

## Coaching for Success

In recent years, the coaching industry has grown by leaps and bounds. This is largely due to the fact that professionals and executives can see the value that coaching offers them, both personally and professionally. In a world driven by measurable results, a positive return on investment is an attractive proposition for any businessperson. Now, people outside of the business arena are seeing the value of coaching in helping them achieve their goals and create their desired life.

### What is coaching?

Coaching is a highly effective, co-creative process that supports individuals in creating the lives they've always wanted. Coaches provide perspective, support, and accountability as they help clients achieve their business and personal goals. For each session, the client brings the agenda to discuss. Focusing on the client's agenda, the coach and client work together to propel the client forward by clarifying the agenda and creating a specific action plan. Although each coach has different methods of coaching, most coaches use thought-provoking questions, various coaching tools, and action challenges to stimulate thinking and create clarity for the client. Because this is a one-on-one relationship, sessions are completely focused on the client and helping them reach their desired goals. Some coaches work with clients in person while others hold sessions via telephone. Many coaches also offer group coaching sessions that use the synergy of the group to generate ideas and create results.

### Who uses a coach?

Just as great athletes use coaches, so do many other already successful people. Executives and professionals are turning to career coaches in growing numbers as coaches can help them become more productive and propel them to greater success. Others turn to life coaches to help find more balance and fulfillment in their lives or to deal with other transitions (changing jobs, careers, promotions, corporate layoffs, etc.). Coaching is ideal for designing the ideal personal or business life, making meaningful choices to simplify life, handling life changes, leading a balanced life, and freeing up energy, reducing stress and attracting great things in life. There are many more coaching niches or specialties as well including retirement, spiritual, fitness, and relationship coaching. Virtually anyone can benefit from working with a coach.

### How does one pick a coach?

Selecting a coach is a very personal process. Most coaches will offer a complimentary sample session to see if the relationship will be a good fit for both client and coach. The sample session allows the client to get a feel for how well the coach and client can work together. If the conversation is strained or uncomfortable, this may not be a good fit. It is also important to look for a coach that specializes in the potential client's area of interest. Another criterion for selecting a coach is certification. Although coaches tend to enter this industry because of their natural coaching abilities, he or she should have attended some type of coach training, preferably related to their niche. There are many different levels and types of certification. Ideally, a coach should also belong to a coaching organization such as the International Coaching Federation (ICF) or the International Association of Coaches (IAC). These organizations are meant to regulate, support, and promote the industry and to hold coaches to ethical standards. Many coaches often have websites, blogs, or newsletters. This is a great way to become familiar with a coach without a commitment.

### How much does coaching cost?

Coaching prices vary greatly depending on the level of experience and expertise of the coach. The important thing to consider is that coaching is an investment in yourself. Many coaches work with clients for short periods of time, around 3 to 6 months. It is generally recommended that clients work with a coach for at least 3 months to begin seeing measurable results.

If you have thought about hiring a coach or are interested in seeing if you might benefit from working with a coach, there are many online coaching directories. Both the ICF and IAC websites contain directories listing member coaches. Find one or two that offer free sample sessions and contact them. This could be the first step on the road to achieving even greater things in your life!

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### About the Author

April Mims is a life and career coach specializing in work/life balance issues and life and career transitions. Her coaching practice is Nexus Coaching Partners. She is passionate about empowering clients to balance the demands of a successful career and a strong family life. April invites you to a complimentary 30-minute coaching session to see if coaching could benefit you. To learn more or subscribe to The Nexus Connection newsletter, visit <http://www.nexuscoachingpartners.com>.