



WHAT EXACTLY IS COACHING?

Please review this brief handout to understand what professional coaching is all about and for some coaching exchange examples to inspire you for your next coaching session.

What Exactly Is Coaching

Coaching is a partnership between a Coach and a Client in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires the client to maximize personal and professional potential. It is designed to facilitate the creation of personal, professional or business goals and to develop and carry out a plan for achieving those goals. Coaching focuses on the present and future and is forward moving at all times.

What is important to remember is that a Coach will not tell you what to do or how to proceed, rather they will partner with you so you can identify the best course of action using your own incredible ability to solve problems and achieve your goals.

What Coaching is Not

Sometimes the best way to understand coaching is to explain what it is not by discussing the differences between coaching and other areas:

Teaching or Training: The trainer has a goal to impart specific learning objectives using a linear learning path. A trainer will tell you exactly what you need to do to obtain a skill.

Therapy: A therapist seeks to heal pain, dysfunction and conflict with self or in relation to others. The goal in therapy is to improve overall psychological functioning and ability to function in present life and work situations in an emotionally healthy way. Therapists typically focus on helping you to heal from the past, whereas coaches will focus on moving forward with your future goals.

Consulting: Consultants are used to access a specialized area of expertise. Consultants use a variety of approaches however it is assumed that the consultant will investigate, assess and diagnose problems and prescribe or even implement solutions to those problems. The consultant is the expert whereas in coaching, you are the expert.

Mentoring: A mentor guides from their personal experience and shares their own experience(s) and knowledge as a template for best practices and best actions to meet outcomes and goals. A coach encourages the coachee to learn and guide themselves based on their own experience

and knowledge, not the coach's personal experience and knowledge.

Performance Management: Performance management is most often a structured process for individuals and teams to attain goals that are in alignment with departmental or organizational strategic objectives and priorities in the most efficient and effective manner. While a manager may coach a subordinate, typically they will set the goals or objectives.

Common Uses for Coaching

Coaching can be used for any personal or professional issue you are facing. Where you are unsure about a decision, stuck on how to proceed in a plan, experiencing a block in a relationship or just seeking to improve upon something you've been unable to tackle, a coach can help.

Although there is a broad range of issues people discuss with coaches, common examples may include:

- A coachee is stuck in their career and knows a change is needed, but is unsure where to start
- A coachee is experiencing a roadblock in a work project and is unable to determine how to clear the way and move forward
- A coachee is struggling to find time to do everything they feel they need to accomplish
- A coachee needs to make a critical financial decision and is uncertain of the best approach
- A coachee wants to improve their physical environment to create less chaos in their lives
- A coachee struggles daily with a personal challenge they'd like to overcome
- A coachee wants to grow their relationship with a family member
- A coachee is contemplating a personal decision with many options but scared to make a choice

For more career coaching ideas, consult this great [article by BetterUp](#).