

COACHING: MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED Questions by Thomas J. Leonard, Founder Coach University

What is coaching?

Coaching is a new profession. Coaches:

Help people set better goals and then reach those goals.

Ask their clients to do more than they would have done on their own.

Help their client to focus better so as to produce results more quickly.

Provide clients with the tools, support and structure to accomplish more.

"My clients get focused and producing faster because they have a coach."

How is coaching different from consulting? Therapy? Sports coaching? A best friend?

Consulting. Consulting. Coaching is rather like consulting. However, the coach stays with the client to help implement the new skills, changes and goals, to make sure that they really happen.

Therapy. Coaching is not therapy. Coaches don't work on "issues" or get into the past or deal much with understanding human behavior. That knowledge may come as clients move forward toward personal and professional goals that will give them the life they really want, but it should not be the focus of a coaching relationship.

Sports. Coaching includes several principles from sports coaching, like teamwork, going for the goal, being your best. Unlike sports coaching, most professional coaching is not competition or win/lose based. Coaches focus on strengthening their clients' skills, not on helping them beat the other team. Coaches look for win/win solutions.

Best friend. A best friend is wonderful to have. But is your best friend a professional who you will trust to work with you on the most important aspects of your life and/or business? Have both - a best friend and a coach.

What is the basic philosophy of coaching?

Simply put, it is that we humans are great, that we're all discovering what we really want, and that we can get what we want faster and more easily by having a coach who's been there and who can help us.

Who hires a coach and why?

People hire a coach because:

They want more.

They want to grow.

They want to do things more easily.

It's as simple as that. Coaches help a client get all three, quickly.

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What happens when you hire a coach?

Many things, but the most important are:

You take yourself more seriously.

You take more effective and focused actions immediately.

You stop putting up with what is dragging you down.

You create momentum so that it's easier to get results.

You set better goals that are more exactly what YOU want.

Does the coach work on personal goals or business/professional goals?

Both, actually. With the line between personal and business life blurring, as it is these days, the coach is the only professional trained to work with all aspects of you.

Where does the coach focus with an average client?

Coaches focus where their clients need them the most. Part of their discussions often include:

Getting the client's Personal Foundation strengthened.

Helping the client beef up their Reserve.

Helping the client set goals based on individual Personal Values.

By including these with what each client wants, coaches help their clients have fewer problems and focus on what will make them the most successful. Clients really enjoy this approach.

Why does coaching work?

Coaching works for several reasons:

Synergy between the coach and client creates momentum.

Better goals are set -- ones that naturally pull the client toward the goal rather than goals that require the client to push themselves to the goal.

The client develops new skills, and these skills translate into more success.

Why is coaching becoming so popular?

Coaching is becoming popular for several reasons:

Many people are tired of doing what they think they "should" do and are ready to do something special and meaningful for the rest of their lives. One problem is that many can't see what this is or, if they can, they can't find a way to reorient their life around it. A coach can help them do both.

People are realizing how simple it can be to accomplish something that several years ago might have felt out of reach or like a pipedream. A coach is not a miracle worker (well, sometimes they are), but a coach does have a large tool kit to help the Big Idea become a Reality. Fortunately, people now have time and resources to invest in themselves in this kind of growth.

Spirituality. If you tracked the phenomenal success of James

Redfield's *Celestine Prophecy* on the NY Times best-seller list back in 1994, you got a sense of just how many people are willing to look at, and consider, the notion of spirituality. Wow. Many coaches are spiritually based -- even the ones who coach IBM and AT&T. America is growing more spiritual very quickly. (Our working definition of spirituality? "How connected you are with yourself and others.") The coach helps the clients to tune in better to themselves and to others.

Please, give me some context about coaching...

A personal coach does just what an athletic coach or music teacher does, only in a fuller and bigger way. A coach challenges you and takes the time to find out what winning in life means to you. A coach is your partner in living the life you know you can accomplish, personally and professionally. A coach is someone to hold you accountable for your life, to make sure you really do live up to your potential.

No matter where you are in life, there is always a desire for more. More success, more money, closer relationships, a deeper feeling of meaning in life, etc. It is the nature of people to want to attain more, become more, be more, and we all struggle with how to get what we're looking for.

Most people believe that "hard work and doing it on your own" are the keys to finding the life, success, money, or happiness that they seek. They believe that a price must be paid to attain what they want, and often that price is poor health, not having enough time to enjoy life, strained family relationships or lessened productivity. The saddest part is that; even though this effort may result in more of something, it is often not the something you had in mind, and you end up back where you started, or worse, further from your real intentions.

Athletes and performers know about this trap. They know they need someone else, a trained someone else to help them set goals, discover real needs, and work effectively toward ultimate goals of excellence. So, they are willing to hire a coach or a teacher. No serious athlete or musician would expect to progress very far without one.

What about people who are already doing really well in their lives. Why would they need a coach? They might not need a coach. But it

is helpful to find out: Are they doing what they most enjoy? Are they tolerating anything? Is life easy? Are they going to be financially independent within the next 15 years? Do they have what they most want? We've discovered that, often, people need to expect more out of their lives. A coach can help in this process.

Can a dependency be created between coach and client?

Not really. The client may "need" the coach in order to maximize an opportunity or accelerate their growth, yet not be "dependent" on the coach. Anyone who's working on major changes "needs" structure, advice, support and a place to brag, so, in that sense, the coach is certainly helpful, but an emotional, psychological dependency is not created. The coach works with people who are just fine and strong enough on their own. Remember, we're not resolving issues here. The coach is helping the client to create a better future: More success, more money, and a higher quality of life.

Can coaching hurt someone?

No. Remember, coaches aren't doing psychological work. They're not trying to control the client's thinking. They're not cattle prods; they're partners.

Can I hire a coach just for a short-term, special project?

Yes. Some clients hire a coach to help them accomplish specific goals or projects. Usually, however, the client keeps working with the coach after that because there are even more interesting things to accomplish.

How long must I commit if I start working with a coach?

Most coaches ask for a three to six month commitment but usually let

you stop immediately if coaching is not working for you right now. Very, very few coaches ask for a written agreement or contract. For the corporate client, however, a signed agreement is simply good business.

What does it cost to hire a coach?

Most coaches working with individuals charge about \$250 to \$500 per month for one half-hour call per week. Executive coaches charge more and some clients work with a coach for an hour or two a week. It all works out to about \$100 to \$150 per hour. Obviously, corporate coaching or programs is more, often running \$1,000 to \$10,000 per month.