

# Coaching

## The Performance Enhancing Relationship

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## **Table of Contents**

<b>Table of Contents.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>What is Coaching?.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Credentials of a Coach .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>When To Recruit A Coach .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Professionalism, Ethics and Confidentiality .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Who's Using Coaching?.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Emerging Trends .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix A .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Coachability Test: How Coachable Are You? .....</b>	<b>14</b>

Talent and human capital distinguishes organizations in the market place. The tighter labour market has companies battling to retain and internally develop every employee they can. At the same time, individuals are recognizing that being successful and getting the development opportunities from their employer means working in different ways and in different manners. Also, trust for large companies is at an all time low - Baby Boomers have been disillusioned and Gen X's aren't expecting the Corporation to take care of them. Based on this, employees are much more likely go outside and get independent advice to better manage their careers. Many are seeking coaching out as it is viewed as being able to provide the development to help an individual succeed and compete in today's market place.

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“Executive coaching is hot because executive development has become paramount to gaining a solid competitive edge.” *Hey Coach!*

## What is Coaching?

### {tc "What is Coaching? " \ 2}

“A coach supports someone in bringing out their best” - *Workforce 2000*

Coaching is well known in the sports industry for its role in creating successful athletes but an emerging business trend of incorporating a coaching role to business relationships has created a cross over of applications. Since it's birth in the 1980s, coaching been an evolving trend and was considered the hottest trend in the consulting field in 1997. Make no mistake though coaching is not consulting. The primary differentiating factor is that consultants tell you how to do things while coaches facilitate and implement the development of an individual using a question-oriented approach. Coaching is all about setting goals and meeting them, about helping a person develop, and about not telling someone what to do.

There are a number of facets to coaching: business, executive, transitional, personal/life and career coaching. Coaching has the most value when used for life transition from one life stage to another and for mature development of basic values. Coaching also provides strong development opportunities in producing high performance in work and life, developing a vision and purpose, and in career and life planning. For the scope of this paper, producing of high performance through a coach will be the focus.

Coaching is taking two forms of application: internal and external. Internal is typically being achieved through a manager/employee relationship. In an external capacity, a professional coach is both being sourced by and paid for by the employer, or the individual is sourcing their own coach. When paid for by the individual, the external coaching relationship can also include personal life with the objective of achieving a better work, family, and life balance. There are aspects to each coaching environment that impacts the effectiveness of coaching but ultimately the person being coached will need to determine which coaching environment leads them to generate their highest level of performance. An overview of the skills of a good coach and when to use a coach will be evaluated in a later part of this paper.

As a company will decide when it will offer employees a coaching relationship, there is little control an employee has in choosing when and who will coach or the terms of the relationship as this will be driven primarily by the company. It is in an external coaching relationship the contract is with the individual as opposed to company, where the individual has a number of options to consider in making a coaching choice.

One of the primary benefits to establishing an external coaching relationship is that you pay to be able to talk only about you. Also, given that the coach comes from outside your organization, you are confiding in someone who does not have a vested interest in your career and you are able to get objective feedback. The coach can offer the fresh viewpoint of an experienced outsider but at the same time may lack some company expertise initially to provide company specific coaching. As this coaching relationship is being driven solely by the individual, you ultimately are creating fulfilling work by taking responsibility, committing personal time and attention to you achieving goals (The Coach Approach). The individual has a lot to gain and lose by how they take on coaching.

Within the internal coaching model, the coach has to be able to move away from their historical role as a manager. A manager who is a coach must think differently as to how to lead their team. The skills needed to coach within an organization are the same as for those who coach externally. The time lag for an organization looking to utilize the internal model is one of change management and having the right skills in the relevant roles. A good manager may not make a good coach. Transition to this coaching culture may take some time to evolve while with utilizing external coaching resources the expertise is immediately integrated. The business case that often justifies companies taking a longer term approach to integrating coaching within their organization is that coaching does empower employees, coaching improves morale and coaching serves as a company characteristics that attracts employees.

The role of a coach, both the athletic and the corporate version, is to create an atmosphere that allows individuals to achieve their best. Coaching is a holistic goals-oriented approach to an organization. There are a number of tools used to support the coaching activities that cover not only individual behaviours and attitudes but professional skills. Coaching is not training and it is not career counselling. This means that the accountability to change and achieve results is anchored with the individual. Having the right coach helps facilitate better outcomes and can create a relationship that generates better results. Given this, it is essential for anyone seeking a coach to hire the right one.

Coaching is not for everyone nor is there a shared respect of the value that coaching can bring to personal performance. Research done in 2000 by well-respected Manchester, a global purveyor of executive coaching, supports the claim that coaching has impact that benefits both the employer and the employee. The majority of people who participated in coaching programs were between the ages of 40-49(60%). Half of respondents held positions of vice -president or higher and a third earned \$200,000 or more. When asked for a monetary payoff for the coaching they got, these managers described an average return of more than \$100,000, six times the cost of coaching to their companies. In addition to this, 28% claimed a boost to their quantifiable job performance (sales, productivity, or profits), 77% reported better relationships with their direct reports, 71% improved relationships with their boss, 63% with peers and 37% with clients. Overall, these coached executives cited a marked improvement in job satisfaction (61%) and organizational commitment (44%) (Fortune- Executive Coaching ). The above survey results demonstrate that coaching has impact. This success is not an easy outcome and will depend on the capabilities of the coach, the coachability of the individual and effectiveness of their professional relationship.

The success of coaching is dependent on the skills of the coach, the desire and commitment of the individual and the effectiveness of their professional relationships. These elements of coaching will now be covered in more detail.

## **Credentials of a Coach {tc "Skills Needed to Be a Successful Coach " \ 2}**

Coaching can enhance an individual's success both personally and professionally but as previously mentioned, it is not an easy outcome. One of the key elements is the capabilities of the coach. As coaching is considered to still be in an infancy stage, there is a broad range of individuals who have entered this market looking to capture an emerging business opportunity. Given the numbers of consultants entering this field, how does an individual set criterion for selecting a coach? Below are some of the most important criteria to consider:



Executive coaching is about:

- A good partnership and not being a best friend or therapist
- The ability to re-frame situations and suggest new ways to think about issues in life and work
- The ability to ask powerful questions
- Expressing active listening (“eaves dropping on someone’s thought process” Craig Kennedy, Coach)
- Designing and creating action plans and action behaviours
- Having the ability to be a risk taker by challenging individuals to achieve higher levels
- Having proficiency in business world
- Being thoroughly familiar with complex systems and their dynamics
- Having broad understanding of leadership and having the ability to be leaders in their own right
- Having an advanced degree through an MBA, PhD, and/or 20 years in line management, human resource specialist, management training, ex-CEO experience, clinical psychologists, mediation lawyers, or outplacement counsellors

Coach U is a leader and pioneer in the coaching field. They acknowledge that coaching is not for everyone, both in being a coach or being coached. Coach U’s belief is that only about one-tenth of one percent of the U.S. adult population will make good coaches. Coach U’s list of qualities and skills of a good coach are more behaviourally oriented than the above list of skills. Coach U’s list is itemized as:

- The spark (bright eyes, open ear, active mind)
- The touch - able to encourage, care about and attract people
- Willingness - open to being coached, learn new things and experiment
- Awareness - has a sense of who they are, what they are and what they need
- Can “dance” - relates well and easily and can have two way conversations
- Intuitive - able to hear what’s being said and not being said; understands the spirit of a situation
- Committed - knows that becoming a coach is an investment, not a seminar

So which list is more accurate? The first list has more business skills and credentials that an executive would likely seek and would form an important part of initial screening of skills. The second list would come into play once in the relationship. In speaking with a practicing coach, she felt that the most important skills for a coach are the interpersonal skills. The professed philosophies of Coach U are aligned with the qualities of a successful coach.

There are some specific management and behavioural models that have application in the coaching environment. Some of these include: 360 Degree Feedback, observation, action research methodology, basic problem solving, and skill assessment tools. As part of membership to Coachville, operated by industry leader Thomas Leonard, coaches have access to numerous other tools to support their coaching activities. Coaching is categorized as an area of consulting in which the consultant does not train yet based on utilizing these business or behavioural models, implementation and perhaps some training will be needed. Based on discussions with a practicing coach, they do not limit themselves solely to the coaching role, they will offer training to their clients as part of the relationship.

## When To Recruit A Coach {tc "When To Recruit A Coach " \ 2}

*“Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to what happens to you.”*

Charles Swindol

People chose coaching to help them move up to the next level of personal and professional competence and are typically in a leadership position. Ask yourself the question: Can I delegate or outsource the task? If yes, a consultant can execute. If no, this means that you have to execute the activity yourself. If you are likely to encounter obstacles that will prevent you from performing effectively or it is critical for you to deliver a high level of performance, then you need a coach (Management Coaching and Mentoring).

The view is that coaching can create new opportunities for employees and allow them to undertake new activities and reinforce success due to efforts (Guided mastery). Based on the changing business environments, growth and evolution of companies and its associated growth and evolution of roles within a company, managers are being stretched beyond their personally perceived comfort levels and the own perceived capabilities (Hey Coach). Coaching relationships are helping to bridge some of the performance gaps.

Another aspect of this question is if the problem is individually focused, are you able to work in a coaching relationship? Appendix A, Coachability Test, is a self-test that will assess if you can gain the right value from a coaching relationship. Based on your coachability rating, you can decide if you will get the benefits of investing in a coach. If you are not open to having constructive feedback or open to changing the way you manage your business, then a coaching relationship will not succeed.

Another question to consider is whether you are willing to spend your money on a coaching relationship, if the external coach is what you have chosen as the channel. The financial commitment is \$250 - \$350 per month for a half hour session per week. Executive coaches will charge anywhere from \$100 - \$200 per hour with a weekly commitment of 1-2 hours.

Coaching relationships typically last for 3 months to 5 years. In some situations, a client may come in and out of coaching relationships during this time but will go back to the individual they have worked with previously. This results in some shorter contractual coaching arrangements as opposed to a continuous relationship.

## Professionalism, Ethics and Confidentiality {tc "Professionalism, Ethics and Confidentiality " \ 2}

Industry coaching leaders have been trying to establish universally accepted definitions and qualifications for the various practices within this segment of the consulting industry. Due to the fact that the grouping of professionals involves counsellors and consultants, efforts to achieve such operating parameters have not been successful. This business model is not an unfamiliar one for business consultants given the evolution of the consulting industry from its original application in early 1930's to the formalization of the industry through organizations such as Canadian Association of Management Consultants in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

At present, there is no specific licensing of coaches but those who operate within this realm typically bring the following standards of professionalism: a university degree and/or up to PhD level degree within both the business environment and the psychological environment. Other recognized membership and accreditation is through The International Coach Federation and Coach U. These credentials relate to the external coach. The internal coaches can have less of the experience and accreditation having obtained training within the

company or in a workshop format. This results in individuals with a broad range of expertise, credentials, and accreditation considering themselves as coaches.

Confidentiality agreements and assurances are paramount within an external coaching relationship. In order for the relationship to be productive, trust and open communications must be present. The client must have confidentiality guaranteed. A contract is the means through which this is presently achieved and a standard formality to the relationship.

Industry leader Coach U offers training and certification designations for coaches. Training is offered in a virtual environment and this delivery method is aligned with delivery of most coaching services. Part of the role of Coach U is to support and promote ethical standards and behaviours within this industry. The International Coach Federation, another recognized leader in the field, also seeks to establish similar standards and ethics of its members.

The commitments of both organizations are defined within the following categories: client and coach approach; confidentiality, professional conduct including outcomes and results, and professional development of the coach.

An example of the standards that Coach U is looking to establish is through their certification requirement. In order to be accredited, the coach must fulfill the following requirements:

*Formal training* (36 web-based module exams based on training programs and a case study)

*Evidence of competency* - documenting effectiveness with 5 clients and have 6 sessions monitored by mentor coach, and a letter of recommendation from two other certified coaches

*Evidence of Standards/Ethics* - be mentored for 6 months by a master Certified Coach

*Evidence of experience* - have coached at least 40 clients for a minimum of 750 hours (with supporting documentation)

*Evidence of Coaching Ability* - complete an Interview/Examination conducted by a 3-member board and defend one or more of their case studies

One interesting aspect of this move towards accreditation is that it is not perceived as all positive by those within the industry. Along with the professional accreditation can also come complacency that as long as you have the papers, you will remain competitive within the field. This field of work obviously requires current awareness and ability to work with emerging business trends. Also, even with an industry-recognized designation, the professionals in the field still have an obligation to educate consumers of what they are buying and their responsibility within the relationship. Client education is not the sole responsibility of the organizations that represent the coaches.

## **Who's Using Coaching? {tc "Who's Using Coaching? " \ 2}**

Many organizations are using coaching in their business. From a corporate perspective, some companies using internal coaching are: IBM, AT&T, Bears Stern Citicorp, Motorola, Salomon Smith Barney, Sears, Ernst & Young and Royal Bank. In an interview with a Royal Bank executive, she indicated that the same coaching that is being done at the client service level and is the same as the model being used at the executive level. The commitment to coaching is well entrenched within the organization at all levels and she related a story where the new CEO of the bank actually sat in on goal setting meeting for the senior management team of Atlantic. The preference is to develop this coaching expertise in-house and utilize to it's fullest within the Bank's own infrastructure.

Within RBFG, coaching is done on a weekly basis with staff members by their reporting manager. The focus of the goal setting and coaching is to enhance outcomes relating to sales performance, customer service and employee capability. The commitment to this coaching is entrenched within every level of management as it

is seen as a critical component to evolving the company and its employees to become a dominant North American financial service provider.

At Nova Scotia Power Incorporated (NSPI), they use a combination of both internal and external coaching. The senior management team of 8 including the CEO, all work with the same external coach, a psychologically accredited professional. This coach comes in monthly from Toronto to work with the team on individual objectives, leadership objectives or organizational objectives. NSPI chooses to use an external coach at this level of the organization to gain a different frame of reference, ensure confidentiality, draw upon expertise and leverage a long term relationship with NSPI and the consultants understanding of NSPI as an organization. The coach's familiarity with the people and its culture has both positive and negatives aspects depending on the manner in which this consultant uses his prior knowledge. Also the relationship with the entire senior management team and the link to the CEO may stifle some communications as the individual may be uncertain as to how much of a discussion could directly or indirectly get relayed back to the CEO. Another positive to this type of coaching relationship is that the coach can effectively help frame and implement a desired objective based on his understanding of the organization.

At the internal level, NSPI has developed some in-house coaches that help their staff. This coaching capability is one of the strategic priorities in the next year and they will be looking to enhance their capabilities in this area. Should coaching identify training opportunities, some of this is fulfilled in-house while the majority is sourced from other professionals. Both at the staff and senior management levels the coaching objective is solely business oriented and does not look to include their personal life.

Whether being achieved internally or externally, the use of coaching is realizing outcomes such as increased revenue, increased market share, increased productivity and is a vital part of the organization's recruitment and retention strategy. The results are viewed as achievable given a study done by Manchester.

## Emerging Trends

The continued growth of the coaching field reflects the increased understanding of the importance of coaching and its role in business. This will generate an increased number of companies and people who will integrate coaching into their personal and professional development plans. Many companies have, or are creating, a culture of coaching within their organization. People are choosing coaching to help them move to the next level of personal and professional competence. These professional relationships are viewed as generating a new facet to organizational change. Companies that have successfully integrated coaching are viewed as a more attractive employer to work with. This trend can create a competitive advantage for a company who coaches.

As coaching matures and certification intensifies, there will be a shakeout within the industry segment. Those that will succeed in this industry will be those who demonstrate results and have a proven track record. Increased specialization will also occur and less blurred lines will exist between the business and personal coaches or between general management consultants and dedicated executive coaches. Some coaches are expanding their revenue streams to include publishing revenues, workshops or delivery of tele-classes. These changes will benefit those that use coaches and those that want to enhance their coaching capabilities.

There is a growing emergence of coaching companies who are branding their services. Several of these firms represent the delivery of a successful philosophy of the founder, like JWC founded on the coaching success of Jennifer White, author of *Work Less, Make More*. Other well recognized firms who have expanded their service to also provide coaching are Franklin Covey and Ken Blanchard. In other large companies, these coaching companies represent the collaboration and merging of a number of successful coaches.

As more coaches enter this field of work, there is a corresponding increases in service related to this industry. Some examples would be increased offerings of training programs to coaches and an increased number of schools offering training.

There is a demographic trend that will further drive the use of coaching and that is the large number of baby boomers age 40-60 relative to the small number of 20-30 year olds. The boomers will need to act as coaches in training their replacements in order to allow them to move up within their own organization.

Another demographic trend is the composite features of the Generation X. Described as “latchkey kids” who are independent and don’t work well within a micro-management environment. They prefer a hands-off management style. The sense of strong workplace relationships makes them great candidates to be coached. Their technology savvy and self-learning style works well within a coaching environment that promotes a learning style of doing rather than formalized instruction. Coaching will be a good fit in organizations that are developing a Generation X staff.

Coaching is further entrenched by the downsizing that happened in the 1990’s where middle management roles were decreased. This reduction has generated a larger leap from lower to higher management. Corporate Coaching is what will help employees make the transition. The question that needs to be answered is where this coaching would most effectively be delivered from, internally or externally?

Some other emerging additions to coaching are shorter in duration: “On the Spot Coaching” and “Daily Goals”. The spot coaching is a short-term engagement that could several experts drawn into the coaching session. An example of its application might involve a marketing issue faced by the business person, so the coaching session would include marketing experts. A daily goal is a teleconference of several people who set specific goals and then go out to accomplish them. They would then have an objective to achieve that goal within a certain time. A re-adjournment of the meeting sees the debrief on the accomplishments. Both these examples use coaching in a shorter time frame and are not as individually focused

## Conclusion

“A coach may not necessarily teach you anything you don’t already know but they will remind you of what’s important and how to get the most impact from the important stuff.” –

*Fast Company*

Studies do show that coaching has measurable outcomes that benefit both the employer and the employee and ultimately create a competitive resource. The key success factors of effective coaching depend on the source (internal or external coach used) and the skills of who is doing the coaching. The responsibility of getting the most of a coaching opportunity rests with the individual at the pre-coach, with the coach, and the implementation. Remember: the coach is not the one who takes the exam or suits up and goes on the field.

To find the right coach for you, you need to consider the following questions:

- ✓ Is the person really a coach or just a consultant in disguise?
- ✓ Do they have a specialty that is aligned with your needs? Ask for CV and references.
- ✓ Does the coach have a strict code of ethics and confidentiality commitment?
- ✓ What will this coach do for me? Seek specific results and be specific about what you need.
- ✓ Does the proposed program match your needs? Game plan has to be consistent with real life and be achievable. Determine frequency and duration of meetings. How long will contract last for?
- ✓ Is the financial picture clear and what do fees include?

Source: How To Find the Right Coach

Like an Olympic athlete, to be at your peak performance, you need the right coach. Achieving this peak performance is what is attracting people to using coaching. The increased use of coaching has seen it become one of the fastest growing segments of consulting. With this growth, there have been many people enter to capture the financial benefits and, in response to this, there has been the move to establish more formalized standards. Industry leaders in the field of coaching will continue to seek more a more formalized business model to gain increased credibility in the business community.

The merits of coaching are evident. As coaching can be obtained both internally and externally in some organizations, which option will yield the best results? An external coach is a paid professional with matching credentials; an internal coach often fulfils many mandates and is not exclusively focused on a coaching. In considering the types of coaching relationship remember; a paying one provides you with more control over the relationship. The relationship can also be expanded to include enhancing the quality of your personal life. Based on these factors, one might be more inclined to hire and pay for their own coach (or get reimbursed for such a personal development expense) than use one provided by their employer.

While coaching isn't for everyone (and some business pundits do not see the merits of coaching) coaching has its applications. Bottom line: f the coaching approach generates a stronger outcome that has benefits to both the employers and employees, why wouldn't you consider using it in today's globally competitive business environment?

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Dana Marcon                      Coach

Craig Kennedy                      Coach

## Appendix A

### Coachability Test: How Coachable Are You?

Want to figure out if you're a good candidate for coaching? Take this test to determine if you are at the place in your life when you're coachable.

#### Instructions:

Circle the number that comes closest to representing how true the statement is for you right now. Then, score yourself, using the key at the bottom of the page.

**Test:** Respond to the following statements in this manner:

1 is for "Least True" and 5 is for "Most True"

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I can be relied upon to be on time for all calls and appointments.  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | This is the right time for me to accept coaching.   |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I am fully willing to do the work and let the coach do the coaching. I keep my word without struggling or sabotaging.                         |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I'll give the coach the benefit of the doubt and "try on" new concepts or different ways of doing things.                                     |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I will speak straight (tell the whole truth) to the coach.  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | If I feel I am not getting what I need or expect from the coach, I will share this immediately and discuss what I want from the relationship. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I am willing to stop or change the self-defeating behaviours that limit my success.   |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I have the adequate funds to pay for coaching and will not regret or suffer about the fee.  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I see coaching as a worthwhile investment in my life.   |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I am someone who can share the credit for my success with the coach.  |

**Total Score** (add up all circled numbers)

#### Scoring Key:

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 10-20 | Not coachable right now                                 |
| 21-30 | Coachable, but make sure ground rules are honoured      |
| 31-40 | Coachable   |
| 41-50 | Very coachable - ask the coach to demand a lot from you |

Remember, this is a self-test. Being honest with yourself is the most important resource you have. If you score 40 or above, you're ready to make your life much more successful and pave the way to a lot more fun.

Source: Adapted from Executive Coaching, Inc, Los Angeles, [www.mycoach.com](http://www.mycoach.com)