pages of reading it, he called me. He thought it was the best thing he

ever had and he just started showing everybody in the company about my workbook and how it was completely different. Yes, referrals are really a tremendous part of my business.

Dan – Thank you for sharing with us on how we can do it as well. What about seminars or retreats? Do they play a role in your business?

Karen – I started groups last year for the more price conscious folks. They're really for the people who want my Semi-Private Coaching experience. It's really provided a pretty helpful piece to my offering. One of the things that I do—because executives are a pretty shy group; they don't want a lot of people in their group—I have to make sure, number one, in those groups, that I keep them small; and number two, I make sure that there's no cross-industry competitors or people who have any idea about anybody in the group. In other words, if someone is in the consumer goods industry, I will not have another consumer goods industry person in that group. If I make sure that I take care of that, then the groups have run very, very well and people feel very, very safe. I am starting a Boot Camp. I'm finding that some people want this stuff ASAP, and so we use what we have. I use Denver and the mountains as a popular draw. I've create the Boot Camp to be held on a Friday so that they can bring their family in on a Saturday and they can meet their family and go on a family vacation over the weekend as well as doing business here on Friday in Denver.

Dan – What about speaking? Is that part of your growth strategy?

Karen – Speaking has never really been part of my growth strategy, but let me kind of share with you my lens that I use for speaking. First of all, I never do anything as part of my business growth strategy until it fits my business model of thought-leadership. I don't speak as a form of business creation. I really speak to reach new target markets. Speaking itself is not an end; it is the avenue to the end. That's the first part of my lens. The second part of my lens is that my target market is really more electronically driven and so I primarily use webcasts, teleseminars, and now I'm looking into podcasting, so that my target audience can not only stay connected with my message more readily, but they can also have access to my message. I'm not really trying to be a speaking star. Finally, if I am approached to speak—and that's happening more and more—I must be clear that I'm speaking to my audience. If the opportunity isn't target rich, there's no amount of money in the world that's going to make me go off of my focus to just be that guru for the day. I really make sure that the speaking can get me to my target audience. I'm not really concerned about getting money from a speaking gig; but I don't speak unless I am paid.

Dan – What about book writing and publishing? Is that part of your plan?

Karen – It's the same criteria as speaking. I do writing. I would use book writing and publishing. I don't have a book right now. But I use it in the same manner as speaking. I'm really not interested in being a minor celebrity. I'm interested in building a business that provides real sustainable growth to my target market and clients. If a book fits that model, then I'm game. But if not, I'm not going to do it.

Dan – It's nice to put your foot down and know what you stand for. The one thing I've found about these interviews is that everyone has a different way of running their business and it works for them and whatever our listeners and readers are gathering from this, they can pick and choose what fits into their lifestyle and their belief structure. Let's talk now about the administration and management part of your business. How many hours a week do you work?

Karen – I was adding this up because sometimes we don't really know. My day usually starts at about 5:30am. I get up really early. But I also make sure I end right around 3:00. I can't do much more than that. My brain just fries on me. I start early to connect with some of my clients in Europe and throughout the world because they're traveling all over the place. I also make sure that I work about four and a half days a week. I have to give myself the weekends. I have to admit that sometimes I do work on the weekends, but whenever I do, I pay for it, not only in my attitude, but also in my motivation. I just, at the end of the week, just think, "I don't want to do this anymore."

Dan – Percentage wise, how much time do you spend on clients, client activity work, compared to administration and other business activities?

Karen – Understand that I said I'm kind of upside down. I went back through this to verify it. I spend about 50% of my time in marketing. That's what I consider creating, writing, speaking, thinking, developing connections. This is different than what I used to do, by the way, before I started coaching and really getting to this place in my business. When I started back in 1992, it was all delivery, delivery, delivery. I was focused on delivery. Now I spend about 10-15 hours of my time, or 40% of my time in client delivery and I make sure I don't go over that. Fifty percent of my time is marketing, 40% of my time is client delivery, so guess what's the rest of my time? About 10% of my time is in administration, and that's only four hours a week, folks. I make sure that within those four hours a week I am very organized.

Dan – What are some of your tips for being organized?

Karen – First of all, I am believer in not using digital tools. Digital tools aren't good for handwriting. For me, I'm the old analog, Franklin Planner person. I use that tool to the max. I've been doing it for 20 years and I use that very, very well. I find that it keeps me well organized. I have a system in my office that is color-coded. I make sure that my files are up to date. I never have a messy office. Things are clean in my office, put away, and organized. I get rid of junk every year. I just stay organized.

Dan – Now I know what I'm going to do after this call is over. Do you have a staff?

Karen – No I don't. I do have, and I have been over the year, building a virtual team of specialists that I use whenever I need to, but they're all 1099 status and by contact only.

Dan – What kind of work do they do for you?

Karen – They help me with my black box. There are things that, if I'm spending that 50% of time in marketing, there are things that I need to delegate to this group like research, some

editing work for my clients as well as myself, some copyrighting work that I have them do. I do that black box piece so that my marketing is pretty clean.

Dan – Can you define black box again please?

Karen – Yes. When I spend 50% of my time in writing and thinking and speaking and delivery, the black box piece is having a copy editor, having a marketing writer that takes my thoughts and actually re-configures them. I have somebody that does research for me. They do the inside, behind-the-scenes kind of thing to help me be better than I would be if I had to do it all myself.

Dan – What advice do you have for managing these kinds of people?

Karen – Be careful.

Dan – How so?

Karen – Just be careful because you're not a feeder for them to find a different way of making money. You need to be aligned with people who have the passion that you have and also have the excellence of delivery that you have. There's a ton of people out there that you can hire off the spot, but you'd better be careful of the kind of talent you've got. You've got to buy people and work with people who will help you be better than yourself, not people who just provide support for you. You need to have a team, if you're going to work with them, that are the best of the best, the 9's out of the 10's.

Dan – Let's talk about how you balance your life, which is a very important aspect for coaches. How do you balance your work life and your personal life?

Karen – I'm very focused in my life, if you haven't figured that out. I am a high "D" person—on the DISC—I am driven and I love it. But one of the things about high "D's"—and if anybody's on the call or anybody listening—high "D's" can get way out of balance. One of the things that I've added to my life, one of the things that I make sure I have in my life, is a spiritual focus. I make sure I journal every day, I make sure that I spend time in my spiritual pursuits. I make sure that my spirit, my soul, my body, my finances and my relationships are all lined up. I make sure that I go to renewal retreats. I make sure that I go out and get facials. I make sure that I go out and go hiking in my wonderful, beautiful mountains when I can. If I don't pull away and renew my spirit and my soul, I'm not going to be good for anything or for anybody.

Dan – Do you have any children living at home?

Karen – No, I don't. I've never had the blessing of being a mother. Those of you that are building a business who are a mother or a father—bless you. I don't know how you do it.

Dan – Are you married and does your spouse play a role in your business?

Karen – I am married. I've been married for 18 years. And no, I would kill my spouse if he was in my business. He's an educator and they have such a different model in education. If he became part of my business, we would probably have no business.

Dan – Again, it's interesting how different coaches run their businesses, because there are some husband and wife teams where the wife is the information provider and the husband does the administration, or vice versa, or helps out on occasion, on weekends or at retreats or whatever. This is the first time I've heard of like...

Karen – No way.

Dan – No way. That's great. That's a good way to lead into our final question. What would you tell a coach who is starting out when they're having one of those dark, dreary days when everything looks bleak?

Karen – I have been there and I have done that. It's all about... I guess the question would be, and I'm sorry this is kind of a back-end question, but what would you do if you had a million dollars? In other words, what would you do if you were going to make a difference, but it didn't make a difference how much money you made in this world? What would you do with your life? How would you be? If you know what that is, go back to that place on those dark, dreary days. For me, there were days when... I didn't know what I was going to do. I really had to get beyond where I was and envision where I was going and what I was going to be and why I was here on the planet. On those very dark, dreary days, it's not about the million dollars. It's about what makes you successful, what is "prosperity" for you, and why are you on the planet. The power of your passionate at work I guess is what I'm saying. The money, the work, the clients, the demands, the challenges, the problems—that's not what makes life worth living. It's the faith in why you're here on this planet; it's what your contribution is to all of us that creates your ultimate value. We all need you to be here. I need you to be here. You can't drop out. You can't quit. Because the collective "we" who are on this planet—we need you involved, we need you here. Whatever it is that's your passion, whatever it is that you have inside of you that's your vision of success, stick with it, because that's really what we all need from you.

Dan – Wow! That gave me a lot to think about. That's a great reversal there. Thank you very much, Karen. Can you please tell our listeners your website address again so they can go out and learn more about you?

Karen – Alliance Resources is my company name. It's in Littleton, Colorado. It's www.AllianceResources.net. My phone number is 303-932-8700. You can connect to my blog from my website.

Dan – Thank you very much, Karen, for joining us today and giving these very, very interesting insights into how you've made your business a success. This is Dan Janal, the President and Founder of PR Leads, thanking you for joining us today and also letting you know that we do have transcripts and audio files available for all of our previous sessions. If you're interested in receiving those, we do have a plan for just \$20 a month; you can access all those files and get

insider information on our coming events. If you have interest in that, just send me a note at Dan@PRLeads.com. Thanks for joining us. We'll see you next week.