

For a better understanding of coaching

I am often asked "what will I get out of working with a professional coach? " Turning to a certified coach to work on professional or personal goals is still new and less familiar to most than the idea of working with a consultant, an advisor or a mentor, for example.

Let's start with a definition of coaching:

According to the International Coaching federation, professional Coaching is an ongoing professional relationship that helps people produce extraordinary results in their lives, careers, businesses or organizations. Through the process of coaching, clients deepen their learning, improve their performance, and enhance their quality of life.

During each meeting, the client chooses the focus of conversation, while the coach listens and contributes observations and questions. This interaction creates clarity and moves the client into action. Coaching accelerates the client's progress by providing greater focus and awareness of choice. Coaching concentrates on where clients are now and what they are willing to do to get where they want to be in the future. Results are a matter of the client's intentions, choices and actions, supported by the coach's efforts and application of the coaching process*.

The coach is therefore responsible for the coaching process, which promotes self-awareness, allowing the client to subsequently take action and to progress and achieve what he/ she has decided to undertake. The coach may share pertinent experiences, skills and knowledge in order to support the client. The coach-client partnership is based on respect and the client is perceived as the master of his decisions and his action plan. The coach challenges the client's thoughts or ideas, and provides constructive feedback, which helps raise self-awareness and allows actions to emerge. The coach-client relationship is based on mutual respect, transparency, trust, openness and confidentiality. The process includes working documents such as the coaching agreement, the action plan, and preparation for coaching as well as other thought provoking tools.

The stages of Coaching:

The coaching stages are structured and require preparation and active involvement on the part of the client and the coach. Initially, a meeting or a telephone conversation is necessary in order to determine, among other things, whether the coach is the right professional to work with the client or for the company. In other words, is there a "connection" or is this a "good fit" for both parties.

Preparation Stage: This stage is a good time for the coach and client to get too know each other, build trust, assess the client's situation, and jointly establish a plan of action or developmental plan.

Implementation of competencies: It is this stage that is at the center of the coaching process. Meetings are conducted on a regular basis and the client is asked to take action, and implement the desired changes in between sessions. Successes and pitfalls are discussed, allowing the client to readjust his action plan and strategies.

Assessment of progress made: This closing stage is very important and allows both the coach and the client to evaluate together, the progress made, in accordance to the targets of the action plan. **

In closing, it is important to inquire about a coach's training and certification. It is best to work with a coach who trained with a recognized school / program and who is registered with a recognized association / federation such as International Coaching Federation (ICF) and International Coaching Federation-Quebec (ICF Quebec). This federation has put in place a code of conduct and a code of ethics to which a member must adhere.

Wishing you an amazing coaching experience!!

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ICF member

**(Refer to ICF-International Coaching Federation website, 2016).*

*** (From: Coaching Managers: Better define it for better intervention, Louis Baron and Lucie Morin, 2010. Management: volume 35 / issue 1)*