

Who is Coach Maz?

[Coach Maz is a specialty food business coach and consultant](#) who has built a network of specialists who can:

- assist you in making your food passion into a business if you are a start-up
- take you to the next level if you are an emerging brand
- fine tune your business processes and policies if you are a legacy brand



How do I get my business off the ground?

- Start with a [workshop by Coach Maz](#) that is customized for you depending on where you are in your discovery
- Read “Sell Your Specialty Food” by [Stephen Hall](#)
- Read “Good Food, Great Business” by [Susie Wysak](#)

How do I get my product made?

- Talk to Rachel Zemser about taking your product from concept to shelf ready
- Buy “From Concept to Commercialization” by [Rachel Zemser](#)

How much will it cost to get my product made?

There is no simple answer for this! However, your first step should be to develop a [business plan](#) that outlines all the costs of doing business from concept (R&D) to the promotional activity that happens once you get on the shelf. Once you lay it out on paper, you will see what it takes to make your dream a reality.



How do I find brokers?

- UNFI has a [list of brokers](#) on their web site.
- The Specialty Food Association has a [broker list](#)
- Ask your peers and colleagues who they use
- Be sure to interview at least 3 brokers and pick the one who most closely calls on your target audience. Coach Maz [list of questions](#) to ask a broker

What free resources are available to me?

- [SCORE Mentors](#) are retired professionals you volunteer to help entrepreneurs no matter what stage you are in. You might not find a Mentor in the food business, but you will certainly find one in manufacturing, accounting, logistics, sales or marketing.
- [The Small Business Administration](#) is here to help you no matter your size.
- Check your local community for business start-up incubators, as emerging brands look into HUBs that can help you find resources and share ideas and, as a legacy brand, look into your local EDC (economic development centers) to assist you with growth.
- As a legacy brand you might want to export; get help from [ITA](#)

What trade resources are available to me?

- [The Small Business Development Center](#) is a national non-profit organization with local branches in most major cities, often in conjunction with local colleges.
- [The Specialty Food Association](#) provides ongoing webinars and seminars at their two trade shows per year.
- [New Hope Media](#) produces Expo East and Expo West trade shows with onsite education as well as ongoing learning opportunities.

What tools should I have for my business?

Regardless of the size of your company, you need basic software to run your company in order to track your sales activities, marketing, revenue and expenses:

- Accounting systems include Quickbooks, Sage and Peachtree.
- CRM (Contact Relationship Management) systems track your prospects, customers, vendors and peers so you never forget to call someone when they ask you to, you keep names, phone numbers and emails in one spot so you are organized, and everything is tracked and documented. Examples are [ACT!](#) And [Salesforce](#)
- Email Marketing program for newsletter and other contact outreach. Popular programs are [Swiftpage](#) which works with ACT!, Constant Contact, Mail Chimp and My Emma.



What outsources professionals should I have on my team?

- An accountant
- A local personal banker
- A sales and marketing consultant
- A business coach
- A process engineer, if you are manufacturing
- A small business lawyer
- An insurance agent
- A SCORE Mentor
- A branding company
- A marketing company
- A social media team
- A PR firm
- Brand ambassadors for store demos

What team members should I hire for my team?

Initially, you might hire consultants, but eventually you'll want to have employees who work solely for you.

This list is in order of importance, but it depends on your skill set; hire people who compliment you.

- A sales manager
- A marketing manager
- Bookkeeper
- Manufacturing/operations/supply side manager
- Office manager
- Inside customer service/telemarketing person
- Chief Finance Officer

How long will it take me to be successful?

This depends on:

- Your motivation
- Your team
- How much capital you have to grow your business
- What your definition of success is.



This all seems so overwhelming, how will I get it all done?

You'll need help and that's why Coach Maz compiled this site to help you with whatever you need to be a success. Contact her with any more specialty food business questions.