

**QUESTIONS  
YOU SHOULD  
ASK  
BEFORE  
CHOOSING  
A BUSINESS  
COACH**

**actionCOACH<sup>®</sup>**  
BUSINESS COACHING  
OAKHAM & KETTERING

# Choosing a Business Coach

It's a big decision and one that most people don't have to make very often. How do I choose my business coach? On LinkedIn Business Coach is a very misused category, having more than 200,000 people listing it as one of their skills! So how do you decide who is suitable for you?

## What do I want to achieve from coaching?

The first question to ask yourself is "what do I want to achieve from coaching?" A business coach will work with the business owner and possibly their senior team to get the business running as they know it should, helping them lead their business and structure it so it will achieve its full potential.

Alternatively, a Consultant comes in and does the work for you! Many businesses do this; bring in an outside person who leads a team of the company's employees and outside staff to achieve an objective. The problem is that the original management team don't learn the skills to do it themselves.

Finally, a Mentor is typically someone who has done a similar role for another company, and then works with the business owner to give them the benefit of their experience to reach the objective as efficiently as possible.

## A Sports Coach and Business Coach are very similar

Most business owners know their business, their trade and their industry. What they need is to develop themselves to achieve the next level. This is what a Coach helps with!

Think of Business Coaching like Sports Coaching. To use Rugby as an example; Luke Cowan-Dickie, Mako Vunipola and Kyle Sinckler are among the top rugby players in England; they know how to play topflight rugby and are very motivated. Eddie Jones did not go out and recruit people who needed to learn to play rugby, their ability is superb already! Eddie Jones hired Matt Proudfoot as Forwards Coach to make them even better, fixing the little differences that make all the difference!

A Business Coach is there to make you better than you would be on your own, taking you to the next level. Otherwise, you would read a book (which we quite regularly advise people to do as well) or go to a training class.

## Decide what you want to achieve

Ask yourself “What do I want to achieve from my business?” and will a coach help me get there faster? People engage a Business Coach at various stages in their business evolution.

- If you are you a start-up you will probably need more practical help around the business basics, such as getting financial and delivery control in place and help with marketing and sales.
- For a more established business, you may have reached a plateau where you are not sure what you need to do next, in which case coaching will be more about working with you to re-define the direction of the business. Where are your next growth opportunities, reviewing the systems and processes to make you more efficient and investigating how to get the most out of your team though leadership and development.
- Alternatively, you may be ready to leave the business. Either looking to retire and sell up or set it up to provide you with a passive income during retirement. In which case, coaching would be more focussed on working out how you structure the business to function without you and get the best sale price. The reality is that coaching at any level will require looking at all areas of your business, but the emphasis will vary.

## Could I work with this person?

When selecting a potential Business Coach (who will probably be someone you have known for a while) consider whether you like them as a person, after all you will have to talk to them regularly, so you need to get on with each other. Also, do you trust them? Do they have case studies and testimonials from the people they are already working with that you can read?

Your coach is there to help you get results, so if the coach is on an hourly rate my advice is to steer clear. Many of the 200,000 plus Business Coaches on LinkedIn also list other skills such as Business Consultant, Project Manager, Finance Director making me think they will simply take whatever work they can get at the time and are not interested in building a long-term relationship with you and your business.

A good question to ask a Business Coach is who coaches them? If they don't believe in coaching enough to invest in it for themselves, this should raise a red flag in your head.

## What else will I get from a coaching relationship?

Look at what else you will get from the coaching relationship. To develop as a business owner you may need to learn a few new skills, even if you've run your business for numerous years.

At ActionCOACH we encourage as much learning as possible outside of coaching. We run webinars (which our clients can attend for free) with world renowned experts and best-selling authors such as Jeffrey Gitomer, Andy Bounds and Andrea Waltz.

In addition, we regularly send our clients books to read on particular topics relevant to areas we are working on. This helps to further embed aspects of our coaching by providing different viewpoints.

Finally, check your coach will be available between coaching sessions if required to discuss elements of the business as you work on them, such as critical staff hires or buying another business. A fantastic coach will be flexible and willing to go the extra mile to support you.

## You know your business

As a business owner you best understand your company, industry, and customers. Our job as a Business Coach is to get you to question what you are doing and look for areas you could do better. Inevitably, this will involve a bit of mentoring to provide you with tools and techniques that you have not used before. You will have someone you can trust to discuss your business ideas with, and we will walk the walk with you as you implement them. Primarily we are the person you need to hold you accountable, so that we're not just discussing improvements and growth, they actually happen.

A Business Coach works with you to identify where your business could do with change or development. These can be small or large steps depending on how quickly you want to go, then we work together on those areas. This is not a random conversation, but a proven system designed to address every area of your business, which ActionCOACH call the 6-Steps.

Hopefully this clarifies not only how to choose a Business Coach, but also how they can help you achieve more. If you'd like to discuss any of the above further, please feel free to get in touch.

# Get Your Complimentary Coaching Session

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