
A Guide to Coaching

What it is, why it's important, and how you can benefit.



Executive and Business Coaching Network

Welcome to your Coaching Guide from the **Executive and Business Coaching Network (EBCN)**. The EBCN is a network of talented and experienced coaches who can work with you to improve your performance, reputation and personal fulfilment. We measure the results.

Our clients often tell us that coaching is both a necessity and a luxury.

It's a necessity because spending time with a neutral but experienced and supportive coach helps you clarify what you want to achieve and how to go about achieving it. This is an essential ingredient to business and personal success in today's world.

It's a luxury because it's time spent purely on whatever you want. In itself this becomes a way of regenerating your enthusiasm, motivation and purpose.

This guide is designed to give you an introduction to what we do at the Executive and Business Coaching Network. I hope that you find it informative and useful.

Michael Beale

EBCN Founder and Director.

July 2013



If you would like to discuss any aspect of coaching with me please leave a message on 01908 506563. Alternatively, you can book a slot on [my on-line](#) diary or complete the contact form on the website <http://www.execcoach.net>

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What is coaching?

Coaching is a one-to-one (1:1) intervention that aims to get you from where you are now to where you want to be. A good coach will help you work out what your goals are and show you how to empower yourself to reach them.

As it is 1:1, the coach can design an approach that works for you. Their broad experience means they know a wide range of techniques or can develop new ones specifically suited to your personality and situation. In this way, the coach makes sure you get the maximum learning from the investment.

Coaching will give you the tools and confidence to achieve your objectives and reach your goals.

A good coach needs the skills to be able to help you significantly while having no formal authority over you in the way a manager has. For this relationship to work, you need to buy-into and take responsibility for your development.

Coaching is different to other interventions, and each has different strengths for different circumstances. A good coach will always know when to recommend something to supplement their own coaching, or indeed, when their own services are not appropriate.

Other interventions that your coach may suggest include:

- **Counselling.** This helps you with personal problems such as depression or anxiety.
- **Consulting.** This tries to find a solution to a problem. You do not need to understand how the solution works, but you do have to be able to implement it.
- **Leading.** As a leader you develop empowering visions and communicate them to your colleagues while being a role model towards those visions. There may be some need for you to manage your managers – a subtle skill!
- **Mentoring.** A mentor is someone who has already succeeded in similar situations and who is willing to share their experience with you.
- **Managing.** Management involves allocating resources to specific goals and monitoring the progress. It will involve leading, telling, teaching, and coaching.
- **Teaching.** This is where you are told about a subject and given tests to make sure the information has been retained.
- **Telling.** This is when you are told what to do to achieve your objectives.
- **Letting people go.** In the long run, if you and the organisation do not 'fit' then it may be better for both parties for you to move on.

A good coach will use a coaching style, but will include elements of any or all of the above interventions to help you reach your goals.

Coaching benefits

There are two parts to measuring coaching benefits – the clear outcomes, or quantitative benefits, and the less tangible results, or qualitative benefits. These latter benefits may have the greater impact upon your performance. They become quantitative when you have a way of measuring them.

Quantitative coaching benefits

These benefits depend upon the situation. If the aim of the coaching is to get you from where you are now (A) to where you want to be (B) then there are three things to consider:

- 1) Did you get to B or perhaps further? If so, what is that worth?
- 2) Did coaching help you get there or would you have arrived anyway? What contribution did coaching make?
- 3) Did your goal of B change along the journey? How was that a good thing? What part did coaching play in this change?

Before starting any coaching, either corporate or individual, you need to decide how you will measure the outcomes. Thinking through your goals through before starting is also very useful to the coaching process itself.

Qualitative coaching benefits

More discipline is needed to measure coaching's other beneficial effects; however they are very real and include:

Corporate benefits of coaching

- Staff performance levels increase.
- Under-performing employees change or leave.
- Productivity increases.
- Better and more productive stakeholder management.
- Organisational change is swifter and easier to achieve.
- Potential senior managers are easier to identify.
- Sickness absence levels fall.
- People feel valued and want to remain with the company.
- Learning and development becomes a natural part of the culture

Personal benefits of coaching

- Having a clear career plan and seeking development opportunities to achieve it.
- Achieving or exceeding work objectives.
- A better work / life balance.
- Feeling happier and more motivated.
- Better relationships within and outside work.
- Improved health.

Coaching benefits include a positive effect upon your results, along with an increase in personal satisfaction.

What types of coaching does EBCN offer?

EBCN coaches come from a range of backgrounds and can offer high quality and professional coaching and mentoring in the following areas:

Performance coaching

Performance coaching can be used to enhance general performance or to deal with specific issues. This could be about beating sales and revenue targets or achieving work objectives. It could also cover improving customer satisfaction scores, or reducing costs.

Behavioural coaching

This aims to increase your inter-personal effectiveness. It includes improving your relationships with your stakeholders, customers and teams. The higher you rise in a company and the more influence you have, the more important this becomes.

Executive coaching.

This type of coaching is invaluable for executives and senior managers. It develops effective leaders and helps with fulfilling a new business vision, strategy, or culture. It is also used to plan career changes or developments and to increase your impact at work.

EBCN can offer a wide range of coaching specialists.

Change and culture change coaching.

Most success today is about managing change and culture. People expect sensitivity and tough decisions during a time of change. If you are responsible for a change programme, you must have the right resources to be successful.

Personal coaching.

At first glance personal coaching may not appear relevant to business. However, the temperament of senior people affects their success in influencing and persuading. Many clients value the opportunity to explore and test new, and maybe contentious, ideas with somebody not involved in the company hierarchy.

EBCN's coaching and mentoring programmes

Here are some examples of the programmes we offer based on the lengthy and varied experience of coaches within the network. Elements of these programmes apply to individual, business and corporate coaching:

Coaching Programme ROI

This programme ensures you measure the impact of your coaching and mentoring initiatives. This involves stakeholder agreement, appropriate feedback methods and (inexpensive) Cloud systems. The benefit is that coaching initiatives can be continually monitored, managed, and improved.

Company Mentoring and Buddy Coaching Programme

In conjunction with the CoachingCloud coaching and mentoring platform we can help you design, set up, run, and evaluate an internal mentoring and buddy coaching programme.

CEO and Managing Partner Programme

CEOs and Managing Partners often find it very beneficial to have a two-hour session every fortnight to step back and focus 'on' the business rather than 'in' the business.

Senior Mentoring Programme

Senior Managers often benefit from access to a mentor as a sounding board to explore new ideas and approaches. When part of a structured programme this can lead to increased competency, proficiency, skill and wisdom.

Vision and Strategy Development

A good vision and strategy motivates us towards a challenging goal by giving us a route to follow. It also gives approaches to the inevitable challenges that appear along the way. This programme coaches a leader to address the paradox of being both bold and practical.

360 Degree Feedback and Leadership Development

A programme starts with a series of confidential interviews with the client's stakeholders to ask individually developed and agreed questions. The responses, and the client's input, then inform the design of a specific leadership development programme. The approach is developed from Marshall Goldsmith's work on feedback. Progress is measured by using further stakeholder information.

Team Building

This programme is based upon Patrick Lencioni's work on cohesive and dysfunctional teams and can lead to significantly improved results and team motivation.

Culture Change

Good organisational culture brings great results, satisfaction, and growth for all those involved. While culture normally starts at the top, each manager and first-line supervisor has a major role to play. Culture is not always easy to tackle, however there are some basic principles that, when applied consistently, make a significant difference. The appropriate coaching programme can ensure leaders and managers learn the skills to develop culture in the right way.

Business Development

Business development is not always easy. A 360 degree study of the key stakeholders and players (including customers), followed by a tailored coaching programme will improve results and customer satisfaction.

Coaching Project Managers and Project Sponsors

Project leaders and project sponsors can find themselves in a lonely place, with little support or guidance. Our trained coaches have broad and deep experience of project delivery in strategic and complex programmes. Coaching brings increased confidence and an increased chance of your project beating expectations.

The Fulfilled Entrepreneur

One-to-one coaching programme aimed at existing and aspiring entrepreneurs who want to design and build a business which delivers a more effective work-life balance.

Networking and Building Social Capital

Successful networking has always been a success criterion for many CEOs, directors, and sales professionals. As we move further into the information age, networking and building social capital is increasing in importance. Our coaching programme can both jump-start and fine-tune networking effectiveness.

Starter Programme

A starter programme of six sessions for those that want to demonstrate the benefit of coaching and mentoring for themselves. This starts with two free sessions.

1:1 NLP Business Practitioner Training

A six-month individual business NLP development programme increases personal effectiveness and satisfaction. This is particularly effective for senior professionals and managers. The client (and ideally their stakeholders) agree the clear end goals at the start and the programme is based on 2-hour sessions (face-to-face and Skype) every two weeks.

Variations are Master Practitioner and Coaching Practitioner training.

The coaching process

EBCN coaches may use many different approaches depending upon your own particular situation. They are designed specifically for you, so no two coaching experiences are the same. To give you an idea of what to expect, the generic EBCN coaching process is as follows:

1. An initial quiz to set the scene.

To give you and your coach a baseline from which to work, you may be asked to give yourself a mark from 0 (low) to 100 (high) for the following:

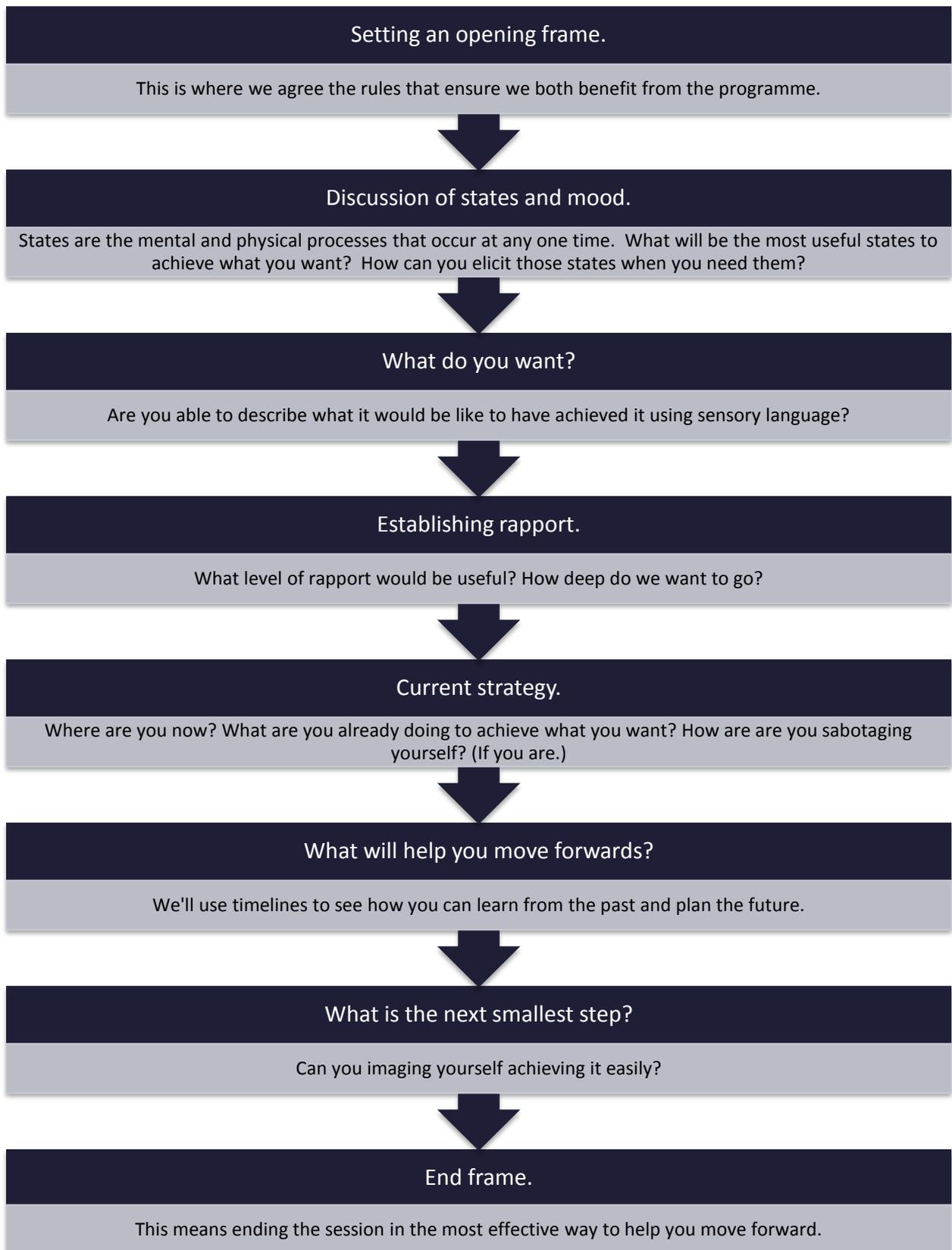
- Do you have a clear purpose?
- If yes, do you have a plan to achieve it?
- Do you appreciate what you have now?
- How good is your connection with your colleagues and customers?
- Are you to speak your mind, make your own decisions and take action upon those decisions?
- How much time do you invest in generative activities? For example sport, meditation, art, writing and other hobbies?

2. Secondly, you and your coach will work out where you want to be.

You may be asked to describe 3-5 things that would make the sessions useful for you. These might include increased revenue, better job satisfaction, more effective use of time and so on. You can change these as you progress. You will need to come up with 2-3 milestones for each one.

The coaching process uses many different methods to explore what you want, where you are now and how you are going to get to where you want to be.

3. The coach will then work with you through the following elements.



4. There may be other areas to explore to help you achieve your goals.

Your coach may encourage you to look at your values and their rules – do you know what they are? What is important to you at a deep level? Are these values correct and do they mean what you think they do? What has to happen for this value to be met?

Linked to your values are your beliefs. What assumptions are you making about your situation? What (if anything) needs to change here? Throughout the sessions the coach will check if your beliefs still stand, and how you feel about them changing.

You may notice NLP or hypnotic language techniques within the coaching, and your coach may use metaphors to help you review your opinion on a matter. An excellent method to achieve results is to model the type of person who has already achieved something similar. Your coach will work through modelling with you and give you techniques to achieve the same success.

All this work will be done within the context of your own working and learning preferences. The solutions and action plans developed will take these into account as well. When agreeing strategies to reach your goals, your coach will go through the steps needed on the way.

*What is really important to you?
What assumptions do you make?
Your coach will help you assess
these and make changes if needed.*

Coaching supervision

The EBCN approach means our coaching quality is consistently high. This is maintained by close coaching supervision. EBCN coaches take their own professional development seriously. Part of this means looking for ways to improve and refine their coaching skills, and they work closely with other members of the network to share experiences. The benefit to you is that your coach is able to draw upon the advice of many other coaches if necessary – whilst always keeping your information confidential of course.

All EBCN coaches have a coaching supervision plan. This means you always receive a high quality coaching service.

EBCN coaching supervision means our coaches:

- Have the support of another coach or mentor to explore pressing issues or concerns.
- Have a monthly supervision session with a senior coach to develop their own lives and careers. This also makes sure they remain focussed on helping you rather than being distracted by personal issues.
- Take part in 'Buddy' coaching with other network members. These allow them to bounce ideas around and can result in some innovative new methods.
- Regularly attending [CoachingCloud™ Tribal monthly meetings](#) to keep their skills honed and to meet other coaches.
- Use the [CoachingCloud™](#) coaching and mentoring platform. This allows you and the coach to monitor your progress.
- Attend a coaching accreditation and supervision course every year to update their professional accreditation.
- Use the CoachingCloud™ feedback system where it is available.
- Save the learning from each case to provide 'Case Studies' and share knowledge with other coaches.

What makes a good coach?

Good coaches come from a variety of backgrounds, and they all work in different ways. They are passionate to stay at the top of their profession and to do this they continually update their skills. What sets them apart from mediocre coaches is that they learn new models and approaches from their clients. In some ways the best measure of a coach is their current clients.

A good coach, like a good director or good sales person, will tend to emerge rather than be 'trained'.

EBCN can make sure you find the right coach for you. Every coach is different and works in different ways according to your needs. However, they are all likely to have the following attributes:

- Curiosity and passion about helping people to solve their problems and achieve their goals.
- They will also be able to 'shut up' and let the client think.
- A proactive approach that is about outcomes not methods. They'll be flexible and happy to explore different approaches.
- They'll be empathetic while not necessarily agreeing or disagreeing with you.
- Although you may not be aware of it, they'll be paying close attention to your unconscious signals.
- The ideal coach will have experience of modelling high performance within the field that he or she is coaching.
- They'll understand the best coaching approaches and have an in-depth understanding of disciplines such as Cognitive Psychology and NLP.
- He or she will be able to set up an effective feedback system so you can measure your progress accurately.
- Within corporate coaching, they'll understand the direction and current culture of the organisation.

Is coaching right for you?

Coaching is a 1:1 intervention that will fit your exact circumstances. It may therefore be exactly what you need. However, coaching is not a panacea for every difficult situation. When it is thought through, carefully planned, and expertly delivered, then the impact can be performance and life changing. It works best when you know you can achieve more, but are uncertain of ways to progress. Coaching can help you improve your performance and help you gain more influence by improving your interpersonal, leadership and management skills.

For coaching to work well you need an idea of what you want to achieve, you need to be 'ready' for coaching and you need to find the right coach.

When coaching is not the best choice

You have to be prepared to take responsibility for your own results and not be looking for someone to sort everything out for you. This requires a certain amount of courage. You need an open mind and a willingness to try new approaches and you must be committed to sticking with coaching for a reasonable period of time. Performance and life changes are not achieved purely through quick fixes!

Coaching may not be the best approach to choose if you are going through serious personal difficulties or have psychological issues such as anxiety or depression. In these situations, we suggest that you talk to a doctor first.

Having said that, if you feel that coaching is the right path and you are prepared to put in the work that is needed, you will find yourself making progress very quickly once you have the right coach for your particular needs and challenges.

Finding the right coach

Finding the right coach is the key to success. Experience, accreditation and supervision are important elements of a coach's credibility, but the rapport between you is often more important. You need to take your time to find out whom you enjoy working with. Don't be afraid to ask for a taster session with more than one coach, or to ask a coach to adopt a different approach. One of the huge benefits of EBCN is that our coaches have a wide range of different experiences and we can help you find the one person that is right for you.

Setting up a corporate coaching programme

These questions are based on our practical experience of corporate coaching. They may not be easy to answer, but we find it beneficial to ask them as part of a programme's set-up.

1. How to set up the programme?

The way you set up a coaching programme is probably the most important determinant of the programme's success. This section gives you a useful list of questions to ask and answer.

2. Who should set up the programme?

The person who runs a coaching programme will have a significant impact upon its success. A coaching programme is a change programme and whoever is running it will inevitably be drawn into sensitive and political issues. They must be able to deal with these for the programme to succeed.

Thus, it is a good idea if a senior manager, who is trusted by people at the same level as well as those more and less senior, is selected to run the programme. If the individual is not a board member he or she should have the support of a board level sponsor.

3. What is the outcome of the programme?

It is important to state the purpose and outcome(s) of the programme at the start.

Most coaching programmes are focused on either:

- Supporting a key company initiative; for example increasing revenue, increasing efficiency, a culture change programme; or
- The professional and personal development of individual executives.

4. What is the likely Return on Investment (ROI) and how will you measure it?

A ROI of 5:1 is not uncommon and is a good starting point for a coaching programme. Your ROI will, of course, depend on the individual circumstances. We support both Kirkpatrick and Brinkerhoff approaches to measurement.

It is important to have a reporting system set up before the programme starts, so that you can take action immediately if anything appears amiss.

The investment in coaching programmes is justified around the people being coached going on to achieve key company performance indicators. These are measured by the people themselves and their managers, plus relevant company data such as absence reports, satisfaction surveys and 360° feedback.

If you don't have the appropriate systems in place to administer this, there are a number of Cloud computing systems that can help.

5. What are the boundaries of the programme?

It is possible to limit coaching discussions to purely work issues, but they work better when allowed to touch upon anything that is a genuine benefit to the coaching client. This is with the expressed exception of anything illegal or anything that may have a negative impact on the health and safety of the individual and organisation. The section on confidentiality is important, see number 18 below.

6. Does the senior team support and understand the coaching initiative?

A number of senior managers may not understand the potential value of coaching, and may be confused by the differences between coaching, mentoring, and counselling. Without care, they can unintentionally sabotage the programme.

It is important to brief them personally so they understand the potential value to them and their teams.

7. Do the coaches understand the company's vision, strategy and culture?

While the first priority of the coach is whatever is important to their individual client, they can have a significant impact on helping the company achieve vision, strategy and culture changes – these may be the primary drivers for their employment.

So it is a good idea to brief them on the current and desired vision, culture and strategy.

8. Which coaching methodology are the coaches using?

Most coaching methodologies are based on establishing what the client wants, where they are now and how they will get to where they want to go. After this the art of good coaching is more about how well the coach uses the methodology, rather than the specific methodology itself.

However, for consistency it is best that the programme has a simple coaching methodology or framework. Within this the coaches are free to do whatever is needed to produce the necessary outcomes.

9. How do I brief those involved?

A coaching programme plan should, as a minimum, answer the relevant questions asked here and include copies of any reports or screens that clients, coaches or managers need to complete. The latest version should be available online to all the programme's stakeholders.

When completed all individuals need to be briefed either 1:1 or as a group. The format should make it possible for individuals to raise questions and concerns and have them answered.

10. What technological solutions do I use?

A number of technological solutions can dramatically increase the effectiveness and ROI of coaching programmes.

The two most important are video telephony and Cloud solutions. Video telephony, such as Skype, allows visual and voice communication and saves travelling costs. Many professionals, who initially found it difficult to work with video conferencing, find Skype allows them to communicate effectively with colleagues across the globe.

Cloud computing solutions make it possible to take secure written notes with appropriate monitoring and control of the programme while still respecting confidentiality. An control panel gives an instant view of the success of the programme.

11. How do I select the individuals to be coached?

Suitable criteria include:

- Individuals with a significant impact on company performance
- Top performers
- Poor performers who have the potential to perform
- Individuals who want to be coached

It is important to define your own specific criteria and the evidence for those criteria.

Coaching individuals who have a significant impact on performance and who are already top performers is likely to offer a greater ROI. In addition the coaches are likely to learn more from the interaction, which then makes them more valuable to the company in the future.

12. What if an individual being coached wants to use their own coach?

The relationship between individual coaches and the coaching client is the key to the success of the interaction; therefore this should be treated sympathetically, subject to the coach passing your selection criteria.

However, it is important to maintain a basic consistency of coaches throughout the programme.

13. How do I select the individual coaches?

Great coaches, like great sales people, tend to emerge rather than have a specific career path. The best recommendation is that they already have a successful track record with your people.

Ask any new coach to coach you on a topic that's important to you, so that you can find out how they work, then get a potential internal client to interview them before making a decision. This will also enable you to check for fit with the company and specific programme.

We advise that you treat coaching qualifications with caution. They do not necessarily guarantee a good coach. Testimonials, checked references and case studies are more important.

The characteristics of a good coach are set out on page 10 of this guide.

14. How I determine if I need external coaches?

As a general guide, junior members of staff work well with internal people, and more senior staff with external people. Performance coaching can be a great learning experience for internal coaches.

Senior staff members do not normally like being coached internally as they cannot always guarantee the confidentiality they require. In addition they are more likely to respect external coaches.

15. How do I choose a coaching network or supplier?

There are three key criteria for choosing a coaching supplier or network. They will be able to:

- provide a high number of quality coaches for you to consider, thus giving you choice;
- provide consistency and supervision of the coaches; and
- help you to set up and monitor the programme.

You should maintain control of the monitoring and process. The more you develop your own processes and systems, the more flexibility you have in choosing individual coaches and the less reliant you are on any particular external supplier.

16. How do I manage the expectations of managers you choose not to coach?

The right to have a coach has to be earned. You need to explain they have not yet reached your criteria to be coached.

As previously mentioned it is important to define your guidelines, criteria and related evidence at the beginning of the programme.

17. What feedback do I want?

As well as collecting feedback that supports your ROI it is always useful to asking all stakeholders two questions:

- What's working?
- What can be improved?

18. What's the policy with regard to confidentiality?

You need to confirm your agreement to confidentiality before starting the programme. A coaching programme works best when there is genuine real confidentiality and confidence between the coach and the client.

However, within this the client needs to report back agreed information to support the programme's ROI and their own continued improvement. The coach has to be able report back anything that would compromise the legality and health and safety of the individual or organisation.

19. How do I handle a client not getting on with their coach?

It is important to create a mechanism to deal swiftly with any disputes and disagreements. If the client cannot work with his or her coach it is best to replace the coach sooner rather than later – and remember this can be a reflection on the client as much as on the coach.

20. When should I end the programme?

Programmes can either have a fixed time – normally when they are for a specific company initiative, or be on-going – when they are part of an individual's development. However in either case the programme should only be maintained if it's generating an appropriate ROI.

Michael is working on a project to establish best practice in measuring the coaching return on investment. The first discussion paper, [Measuring Coaching – an opportunity and a threat](#), is available on the EBCN website.

EBCN coaches

All EBCN coaches have significant business and organisational knowledge, over 100 hours coaching experience, EBCN and external accreditation, continual professional development, coaching supervision, professional indemnity insurance and contribute to our expanding library of coaching case studies.



David Regler specialises in accelerated business development and sales team mentoring



Manish Gohel specialises in building self-esteem and enabling personal change.



Edmund Hill specialises in grooming companies for sale and providing practical financial solutions.



Marianna Beckwith specialises in communication, study skills, and personal development.



Jon Baker is a business coach specialising in increasing profits and motivating staff.



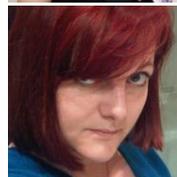
Michael Beale specialises in 1:1 NLP training and executive coaching. He also sets up coaching programmes.



Jo Geraghty is an executive coach specialising in bespoke leadership development programmes.



Mike Jones improves the performance of people in businesses through working with emotional intelligence.



Joanna Brown's speciality is coaching creative thinking. She uses NLP, emotional intelligence and mentoring to help clients.



Peter Barnett coaches individuals and companies to generate new business leads.



Julian Shreeve specialises in personal change, emotional intelligence, and building high performance teams.



Peter Parkes helps project sponsors, managers and teams deliver great results.



Lana Holman specialises in coaching HR professionals, middle and first line managers.



Tracy O'Connor specialises in helping clients build self-esteem and confidence in their personal and business lives.

Further reading and useful links

More information about personal and corporate coaching, mentoring, and training in Neuro-linguistic Programming and mentoring can be found on the [EBCN website, www.execcoach.net](http://www.execcoach.net)

EBCN coaches are leading the way in using Cloud technology for executive coaching. EBCN uses the [CoachingCloud™](http://www.coachingcloud.com) system at <http://www.coachingcloud.com>

[Coaching case studies](http://www.coaching-case-studies.net) can be found on the EBCN website and at www.coaching-case-studies.net

A selection of recommended [coaching books](#) for those interested in coaching and performance improvement can be found on http://astore.amazon.co.uk/executive-coaching-mjb-21?_encoding=UTF8&node=1

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