

1. THE ROLE OF THE COACH - THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF COACHING



*Why have you chosen to become a life coach?
What can you offer your clients?*

OVERVIEW

In this module we cover the following topics:

- What does coaching involve?
- How did life coaching start?
- Why become a life coach?
- How coaching compares with therapy
- Coaches don't provide answers
- The different types of coaching: Telephone and video call coaching, Email coaching and Face to face coaching
- Understand yourself

WHAT DOES COACHING INVOLVE?

Coaching helps people in all sorts of ways. This includes:

- Set priorities in their life
- Achieve a better work-life balance
- Understand their strengths and weaknesses
- Resolve problems in their personal life
- Overcome obstacles
- Achieve their goals
- Identify their life values
- Help them create an action plan
- Act as a sounding board
- Challenge themselves to achieve greater things
- Stick to their resolutions
- Acknowledge their successes
- Bring clarity into their life.

HOW DID LIFE COACHING START?

Life coaching began in California in the early 1980s. Therapists, counsellors and other professionals found that clients wanted personal support in their life.

These clients were fit and well, in that they didn't have mental or physical problems. But they needed guidance.

A medical or therapeutic programme would therefore be irrelevant. What people wanted was someone to help them achieve their goals. Thus personal life coaching began.

Now there are thousands of life coaches and millions of clients.

Everyone could, in theory, use a life coach. And few people are aware that they could profit from a coach. So the market is vast in size.

WHY BE A LIFE COACH?

Coaching helps many people. Here are three typical types:

1. **People who want to succeed, whether at work or in love.** They are sometimes held back, whether through fear, timidity, or procrastination.
2. **People who feel stressed out, often by their work.** Many want to spend more time with their family or spouse. Others want to downshift and lead a simpler life.
3. **People who feel something is lacking in their life,** whether a community or just time for themselves. Coaches can help them change their priorities.

As you can see, people want change in their lives. But they don't know how to achieve it. Sometimes they don't know what changes they want.

As a coach, you can unravel their concerns, and point them in a new direction or their own choosing.

Read this article: What is a life Coach

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-a-life-coach-4129726>



GROWTH OF STRESS

A survey of 650 GPs who have practised for more than 15 years reveals that society has become much more stressed. The survey, which was published in the British Medical Association News Review, shows that:

- 80% of GPs said the number of patients seeking help for stress related problems has increased significantly over the period.

- 58% said their patients were drinking more. Half blamed stress for the rise.
- The survey paints a picture of a nation in which people are weighed down by stress, young adults find it difficult to cope, marital problems are resolved by divorce, and elderly people are increasingly left to fend for themselves.

This survey, like many others, shows that people need coaching advice, and that coaching is accepted among GPs.

For more statistics on stress look at this website:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/statistics/mental-health-statistics-stress>

EXERCISE 1.1

Write a list of other types of people you think might benefit from having a life coach.

NOW WATCH THIS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1srttqJbyI>



What is a Life Coach?

HOW COACHING COMPARES WITH COUNSELLING OR THERAPY

Coaching is much newer than therapy or counselling. But many therapists are adding coaching to their repertoire because it is so popular.

Some people see therapy and counselling as essentially for people who are unwell. But many people seek counselling for relationship issues, grief, behavioural patterns associated with abuse, decision making, mid-life crises or even personal development. And we wouldn't class these people as unwell. However, coaching is very clearly for well people who need guidance. So there is a clear divide between coaching and counselling.

As a coach, you must be aware of the possibility that sick people (whether mentally or physically unwell) will ask you to coach them. If you feel someone is unwell then you should get them to seek qualified advice.

COACHES DON'T PROVIDE ANSWERS

Your job is not to provide answers. Let me repeat that. You don't provide answers.

Why? Because clients don't do what people tell them. They do only what they want to do. So until they have decided to quit their job or move to Alaska, there is nothing you can do to persuade them of that.

So what is the role of the coach?

- Help clients understand themselves
- Help clients prioritise their lives
- Facilitate change by being a sounding board
- Help the client see the alternatives
- Set goals, and help the client achieve them.

Not having to provide answers has an added bonus. It means you don't have to know the answers to the clients' problems. For example, you don't have to be a financial expert.

And this isn't a cop-out. It's important not to get too far into the technical detail of the client's problems. Most of life's important issues are simple: it's making the decision that's hard.

BUT COACHES ARE PUSHY

Nevertheless, we do guide people into achieving change. And when a client reveals what they want, we'll push them into achieving their goal. That isn't the same as telling them what to do.

So you can play devil's advocate. You can suggest alternatives (assuming that you sense they are able to take it).

You can say things like:

- So you're still under the sway of your mother? Why don't you move further away?
- So you hate your boss? Why don't you change your job?

Here you are not providing answers: you're challenging your client to confront reality, and giving them a dose of tough love. Only if the client really wants to make those changes, will they do them.

As a life coach you're providing an environment where they can create change. And you'll be giving them tools (which we discuss in the course) to help them do that.

Unlike counsellors, who almost never suggest a direction for their client, the life coach wants the client to solve their problems by taking action. So the end of a coaching session often involves the coach setting targets for the client to achieve by the next meeting.

WHAT COACHING ISN'T

There are many misconceptions about a coach's work. Most people imagine that a coach operates like an 'agony aunt' in the women's press.

There, the agony aunt dispenses brisk, no-nonsense advice. This involves advice like:

- Ditch your worthless boyfriend.
- Don't tell your husband the truth about your old affair. It will only hurt him.
- It is normal to blush/have spots/feel attracted to someone.

Coaching is not like being a magazine agony aunt. Your clients probably don't want advice, even when they say they do. If you advise a client to 'Stick with your marriage', they are just as likely to abandon their spouse.

So remember, clients don't come to you for advice. They come to you to get things sorted out in their own mind. You are a catalyst. You help the client initiate a change. This is such a fundamental point of coaching that you need to grasp it. Below we reiterate it.

DON'T OFFER SOLUTIONS

Don't offer advice.

Don't tell the client what they should do.

Don't recommend solutions.

The client doesn't want to know your views. People rarely listen to advice. Even if they ask, 'What should I do?' it doesn't mean they want an answer. They may just be making polite conversation.

Remember that the client's position is different from yours. They may have a different background, different income, different level of family support, and a different set of values.

WHEN THE CLIENT ASKS FOR ADVICE

The client may ask for advice. They may say, 'What would you do?' It is very easy to start giving advice, but it is not very effective. The best reply is to say, 'What do **you** think **you** should do?'

If you start recommending solutions which the client is unwilling to accept, they will inwardly dismiss you as someone who doesn't understand. You cannot change a client's mind. Only the client can come to a conclusion.

At certain points during this course, we suggest practical solutions that the client may not know about, for example techniques for helping an alcoholic.

You may offer these solutions if they seem appropriate. If the client appears not to hear, don't continue to repeat it. The client has heard what you said, but like all clients, they simply don't want advice.

Read this article: 9 reasons life coaching can change your life

<https://peopledevelopmentmagazine.com/2019/09/18/life-coaching/>



THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF COACHING

There are three main types of coaching:

- Telephone/video coaching
- Face to face coaching
- Email coaching

TELEPHONE/VIDEO CALL COACHING

Telephone or video call coaching does away with the wasted time spent travelling or waiting for a client to arrive.

Neither you nor your client have to dress up or have the house tidy for your coaching. And you don't have to fight traffic. But most importantly, it lets you coach people in distant places who would otherwise never be able to receive coaching from you.

When people think of coaching, they assume that it involves face-to-face discussions in the office. This is perhaps because therapy is usually conducted in this way. But this isn't the case for coaching. Coaching can be conducted by remote access.

And during the phone conversation, most clients feel that you are there with them. For although the phone conversation is business-like and methodical (on your part), it is also charged with emotion. That's because you're discussing with the client things that they don't reveal to anyone else.

EXERCISE 1.2

Collect a selection of problem pages. Read the problem, but not the answer. Decide what you would say to the reader.

Then read what the Agony Aunt says. Were your answers different?

Remember that Agony Aunts dispense no-nonsense advice. This isn't what a real-life coach does.

TYPICAL TELEPHONE COACHING FORMATS

Typically, telephone or video call coaching involves two, three or four calls a month. A three call session could cost £125 - £250.

The calls are usually 30-45 minutes in length. You need to tell your client how long they will get, and publicise the information in your brochure or on your website.

Some coaches offer a range of options, from two to four calls a month. The cost of two calls a month is likely to be around £100 a month. If you choose three calls a month, you can put the meetings at weekly intervals, on for example the 3rd, 10th and 17th. This leaves the client with a week free (the 24th) before starting again at the 3rd.

You can also offer unlimited telephone/video call coaching, for perhaps £325 a month.

You should also allow the client to phone you when necessary for extra sessions.

GROUP COACHING

Group coaching is a variant of coaching, where you coach several people on the phone/video call at once. The people are likely to share a similar concern, or else they will be friends. Group coaching can involve clients paying around £100 a month for four sessions and may include unlimited emails.

We discuss how to price and design your services in later modules.

Some coaches allow unlimited emails during the coaching period. This is a good idea when you are getting started. But when you get busy, amend your terms for new clients, so that they can pay £65 for a month's unlimited emails.

EXERCISE 1.3

Decide whether you will offer telephone/video call coaching. Decide what kind of prices you will charge. Do some research on the internet.

FACE TO FACE COACHING

In-person sessions are suitable only for people who live in your area. This means your market is limited.

Face-to-face coaching has many advantages. You get to meet the client in person, and so you can see their body language. You can hear the gaps between words, and because you have more clues, you can more readily understand what the client is really trying to say.

In the next module, we consider whether you should meet in the client's home or your own, or in some other place such as an office. Each of these has its merits.

Once a client has had a program of four face-to-face coaching sessions, they may decide if prompted by you, to opt for a further programme of tele/video-coaching.

This lets them unburden themselves, and tell you their progress. It also lets you gently encourage them to stick to their resolutions, and maintain progress towards their goals.

Therefore tele-coaching is important for the client. If you cut them adrift after a program of face-to-face coaching, it is easy for them to slip back into their old ways. Tele-coaching helps to keep them moving their life forwards.

The price, frequency and duration on in-person coaching is the same as for telephone coaching (see 'Typical tele-coaching formats', above).

EXERCISE 1.4

Decide whether you will offer face to face coaching. Decide what kind of prices you will charge. Do some research on the internet first.

EMAIL COACHING

Like the telephone, email allows coaches to operate far beyond their town or city. It also allows you to continue coaching people after they have left your locality, or when they are at college or on a business trip.

Email coaching is often used as an extension of telephone coaching. For example, you might let a client send you unlimited emails (each one of which you need to reply to) for £65 a month. You undertake to reply within two days (or you may choose a different period).

Email works well for clients who feel happiest behind a keyboard. They can also involve you sending them weekly lessons on how to achieve their goals.

Sometimes coaches offer stand-alone email coaching. This involves an unlimited number of emails passing between the client and coach each week. At the end of the week, the coach may summarise what has been discussed.

You can also set up a more structured system. You get information from the client about their problems and concerns, and regularly email them about their progress in these areas. The emails will ask questions and seek responses, and will thus help the client to achieve change.

EXERCISE 1.5

Decide whether you will offer email coaching. Decide what kind of prices you will charge. Do some research on the internet.

UNDERSTAND YOURSELF

Coaches need to understand their own feelings. Every coach is human, and unwittingly carries their own prejudices or preconceptions towards others.

As a coach, you will encounter clients with extreme views. Your job is not to have a political or economic argument with them, but to find out what their problem is. Sometimes clients' problems cause them to hold extreme views.

Read this article: Life coaches on Instagram break the first rule of therapy – That's why it works.

<https://qz.com/quartz/1167237/whats-the-difference-between-a-life-coach-and-a-therapist/>



NOW WATCH THIS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdclzQfoE9k>



Coaching Niches – The 5 most profitable coaching niches

REMINDER

Have you completed the following exercises?

- ☐ Exercise 1.1
- ☐ Exercise 1.2
- ☐ Exercise 1.3
- ☐ Exercise 1.4
- ☐ Exercise 1.5

Tick the boxes above when you have completed them. When you have completed them you can move on to the next module.

SUMMARY

1. You have learnt what coaching involves.
2. You have gained some background knowledge about the history of coaching.
3. You have considered the reasons why society needs life coaches.
4. You understand the difference between coaching and therapy.
5. You realise that coaches don't provide answers.
6. You are aware of the different types of coaching.
7. You now have a better understanding of yourself.

**THERE IS NO TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT FOR MODULE 1.
PLEASE MOVE ON TO MODULE 2.**