

CONVERSATIONS

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What you don't know about selecting a coach: Why it matters



Synopsis: *With increased interest in personal development it is becoming quite popular to hire a personal coach or mentor. There are coaches available for most any area of interest once can imagine. However, not all coaches are as skilled as they might seem. Finding a qualified coach requires some investigative work up front. This article discusses what skilled coaches should have on their resume and what*

you should ask before hiring one.

Most of us find it difficult getting clarity on why we struggle with our own personal development and more so what to do about it. Having the awareness of our blind spots is a bit like a fish realizing it is in water. We can turn to bosses, friends and family to give us some insights. But even with the best intentions most often those around us either lack the fortitude or insight to be of significant help.

Where skilled coaches can best make a difference is asking the powerful questions that we might not even consider. Those questions well targeted can bring the initial clarity and awareness that begins us on a journey of growth.

Skilled coaching can be a great enabler for moving to purposeful action. Although not a panacea, coaching brings clarity and direction,

increasing the probability that future development actions will be effective.

Perhaps the biggest fallacy about coaches is that they have the 'answer'. I would offer that any coach who suggests they have the solution to your unique life challenges are not the coach you want. Today's skilled coaches have the intuitive ability to ask you the questions that clarify for you the focus of your challenge and guide you in laying out a roadmap for new growth and success.

Finding a qualified coach can be relatively easy given a few simple rules. First, know whether a coach has a specialty. Is it life coaching, leadership, coaching for divorced dads or career development? Secondly find out if the coach has

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a certification by a qualified coaching organization. The International Coaching Federation is a very recognized group for assuring that coaches have the training and credentials.

Thirdly, ask about the coaches general framework for working with a client. Do they see you as a client, cohort, patient or colleague? Finally you will want to know the length of the engagement, fees and whether the sessions will be timed to meet your scheduling needs.

Most importantly you must feel there is a chemistry and connection between yourself and your coach. Will you be comfortable sharing your concerns? Do you sense that this coach will be able to connect with your experience and provide support and guidance in your development journey?

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