

Luminate

Tips & Pointers

# Working with an Executive Coach

Claire Davis, Vice President of People & Culture

What type of support do you need?

## Executive coaching

**A coach's job is to:**

- Look forwards (not backwards)
- Set clear boundaries and goals
- Work on solid foundations (not uncover wounds)
- Unlock potential to maximise performance

## Other types of coaching

- **Life Coaching**
- **Management or Business coaching**

## Personal support

- **Mentor** will share insights based on their personal experience
- **Consultant/ Advisor** will give you advice about how to do your work
- **Counsellor** will work with you to overcome issues
- **Therapist** will look back to understand what in your past might be holding you back

## Guidelines for selecting a coach

### 1) Get recommendations from colleagues who have had success with a coach

Get several referrals and set up interviews with each one. It's like finding a doctor; you can find one on Google but it's better to hear about someone's experiences with a practitioner. In addition to word of mouth and personal recommendations, consider exploring coaching networks (International Coaching Federation/ Modern Health /Women In Coaching network) and LinkedIn/ Business networks or the Institute of Directors.

## Guidelines for selecting a coach

### 2) During the interview, ask probing questions

What is your measure of success? What can I expect during our conversations? Tell me how you helped someone else. What if this doesn't work? Should my manager/ board chair inform the objectives of my coaching engagement? How would you address my specific issue?

## Guidelines for selecting a coach

### 3) Connecting with a coach is critical, but not especially scientific

Does this person listen? Do you believe she or he can help with your particular situation? Can you see yourself trusting this person? Will you be comfortable exposing your vulnerabilities? Ultimately the decision is more intuitive. Do you click with this person? Is the chemistry right for you? Once you've decided you want to work with a coach, be sure to ask questions about how that coach gets results.

## Guidelines for selecting a coach

### 4) Explore knowledge and logistics

Most coaches spend their time in for-profit organizations. Be sure that your coach is well versed in the nuances of the non-profit world. Inquire about scheduling flexibility because things can change on a dime in your routine. Ask about phone, email, and remote access. Discuss fees and negotiate, if necessary. Get clarification on frequency of meetings and contract terms. Common practice for many coaches is to meet once or twice a month for 1.5-2 hours over the course of 6-9 months. Most coaches will have standard practices in all these areas but are open to fit your needs.

How do you know if coaching will work?

## Commitment

- Are you willing to acknowledge your blind spots?
- Are you prepared to face some truths about what is getting in your way?
- Are you ready to do the work?
- Do you want to change?

## Purpose

- Do you have a specific goal?
- Are you in an environment where you will be supported to achieve that goal?
- Do you want to be held accountable?

## Coaching approaches

**Some coaches will look for a baseline to work from, generally adopting psychometric frameworks such as:**

- MBTI, DiSC, StrengthsFinder, Enneagram, BMI, etc.
- Stakeholder feedback research and report

**The coaching process will then likely be modelled on an approach such as:**

- Grow model (Goal, Reality, Options, Will)
- Leadership presence (influence, energise, connect)
- Self-actualization (Research, Introspection, Conflict-resolution, Harmonization)

**Be specific about what your objectives are if you want to identify a coach who has specialised in a certain field:**

- Career coaching
- Performance coaching
- Leadership coaching
- Skills coaching
- Entrepreneurship coaching



## The power of coaching

# A successful coaching relationship will result in self-awareness and accountability through powerful questions and active listening

- **Self-awareness:** Know what you are experiencing and know you are in control of those experiences
- **Accountability:** Take responsibility for your actions and know that you have the capacity to unlock and fulfil your potential
- **Powerful questions:** Imagine having a conversation with the wisest person you can think of. What would they tell you to do?
- **Active listening:** It is a privilege to be truly listened to - to be truly heard