

---

# How to Choose a Business Coach



---

# How to Choose a Business Coach

## Our Top 10 Tips



## **What is Business Coaching?**

A business coach works with their clients on their personal and business objectives. It is the job of the Business Coach to challenge their clients to reach their full potential; to hold them to account and to maintain focus and momentum.

A Business Coach will work with the client on their own specific development requirements, as well as covering a number of core effectiveness competencies, including; strategic direction, clarity, accountability, self-awareness, communication, goal setting, building trust and leadership capabilities.

## **How will business coaching benefit me/my team/my organisation?**

The role of the Business Coach is ultimately to make you/your team/your organisation more effective, and in so doing, deliver an improvement to your bottom-line.

In a 2011 report by The Institute of Leadership & Management, 95% of organisations reported that they believed coaching, as a development tool, benefitted the organisation, whilst 96% believed it also benefitted the individual. Add to that the evidence from the CIPD's 2011 Report: The Coaching Climate, stating that organisations have increased the amount of coaching they are doing (nearly 84% of respondents reported that they are doing more coaching compared with 2009), and we see a clear consensus within organisations as to the enormous value of coaching.

In order to get the maximum from Business Coaching you need to understand what it is you want to achieve. Before engaging the services of a Business Coach, consider what success looks like to you/your team/your organisation and how you might measure it. Your Business Coach will help you get there, but you must first know where it is you want to go!

## **Choosing a Business Coach**

### **1. Ask around**

So how do you go about finding a Business Coach if you've never worked with one before? Well, all good business coaches will see a significant chunk of their new business coming through recommendations from existing clients. A recommendation from somebody whose opinion you value is likely to carry more weight than any client portfolio or list of qualifications, so ask colleagues and friends if they can recommend anyone and be clear that it's a Business Coach (not a Life Coach) that you're looking for, many people confuse the two.

If you're not working off a recommendation, then do your research. However, you find your prospective coach, look first at their website. The website should clearly

detail the services they offer, the business coaches they have available and details of existing clients, including testimonials. Beware of anonymous testimonials.

### **2. Pick up the phone**

First impressions count, so pick up the phone and speak to your prospective coach. Did you like them? Did you feel there was any rapport there? Do you feel you could trust this person? Have a list ready of things to ask them and don't be afraid to ask challenging questions, after all, you are considering placing your future in their hands.

### **3. Ask about their experience**

Any good business coach will be able to provide you with contact details of existing clients who would be happy to talk to you. Also, what is the Coach's own experience in business? Do they have experience of your specific industry or requirements? Have they worked with similar sized organisations before?

### **4. What qualifications do they have?**

There is currently no recognised requirement when it comes to a Business Coach's qualifications. You will therefore find that Business Coaches tend to hold a wide range of qualifications and some may not hold any. For some people these are essential, for others a sincere recommendation is more than enough.

When considering a Business Coach it is important to take into account all of the factors on this list, but do take into account your own specific requirements, because there are some aspects of Coaching that do require specific training, for example NLP or Myers Briggs. You might also want to look for membership of one of the following; The EMCC (European Mentoring and Coaching Council), APECS (Association for Professional Executive Coaching), or The ICF (International Coaching Federation), all of which require members to conform to a specific code of ethics.

### **5. Are they Focused on their own Professional Development?**

Business Coaches should be committed to their own learning and development. Are they working towards specific qualifications? Do they keep up to date with new ideas and thinking around coaching, business and the economy?

## **6. Meet the Coach**

If you have got this far in the process and have been happy with the answers you've been given, then the next step is to meet the coach. Even if you didn't feel an initial 'fit', but you were otherwise impressed with their credentials/experience, or they were recommended to you, then it may still be worth a meet. You should not expect to pay anything for this initial meeting, all good Business Coaches will be happy to offer you a free initial consultation to ensure there is a good fit.

## **7. Availability**

Is your coach available to deliver the quantity of coaching you're looking for over the desired period of time? If the coaching is for a large number of people, does the coaching company have the resource to fulfil these requirements? How and where will these coaching sessions take place? If the coaching is for a team, particularly a geographically diverse team, how will the Business Coach facilitate this? Does the Business Coach have the technology to facilitate virtual coaching, if required?

## **8. How much will it cost?**

There is so much scope for ambiguity when it comes to pricing for Business Coaching, so before committing to anything, make sure you understand how much you will be paying and exactly what is covered. For example, some Business Coaches will charge you extra for coaching advice given over the phone in addition to face to face sessions, others will not. Be clear on what it is you're getting for your money. Also at this point, it's good to talk to your prospective Coach about ROI, how this will be measured and whether they offer any guarantees on the coaching they deliver.

## **9. Evaluate**

Unless your prospective Business Coach comes with a glowing recommendation from a trusted colleague/friend, you will probably find it beneficial to meet with several Coaches. You may find that you just 'click' with one of them and your decision is made, or it may come down to comparing experience and qualifications.

## **10. Get Started**

Once you have found a coach you're happy with, don't let the momentum slip.

Many people, with fantastic intentions, go through this process and then say they cannot find the time to fit coaching in with their everyday roles and responsibilities. A good business coach will always work with you to find times that fit alongside existing commitments and minimise your time away from the job. Remember too that one of the benefits of business coaching is maximising personal effectiveness, giving you more time to focus on your own growth and development.

[www.mindstrongltd.co.uk](http://www.mindstrongltd.co.uk)