

# Tips on Selecting a Coach

## Fact Sheet

### Tips on Selecting a Coach

In this ever changing world, we all need a coach. Coaches even have a coach! Coaching is a professional relationship which enables you to achieve **bigger** and **better results**, **faster** and **more efficiently**.

#### How to find a coach

With so many coaches offering their services, it is hard to sort through and make a choice as to who is the most suitable one for you or your business. Some coaches have great credentials, but no industry experience. Others have a background in psychology, consulting, sports, or are former business people. With so much choice, how do you find a coach you can work with, that has the right experience, and will ensure you and your organisation get a good return on investment?

#### How does coaching work?



#### A question of choice

A key characteristic of a successful coaching relationship is the chemistry between the coach and the individual. The relationship can be very personal and it is important there is a connection that works, as well as dual respect, understanding, and confidentiality. Research determines that individuals need to select their own coaches in order to build an effective coaching relationship. Before making a selection, it is advisable to get detailed background and experience information, and then decide who to meet with. Companies like Corporate Training Partnerships offer a choice of several coaches and can help you screen and then choose from within their own organisation, making the choice a smoother process.

## Attributes of a good coach

Coaches need to be extremely good listeners and know how to ask the right questions. The role of the coach is not to provide advice on the direction that needs to be taken, but to ask the right questions of the client, help him see the direction and then take them there. As opposed to training, coaching is often extremely personal and the process should allow for the freedom to work with the “whole individual” so they can become an effective person – in their private life and at work. When choosing a coach and developing that relationship, here are some points to keep in mind:

- **Experience** – look for a coach with breadth and depth in their coaching experience who has coached individuals and teams in different situations. It is unlikely you will find someone who has coached in the exact circumstances that you and your organisation have, so choose a coach who has worked in several diverse situations and been able to have impact. Industry experience is usually essential when technical advice is required, but not essential when addressing people management and process improvement issues.
- **No flexibility in approach** – be cautious of a coach that offers only a “one-size fits all approach”.
- **Results** – your coach should have a proven track record of success of both measurable improvements and hard to measure skills and process results. Get references and contact them. Be wary of improvement claims without access to references.
- **Coach or consultant** – is the person really a coach or a consultant? Is he giving advice or is he ‘coaching’?
- **Process** – choose a coach that has and uses a proven coaching process.
- **Choice** – choose a coach from a firm or network that provides several coaches to choose from.
- **Quality Assurance** – choose an organisation that provides a quality assurance process to ensure quality and consistency for your organisation.

## Check list

### A coaching program is successful when:

- it is a transparent process;
- the coach is qualified for the type of coaching needed;
- the coach is grounded in the company's business and culture;
- it is results oriented;
- quality assurance is present;
- the individual has a choice of coaches;
- coaching is tied to performance measurement – whether tangible or intangible;
- the coaching receives organisational support;
- it is not done in isolation and the coach, individual, individual's supervisor, and possibly organisation is involved;
- there is trust, commitment and confidentiality between all parties; and
- expectations are clear.