

Coaching

Executive Coaching is an important and valuable tool in equipping leaders to succeed in a rapidly changing world of work. It provides a safe place to foster personal growth, development and experimentation and is an effective tool for positive organisational change. Coaches help you identify your strengths, clarify your goals for development and co-create a development plan to achieve them. A large body of published research supports the effectiveness of leadership coaching for individuals and broader organisational culture and performance.

What is coaching for?

Coaching isn't a panacea. First decide if coaching is right for you and your needs. For example:

- **Training** - is most effective in developing specific skills, e.g. using a new technology or a planning or process improvement methodology.
- **Mentoring/consulting** – getting advice or telling you how to do it. This is best from someone who has done it before. They should be an expert in the industry you work in and/or your discipline (finance, IT, entrepreneurship etc.) and they should have deep experience and a track record of delivering high performance in the role.
- **Coaching** – is most effective for building your thinking, reflection and problem-solving skills, providing new models and ways of thinking and removing blockages and old patterns of thinking. A coach, generally, won't tell you how to solve a problem, they will build your ability to understand the problem more broadly and solve it yourself.

Here are some important considerations in choosing a coach:

1. **What are their credentials and qualifications?** Coaching, unlike psychology, is an unregulated industry. Anyone can call themselves a coach. So, look for coaches who graduated from a university master's degree in coaching or a program that is credentialed by the International Coaching Federation (ICF).
2. **Do they have an Evidence-based approach?** They should have a clear, easy to understand rationale for their approach and be able to provide validation for any surveys or assessments.
3. **Do they continually build their skills?** A good coach continually reflects on and develops their skills through individual and peer supervision and membership of professional bodies. In Australia they should be a member of at least one of: ICF, USCMA, AC or EMMC.
4. **What are their areas of expertise?** While there are coaches who are strong generalists, not all coaches have experience in all types of coaching. Some specialities include: leadership, group, developmental, career transition, life, and performance coaching and the list goes on. Make sure your coach has experience in working in the areas you need.
5. **Do they share their success stories?** They should be able to provide references or recommendations on LinkedIn or their website.
6. **Can you work with them?** They should offer a free "chemistry" or "discovery" meeting – this could be a coffee or a phone call so you can both see whether your styles fit.
 - Does their approach work for you, and your organisation?
 - Do you trust them to push you appropriately to try new approaches?
 - Will they help you work towards your goals and deliver effective ROI?
7. **Do they have an exit strategy?** Coaching should be for a fixed period with clear objectives. The purpose of coaching is to develop a client to function at a higher level independently of the coach.

Ref: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2018/04/24/your-no-fail-guide-to-selecting-an-executive-coach/>