

Organizations invest in Executive Coaching to help leaders become even more valuable to their company. Executive Coaches help leaders develop key insights into their own tendencies, behaviors, and interactions that either contribute to success, or limit it in some way. Coaches also help to identify and / or create clarity between the leader and key stakeholders relative to the behavioral changes critical to fueling additional success. Using proven methodologies, coaches provide developmental, transition, and acceleration strategies, deliver feedback, and support leaders via meaningful conversations every 2 - 3 weeks during the duration of the coaching.

IF your organization has chosen to invest in you, the following areas are important considerations and actions to help you Maximize the Value of YOUR Executive Coaching.

Selecting a Partner

Often the organization has chosen or narrowed a field to 1 or 2 coaching firms. If you have the opportunity, ask who the firm's top clients are and how long they've provided coaching to them. Seek information on the coaching process they plan to leverage, and understand who they recommend involving from your organization. Ask about the qualifications and experiences of their coaches, and how the firm ensures a data-driven, time-bound, and results-focused process.

Every coaching engagement should be informed by valuable and objective data. There should be a clear timeline to achieve the agreed-upon outcomes. Lastly, the firm should provide an assurance of results.

Choosing the Right Coach

Look for a coach who you feel comfortable talking with, yet who will challenge you to grow. Pick someone who has experience in the change you desire (though they don't need to be an expert). Think beyond your city. Though there is great value in meeting face-to-face when you can, coaching by phone or video has proven highly effective. Build a strong bond with your coach to serve as an ally in your development.

Conduct a chemistry interview with one or multiple coaches. Take time to prepare for the interview(s) as you'll work closely with your coach as your ally for several months.

Prepare yourself by considering:

- What challenges am I facing now, immediate and longer-term?
- What might I change that will positively impact my organization?
- What are my stakeholders saying that I need to hear?
- What attitudes or biases might be limiting my success?
- What characteristics in a coach are most important to me?

Ask your potential coach:

- In what industries and at what levels have you coached?
- How would you describe your coaching style?
- How would you support me in my development?
- What mistakes have you made when coaching others?
- What's your greatest learning in coaching leaders?

Following the interviews, consider whether each coach is right for your development. Keep in mind that you need a coach who will listen, support, and challenge you – to ultimately achieve new levels of personal and business success.

Maximizing Results

Be open to feedback.

Coaching can touch on some sensitive topics. It will reveal opportunities for your improvement if you are open to feedback. Seek frequent feedback from your coach and manager; they have your best interests at heart.

Stay focused.

It takes time and a lot of mental energy to think and act outside your comfort zone. Often, you'll be challenged to proceed forward even when faced with discomfort. Some people will want to give up on their goal and quit, as status quo is a comfortable state, and enticing when new behaviors are not working perfectly, yet. Clients who remain focused and committed even when it is uncomfortable see results.

Be prepared to act, now.

Expect that you will take immediate action on whatever you discuss in your coaching conversation. Coaching is a type of action-reflection cycle. Insights without action are just nice ideas. Real results require you to do something differently and learn from your actions.