



# Coaching - Frequently Asked Questions

## Table of Contents

<b>What is coaching?</b> .....	2
<b>What’s the difference between coaching, mentoring, sponsorship, and other developmental relationships?</b> .....	2
<b>What are the roles in coaching?</b> .....	3
Coachee.....	3
Coach.....	3
<b>What will the coaching process look like?</b> .....	4
Process .....	4
Breakdown of Sessions.....	4
<b>What is the time commitment to participate in coaching?</b> .....	4
Number of Coaching Sessions .....	4
Cadence of Coaching Sessions .....	4
Length of Individual Coaching Sessions .....	4
<b>What work is required between coaching sessions?</b> .....	5
Activities/Actions .....	5
Coaching Session Preparation .....	5
<b>What are the requirements to participating in coaching?</b> .....	6
Express Interest .....	6
Feedback/Assessment Information .....	6

## What is coaching?

Coaching is a powerful, future-oriented, solution-focused practice. As defined by the International Coaching Federation, coaching is, "... partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential." It involves the commitment and partnership between an individual that is looking for positive performance and behavioral change in themselves (the coachee) and the individual that will support them through that journey (the coach). The coach guides the coachee through a structured process to:

- Create goals
- Design activities/actions to support achievement of goals
- Carry out activities/actions to move towards goals
- Achieve goals

While the coach serves as a thought and accountability partner, through powerful questioning and active and empathetic listening, the coachee is responsible for putting in the hard work and effort to realize their goals.

**Note:** Confidentiality in the coaching process is imperative. All conversations that occur between the coachee and their coach are considered confidential.

## What's the difference between coaching, mentoring, sponsorship, and other developmental relationships?

Developmental relationships are those that allow an individual to prosper and grow with the support of others. They allow and empower the individual to gain new insights, establish and achieve goals, fulfill achievements, cultivate skills and abilities, and/or realize career development and advancement. While there can sometimes be overlap between different developmental relationships, they each use different methodologies and processes and serve differing purposes to meet the needs of the individual.

In the coaching relationship, the coach does not serve as an advisor, subject matter expert, authority figure, or "superior" to the coachee as with some of the roles in a developmental relationship like mentoring, sponsorship, consultation, and performance management. Coaching also focuses on future success, rather than focusing on the past like a therapeutic relationship. The information below provides a brief synopsis of various developmental relationships and their functions/methods.





## What are the roles in coaching?

### Coachee

An individual that is seeking to accomplish one or more of the following:

- Increase Performance
- Generate Positive Behavior Change
- Develop Skills
- Build on Strengths
- Overcome Obstacles
- Work through Blind Spots

The coachee must enter into the coaching engagement with a growth mindset and be willing to be pushed outside their typical comfort zone by their coach. They will take the actions necessary to identify and move towards their desired goal(s), with the support of their coach, and not relinquish the responsibility for creating or maintaining those goals to their coach. The coachee should not regularly seek advice, guidance, direction, or opinions from the coach on how to move forward with their goal(s) and associated actions to achieve them, as they are the expert in their own situation/journey. There may be times when the coach feels that offering such recommendations is warranted, but the coachee is free to accept or decline what is offered; the coach should first ask the coachee permission to offer said advice.

### Coach

An individual that relates to the coachee as a partner; they do not approach the relationship serving as an:

- Expert
- Authority
- Healer

They instead support the coachee through:

- Powerful Questioning
- Active and Empathetic Listening
- Partnering for Accountability

The coach need not possess any experience similar or related to the coachee, as they are there to be curious and promote exploration of possibilities as determined by the coachee. Their responsibility is not to serve as an advisor or specialist in a particular career field, industry, educational background, position/role, etc. The coach's function is to push the coachee beyond their typical comfort zone for growth and development; they do not take responsibility for the coachee's desired goal(s) or associated actions to achieve them. The coach will refrain as much as possible in providing advice, guidance, direction, or opinions, but may find specific circumstances in which it is warranted. Should this be the case, the coach will first ask the coachee for permission to offer said advice.



## What will the coaching process look like?

### Process

The coach will leverage a coaching model with their coachee; the coach's role is in managing the process, while the coachee is responsible for the creation of and carrying out of their designed plan. Each coaching session will follow a fairly standard flow using the following steps:

- Establish (or revisit) overall goal(s) for the coaching process/experience
- Establish/prioritize smaller, incremental goals and/or areas of focus for each coaching session
- Generate options for achieving the goal(s)
- Identify strengths that support achievement of selected options
- Identify obstacles to overcome in achieving selected options
- Select activities/actions to be taken to carry out selected options
- Create an action plan/timeline to carry out selection options

### Breakdown of Sessions

- **First Session - Designed Alliance**
  - Relationship building and initial goal development
- **Working Sessions**
  - Report out and work through activities/actions for goal achievement; address any goal changes/adjustments
- **Final Session - Closeout**
  - Review overall progress towards goal, establish next steps, close coaching engagement/relationship

## What is the time commitment to participate in coaching?

### Number of Coaching Sessions

Based on the focus areas and goals established by the coachee, the coach and coachee will determine the appropriate number of coaching sessions. Generally up to six coaching sessions would be expected for a coachee to work towards the accomplishment of their goal(s), but more or fewer sessions may be deemed necessary as decided in the partnership.

### Cadence of Coaching Sessions

Based on the focus areas and goals established by the coachee, the coach and coachee will determine how often the coaching sessions occur. The coachee will need time between coaching sessions to carry out their activities/actions to achieve their goals, so generally two weeks between sessions provides the time needed to accomplish this, but more or fewer weeks may be deemed necessary as decided in the partnership.

### Length of Individual Coaching Sessions

Based on the focus areas and goals established by the coachee, the coach and coachee will determine the length of individual coaching sessions. Generally 30 minute to one hour sessions provide the time needed to work through the coaching process, but more or less time may be deemed necessary as decided in the partnership.

## What work is required between coaching sessions?

### Activities/Actions

During each coaching session the coachee, with support from their coach, will:

- Establish (or revisit) overall goal(s) for the coaching process/experience
- Establish/prioritize smaller, incremental goals and/or areas of focus for each coaching session
- Generate options for achieving the goal(s)
- Select activities/actions to be taken to carry out selected options
- Create an action plan/timeline to carry out selection options

During the time between coaching sessions the coachee will carry out their plan and complete their activities/actions to move forward in the achievement of their goals.

### Coaching Session Preparation

In preparation for each coaching session following the Designed Alliance, the coachee should complete the following activities:

- Complete all agreed upon activities/actions generated from their action plan during previous coaching session
- Reflect upon what occurred since the last coaching session; this can include but is not limited to:
  - What progress was made toward activities/actions?
  - What progress was made toward overall goal?
  - What was accomplished?
  - What wasn't able to be accomplished?
  - What went well?
  - What was challenging?
  - What was successful?
  - What hindered success?
  - What lessons were learned?

Between the coach and coachee, a determination will be made if this reflection information should be formally documented. If the coachee does write down their reflection, then it can also be agreed upon if this information will be shared with the coach prior to the next coaching session. This information can help the coach know what to expect and how to prepare for the next session, and for the coachee to be prepared to share their experiences. It can also form the "agenda" for the next session.



## What are the requirements to participating in coaching?

### Express Interest

All interested faculty and staff wanting to participate in coaching must submit their interest through the online [Interest Form](#). Once received, the form will be reviewed by Workplace Learning & Professional Development and the individual will be contacted by a member of the team to gain more insight into their professional development needs.

Once it's determined that coaching is the best resource to meet an individual's needs, the coachee will be given access to a repository of coaches to choose from. Then a coaching agreement is signed between the selected coach and coachee, and both will work together to determine the date, time, and meeting mode (i.e. in-person or virtual) of their initial coaching session, and ultimately all subsequent session logistics.

### Feedback/Assessment Information

Though not required, the coachee may find that informal and/or formal feedback received about their behavior/performance may provide them with valuable information about themselves that can serve as a jumping off point for work with their coach. Feedback can be uncovered using the following practices/tools (this is not intended to be an all-inclusive list):

- Feedback from an individual's manager, peer(s), and/or direct report(s)
- Past performance review ratings/feedback
- Self-assessment tool results (e.g. [GT's Values-Based Assessment Tool](#))
- 360 Evaluation/Inventory results
- Assessment results
  - (e.g. Myers Briggs Type Indicator [MBTI], DiSC, Keirsey Temperament Sorter [KTS], Emotional Intelligence, Clifton's Strengths Finders, Hogan, etc.)
- Class/Training participation (e.g. in-person, virtual, online, etc.)