

CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO HIRING A PERSONAL OR BUSINESS COACH

by
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Master Certified, Mentor & Executive Coach
And Mid-Life Strategist

Read this guide (i.e. click on each link below) and you'll discover:

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Dear Consumer,

Choosing a personal or business coach isn't easy. I know, because I've helped to train thousands of coaches since 1996.

Why? Because coaching is a self-regulated industry, and there's a ton of confusing claims, and poor information.



From super low prices to high-pressure sales – to unqualified and untrained coaches with near-worthless methods – how do you ever find a qualified, competent, professional coach?

You start by reading this Consumer Guide. In this fact-filled report, you'll discover how to avoid four coaching rip-offs, eight mistakes to avoid when choosing a coach, and four steps to finding the right coach for you!

I wrote this guide to help you better understand coaching. Now, with this information, you can make an informed, intelligent decision.

And if you have any questions about coaching, you're invited to contact me at (909) 794-2136 between 8 AM and 5 PM Pacific time (Monday thru Friday). I've dedicated my business to educating consumers like you. I'm happy to help you in every way.

Cordially,

Dr. Jim Vuocolo, President
Life Coach Consulting
Master Certified Coach, ICF
Certified Executive Coach, WABC
Certified Life Strategist



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What Is Coaching & How Does It Work?

Professional Coaching is a professional partnership between a qualified coach and an individual or team that supports the achievement of extraordinary results, based on goals set by the individual or team. Through the process of coaching, individuals focus on the skills and actions needed to successfully produce their personally relevant results.

The individual or team chooses the focus of conversation, while the coach listens and contributes observations and questions as well as concepts and principles which can assist in generating possibilities and identifying actions. Through the coaching process the clarity that is needed to support the most effective actions is achieved. Coaching accelerates the individual's or team's progress by providing greater focus and awareness of possibilities leading to more effective choices. Coaching concentrates on where individuals are now and what they are willing to do to get where they want to be in the future. ICF member coaches recognize that results are a matter of the individual's or team's intentions, choices and actions, supported by the coach's efforts and application of coaching skills, approaches and methods.

What are the benefits of coaching?

Individuals who engage in a coaching relationship can expect to experience fresh perspectives on personal challenges and opportunities, enhanced thinking and decision-making skills, enhanced interpersonal effectiveness, and increased confidence in carrying out their chosen work and life roles. Consistent with a commitment to enhancing their personal effectiveness, they can also expect to see appreciable results in the areas of productivity, personal satisfaction with life and work, and the achievement of personally relevant goals.

How can you determine if coaching is right for you?

To determine if you could benefit from coaching, start by summarizing what you would expect to accomplish in coaching. When someone has a fairly clear idea of the desired outcome, a coaching partnership can be a useful tool for developing a strategy for how to achieve that outcome with greater ease.

Since coaching is a partnership, also ask yourself if you find it valuable to collaborate, to have another viewpoint and to be asked to consider new perspectives. Also, ask yourself if you are ready to devote the time and the energy to making real changes in your work or life. If the answer to these questions is yes, then coaching may be a beneficial way for you to grow and develop.



What are some typical reasons to work with a coach?

There are many reasons that an individual or team might choose to work with a coach, including but not limited to the following:

- There is something at stake (a challenge, stretch goal or opportunity), and it is urgent, compelling or exciting or all of the above
- There is a gap in knowledge, skills, confidence, or resources
- A big stretch is being asked or required, and it is time sensitive
- There is a desire to accelerate results
- There is a need for a course correction in work or life due to a setback
- An individual has a style of relating that is ineffective or is not supporting the achievement of one's personally relevant goals
- There is a lack of clarity, and there are choices to be made
- The individual is extremely successful, and success has started to become problematic
- Work and life are out of balance, and this is creating unwanted consequences
- One has not identified his or her core strengths and how best to leverage them
- The individual desires work and life to be simpler, less complicated
- There is a need and a desire to better organized and more self-managing

What has caused the tremendous growth in the coaching industry?

Coaching has grown significantly for many reasons. Generally the world has changed a lot, and coaching is a useful tool to deal with many of those changes. For example, coaching is a great tool for today's challenging job market. There is more job transition, more self-employment and small business. Some of the real life factors include:

- Rapid changes in the external business environment
- Downsizing, restructuring, mergers and other organizational changes have radically altered what has been termed the "traditional employment contract"—companies can no longer achieve results using traditional management approaches
- There is a growing shortage of talented employees in certain industries—to attract and retain top talent, companies must commit to investing in individuals' development



- There is a widening disparity between what managers were trained to do and what their jobs now require them to do in order to meet increasing demands for competitive results
- There is unrest on the part of many employees and leaders in many companies—people are wrestling with fears around job insecurity and increased workplace pressures to perform at higher levels than ever before.
- Companies must develop inclusive, collaborative work environments, in order to achieve strategic business goals, and to maintain high levels of customer satisfaction

In addition, individuals who have experienced the excellent results of coaching are talking to more people about coaching. In short, coaching helps people focus on what matters most to them in life: business and personal. People today are more open to the idea of being in charge of their own lives. Coaching helps people do just that; so the industry continues to grow.

How is coaching delivered? What does the process look like?

The Coaching Process—Coaching typically begins with a personal interview (either face-to-face or by teleconference call) to assess the individual's current opportunities and challenges, define the scope of the relationship, identify priorities for action, and establish specific desired outcomes. Subsequent coaching sessions may be conducted in person or over the telephone, with each session lasting a previously established length of time. Between scheduled coaching sessions, the individual may be asked to complete specific actions that support the achievement of one's personally prioritized goals. The coach may provide additional resources in the form of relevant articles, checklists, assessments, or models, to support the individual's thinking and actions. The duration of the coaching relationship varies depending on the individual's personal needs and preferences.

Assessments—A variety of assessments are available to support the coaching process, depending upon the needs and circumstances of the individual. Assessments provide objective information which can enhance the individual's self-awareness as well as awareness of others and their circumstances, provide a benchmark for creating coaching goals and actionable strategies, and offer a method for evaluating progress.

Concepts, models and principles—A variety of concepts, models and principles drawn from the behavioral sciences, management



literature, spiritual traditions and/or the arts and humanities, may be incorporated into the coaching conversation in order to increase the individual's self-awareness and awareness of others, foster shifts in perspective, promote fresh insights, provide new frameworks for looking at opportunities and challenges, and energize and inspire the individual's forward actions.

Appreciative approach—Coaching incorporates an appreciative approach. The appreciative approach is grounded in what's right, what's working, what's wanted, and what's needed to get there. Using an appreciative approach, the coach models constructive communication skills and methods the individual or team can utilize to enhance personal communication effectiveness. The appreciative approach incorporates discovery-based inquiry, proactive (as opposed to reactive) ways of managing personal opportunities and challenges, constructive framing of observations and feedback in order to elicit the most positive responses from others, and envisioning success as contrasted with focusing on problems. The appreciative approach is simple to understand and employ, but its effects in harnessing possibility thinking and goal-oriented action can be profound.

How long does a coach work with an individual?

The length of a coaching partnership varies depending on the individual's or team's needs and preferences. For certain types of focused coaching, 3 to 6 months of working with a coach may work. For other types of coaching, people may find it beneficial to work with a coach for a longer period. Factors that may impact the length of time include: the types of goals, the ways individuals or teams like to work, the frequency of coaching meetings, and financial resources available to support coaching.

How do you ensure a compatible partnership?

Overall, be prepared to design the coaching partnership with the coach. For example, think of a strong partnership that you currently have in your work or life. Look at how you built that relationship and what is important to you about partnership. You will want to build those same things into a coaching relationship. Here are a few other tips:

- Have a personal interview with one or more coaches to determine "what feels right" in terms of the chemistry. Coaches are accustomed to being interviewed, and there is generally no charge for an introductory conversation of this type



- Look for stylistic similarities and differences between the coach and you and how these might support your growth as an individual or the growth of your team
- Discuss your goals for coaching within the context of the coach's specialty or the coach's preferred way of working with a individual or team
- Talk with the coach about what to do if you ever feel things are not going well; make some agreements up front on how to handle questions or problems
- Remember that coaching is a partnership, so be assertive about talking with the coach about anything that is of concern at any time

Within the partnership, what does the coach do?

The role of the coach is to provide objective assessment and observations that foster the individual's or team members' enhanced self-awareness and awareness of others, practice astute listening in order to garner a full understanding of the individual's or team's circumstances, be a sounding board in support of possibility thinking and thoughtful planning and decision making, champion opportunities and potential, encourage stretch and challenge commensurate with personal strengths and aspirations, foster the shifts in thinking that reveal fresh perspectives, challenge blind spots in order to illuminate new possibilities, and support the creation of alternative scenarios. Finally, the coach maintains professional boundaries in the coaching relationship, including confidentiality, and adheres to the coaching profession's code of ethics.

The role of the individual or team is to create the coaching agenda based on personally meaningful coaching goals, utilize assessment and observations to enhance self-awareness and awareness of others, envision personal and/or organizational success, assume full responsibility for personal decisions and actions, utilize the coaching process to promote possibility thinking and fresh perspectives, take courageous action in alignment with personal goals and aspirations, engage big picture thinking and problem solving skills, and utilize the tools, concepts, models and principles provided by the coach to engage effective forward actions.

What does coaching ask of an individual?

To be successful, coaching asks certain things of the individual, all of which begin with intention....

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- **Focus**—on one’s self, the tough questions, the hard truths--and one’s success
- **Observation**—the behaviors and communications of others
- **Listening**—to one’s intuition, assumptions, judgments, and to the way one sounds when one speaks
- **Self discipline**—to challenge existing attitudes, beliefs and behaviors and to develop new ones which serve one’s goals in a superior way
- **Style**—leveraging personal strengths and overcoming limitations in order to develop a winning style
- **Decisive actions**—however uncomfortable, and in spite of personal insecurities, in order to reach for the extraordinary
- **Compassion**—for one’s self as he or she experiments with new behaviors, experiences setbacks—and for others as they do the same
- **Humor**—committing to not take one’s self so seriously, using humor to lighten and brighten any situation
- **Personal control**—maintaining composure in the face of disappointment and unmet expectations, avoiding emotional reactivity
- **Courage**—to reach for more than before, to shift out of being fear based in to being in abundance as a core strategy for success, to engage in continual self examination, to overcome internal and external obstacles

How can the success of the coaching process be measured?

Measurement may be thought of in two distinct ways. First, there are the **external indicators** of performance: measures which can be seen and measured in the individual’s or team’s environment. Second, there are **internal indicators** of success: measures which are inherent within the individual or team members being coached and can be measured by the individual or team being coached with the support of the coach. Ideally, both external and internal metrics are incorporated.

Examples of external measures include achievement of coaching goals established at the outset of the coaching relationship, increased income/revenue, obtaining a promotion, performance feedback which is obtained from a sample of the individual’s constituents (e.g., direct reports, colleagues, customers, boss, the manager him/herself), personal and/or business performance data (e.g., productivity, efficiency measures). The external measures selected should ideally be things the individual is already measuring and are things the individual has some ability to directly influence.



Examples of internal measures include self-scoring/self-validating assessments that can be administered initially and at regular intervals in the coaching process, changes in the individual's self-awareness and awareness of others, shifts in thinking which inform more effective actions, and shifts in one's emotional state which inspire confidence.

What are the factors that should be considered when looking at the financial investment in coaching?

Working with a coach requires both a personal commitment of time and energy as well as a financial commitment. Fees charged vary by specialty and by the level of experience of the coach. Individuals should consider both the desired benefits as well as the anticipated length of time to be spent in coaching. Since the coaching relationship is predicated on clear communication, any financial concerns or questions should be voiced in initial conversations before the agreement is made. The ICF Coach Referral Service allows you to search for a coach based on a number of qualifications including fee range.

How is coaching distinct from other service professions?

Professional coaching is a distinct service which focuses on an individual's life as it relates to goal setting, outcome creation and personal change management. In an effort to understand what a coach is, it can be helpful to distinguish coaching from other professions that provide personal or organizational support.

- **Therapy.** Coaching can be distinguished from therapy in a number of ways. First, coaching is a profession that supports personal and professional growth and development based on individual-initiated change in pursuit of specific actionable outcomes. These outcomes are linked to personal or professional success. Coaching is forward moving and future focused. Therapy, on the other hand, deals with healing pain, dysfunction and conflict within an individual or a relationship between two or more individuals. The focus is often on resolving difficulties arising from the past which hamper an individual's emotional functioning in the present, improving overall psychological functioning, and dealing with present life and work circumstances in more emotionally healthy ways. Therapy outcomes often include improved emotional/feeling states. While positive feelings/emotions may be a natural outcome of coaching, the primary focus is on creating actionable strategies for achieving specific goals in one's work or personal life. The



- emphasis in a coaching relationship is on action, accountability and follow through.
- **Consulting.** Consultants may be retained by individuals or organizations for the purpose of accessing specialized expertise. While consulting approaches vary widely, there is often an assumption that the consultant diagnoses problems and prescribes and sometimes implements solutions. In general, the assumption with coaching is that individuals or teams are capable of generating their own solutions, with the coach supplying supportive, discovery-based approaches and frameworks.
 - **Mentoring.** Mentoring, which can be thought of as guiding from one's own experience or sharing of experience in a specific area of industry or career development, is sometimes confused with coaching. Although some coaches provide mentoring as part of their coaching, such as in mentor coaching new coaches, coaches are not typically mentors to those they coach.
 - **Training.** Training programs are based on the acquisition of certain learning objectives as set out by the trainer or instructor. Though objectives are clarified in the coaching process, they are set by the individual or team being coached with guidance provided by the coach. Training also assumes a linear learning path which coincides with an established curriculum. Coaching is less linear without a set curriculum plan.
 - **Athletic Development.** Though sports metaphors are often used, professional coaching is different from the traditional sports coach. The athletic coach is often seen as an expert who guides and directs the behavior of individuals or teams based on his or her greater experience and knowledge. Professional coaches possess these qualities, but it is the experience and knowledge of the individual or team that determines the direction. Additionally, professional coaching, unlike athletic development, does not focus on behaviors that are being executed poorly or incorrectly. Instead, the focus is on identifying opportunity for development based on individual strengths and capabilities. (Source: The International Coach Federation <www.coachfederation.org>)



How To Avoid 4 Coaching Rip-Offs!

RIP-OFF #1: UNBELIEVABLY LOW PRICE

At the time of this writing, coaches are charging an average of \$150.00 per hour in the USA. Among personal coaches, the average is \$132.00 per hour with a range of between \$25.00 and \$400.00 – And among business coaches, the average is \$213.00 per hour, with a range of \$50.00 to \$750.00 per hour. Some 52% of coaches charge via a monthly retainer; 20% by the hour; and another 13% by the project. In business coaching, coaches often dialogue with a prospective client, and determine one or two options and pricing for the entire project. (Source: Getting Started in Personal and Executive Coaching by Stephen G. Fairley & Chris E. Stout; John Wiley & Sons, 2004, pp. 286-287).

RIP-OFF #2: GUARANTEED RESULTS

Like any service, Coaching works best when the client is motivated and willing to work with the coach for a desired or negotiated result. If any coach – business or personal – offers “guaranteed results” before knowing you and/or your personnel well enough to discern your actual agenda and level(s) of motivation, don’t believe or buy it!

RIP-OFF #3: UNSUPPORTED CLAIMS

Trained coaches who adhere to the ethical guidelines of a professional organization like the WABC, ICF & IAC are not going to over promise results they cannot deliver. If anything, they will under-promise and over-deliver. They will not divulge the names of their clients, but they may have a number of clients who have provided consent to release their names and/or testimonials.

RIP-OFF #4: OUTDATED INFORMATION & PROGRAMS

Anyone can call themselves a coach – and many do. Coaching is a non-regulated/self-regulated industry. Always inquire where a Coach has received her/his training, and check to see if the school or organization they attended has been accredited by the International Coach Federation (www.coachfederation.org); or if they are a member of another certifying body, such as the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (www.wabccoaches.com) or the International Association of Coaches (www.certifiedcoach.org) Otherwise, you are probably hiring a trainer, educator, or businessperson or consultant in disguise who has not received any coach specific training. Always ask!



6 Costly Misconceptions About Coaching

MISCONCEPTION #1 – You should always wait as long as possible before retaining the services of a coach.

No. Trained coaches can be very effective but they are not miracle workers. If you want a strategic partner who is dedicated to you and/or your company's success, hire as early as possible in order to avoid costly mistakes, make better decisions, and get the results you desire!

MISCONCEPTION #2 – The only reason to hire a personal coach is vanity.

On the contrary – vanity is the last reason for anyone to retain a personal coach. The best reasons to have a coach relate to increasing your quality of life, learning techniques that enable you to work smarter, save time, have more money and energy, practice better self care, and be a more effective and attractive human being from the inside, out!

MISCONCEPTION #3 – One coach is as good as another.

Not really. Often what passes for coaching in businesses is really what coaches would call training or mentoring programs, i.e. a program wherein a new employee is "coached" by a more senior employee who's job it is to "show them the ropes". This is not the same as what a trained coach can and will do. As stated earlier, always inquire whether and where a Coach has received their training, make sure it's a reputable or accredited program, and ask the coach for references or testimonials. Always plan on interviewing at least 3 different coaches before deciding to hire any particular coach. Trained coaches are perfectly okay with this, and will often give you some other names to contact, if asked.

MISCONCEPTION #4 – Coaching is the same as therapy.

Coaching is not the same as traditional therapy. While there are some therapists who are now trained as coaches, the context of the work is distinct. Coaches don't "dig into the past" or "assume a problem" with our clients. We note feelings but do not analyze them. We do not diagnose or devise treatment plans. We leave it up to the client to



obtain any therapy they desire (which we may recommend, if appropriate), while we figure out how to help them move forward and set personal and professional agendas that result in designing the life they really want!

MISCONCEPTION #5 – Coaching is the same as Consulting. Not really. By definition, a consultant is perceived and recognized as being “an expert” in a given field or discipline. Many personal or business coaches are passionate about certain fields, yet most often rely upon their client’s expertise in a given industry or business. The coach is better seen as a resource center than an expert. Trained coaches are merely experts in the processes and skills related to coaching, hence, I have effectively coached Executives, Physicians, Attorneys, IT Managers, Realtors, and others, without having been trained in any of those areas. The late Thomas Leonard, founder of CoachU and Coachville, often said that coaching is an advanced type of consulting and said, “All coaches are consultants, but not all consultants are trained coaches.”

MISCONCEPTION #6 – Coaching is too expensive. I can get coached by a friend and save a lot of money. A best friend is truly wonderful to have. But is your best friend a trained professional whom you can trust to advise you on the most important aspects of your life and/or business? Will they truly hold you accountable to your stated goals, desires and aspirations? Do you really want to place that kind of burden on a good friendship? Instead, have a best friend and a coach! Most people discover that the money they spend on coaching is a bargain in return for designing the life that they want. The best coaches want money to be a detail, not an issue, for their clients.



Which Coaching Methods Are Best?

Each coach has a unique style, personality, and methodology. No two coaches are exactly the same, so it's important to interview two or three coaches in order to find the one that's right for you. Coaching is, above all, a conversation wherein the client grants the coach permission to challenge, support and encourage them to grow. The aim is to further the client's growth, learning and action toward their own goals. In short, coaching is a sophisticated form of teaching that seeks to expand the client's awareness while inviting the client to develop systems and environments that will support that which they want to attain.

Clients typically hire coaches because they want to achieve something they currently lack. The results they want to create usually fall into one of the following areas:

- **Performance Goals** – e.g. improving results as a business owner; meeting daily standards for numbers of contacts with potential clients; clearing clutter, etc. Generally speaking, performance goals can be objectively measured.
- **Learning Goals** – e.g. improving public speaking skills; increasing patience with colleagues, children, and others; learning to practice extreme self care, meditate, etc., and doing so consistently. The measurement standards for these goals may be either external or internal.
- **Fulfillment Goals** – e.g. a balanced life, a satisfying relationship with a spouse, working from the heart, etc. The determination of whether these goals have been achieved rests with the *client's* sense of fulfillment.

Most of the time, a well-trained coach works with clients in all three of the goal areas simultaneously. For example, a client may want to improve her/his small business results (*a performance goal*), as measured by the amount of sales per customer. In the process of identifying what needs to happen to create that result, the client may discover a need to bring more potential customers into contact with them. In order to do so she/he may have to become a better networker (*a learning goal*). And as they begin to attend more



networking meetings and events, she/he discovers they are spending less time at home with their children – and so a new goal is established to spend more quality time with family members because of the desire to be a loving and caring parent (*a fulfillment goal*).

There are some coaches who have only been trained to work with performance goals (think athletic coaching). Others have been trained to promote learning goals (think trainers). Still others work primarily with fulfillment goals (think spiritual directors). A well-trained personal and business coach will be comfortable working in all three of these arenas.

It's important to know also that some creative type of coaching clients are reluctant to set specific goals. The well-trained coach knows how to work with these individuals to develop their vision and intentions for various areas of life and work, together with establishing the systems they want and need for them to develop.

The author of *The Inner Game of Tennis*, Timothy W. Gallway, writes:

"The coach is not the problem solver. In sports, I had to learn how to teach less, so that more could be learned. The same holds true for a coach in business."



8 Mistakes To Avoid When Choosing A Coach

Mistake #1 – Choosing a Coach Based on Low Price

Low price can be a problem in three ways: (1) Low price can be the bait that attracts you – but once you agree to retain the coach, you may be pressured into making more expensive purchases. (2) Low price may only cover a single coaching issue – and an unsuspecting client may end up paying a premium price for additional services. (3) Low price may mean the coach has had little or no training or experience.

Mistake #2 – Choosing a Coach Based on False Promises

There was actually a coach on the East Coast who put an ad in the paper promising to “Cure Depression in 3 Sessions”. Depression is not something that reputable coaches address, as it requires diagnoses and treatment by a qualified mental health professional. More to the point, a trained coach can deal with a client who feels depleted at a given point in time, i.e. a person who is facing circumstances and/or people who may be draining their energy. This is far different from clinical depression.

Mistake #3 – Choosing a Coach Based Upon A Web Site

A quality coach may send you to their web site in order to learn more about their work – but most reputable coaches will want to interact with you personally before deciding to work with you. This may be in the form of a telephone consultation, or face to face. However, no reputable coach will “hire a client” with whom they have had little or no personal interaction.

Mistake #4 – Choosing a Coach After a Single Interaction

Quality and well-trained coaches want you to obtain the best possible “fit” when choosing a coach. For this reason, it is not uncommon for a coach to expect that you will interview 2 or 3 people before deciding with whom you wish to work. Many coaches will also gladly make referrals to other professionally trained coaches whom they believe may be of genuine benefit to you, upon request.



Mistake #5 –

Choosing a Coach Who Will Not Offer A Trial Period

It's unusual for coaches to offer a money-back guarantee. However, in my opinion, it's a mistake to hire any coach who will not offer a trial period. In my business, a client may retain my services for 90 or 180 days at a time; yet my agreement clearly offers an "100% Satisfaction Guarantee" within the first 30 days – no questions asked. Why? Because I do not want any client to stay with me who believes they are not receiving real value for their time and hard-earned money.

Mistake #6 – Choosing a Coach Without Getting Comments From Other Clients

Any coach can say anything regarding their previous performance with clients. Make certain the coach you are considering has references and written testimonials from current and/or past customers who agree to be identified so you can depend upon their work. I always ask my clients for written and audio testimonials, and post these at my web site for all to see or hear. I'm proud of my work – and even more proud of the fact that many of my clients are so willing to assist me in this way!

Mistake #7 – Choosing a Coach Who Has No Training

It seems basic, but there are far too many people calling themselves coaches who have never bothered to be trained by a reputable coach training program. If your coach isn't a close personal friend, you really don't know whether or not she/he is sufficiently knowledgeable or experienced to handle your personal or business agenda. Don't hesitate to ask whether or where the coach has received their training.

Mistake #8 – Choosing a Coach Who is Not Certified

The best coaches either are certified, or are working toward becoming certified by a professional body, such as the International Coach Federation (www.coachfederation.org); the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (www.wabccoaches.com) or the International Association of Coaches (www.certifiedcoach.org). Make sure any coach you retain is affiliated with at least one of these professional organizations.



The Importance of Value And Price

When retaining a trained and qualified personal or business coach, price is what you pay ... and Value is what you get! Coaching is an investment that you can expect to pay you dividends now and later. *Coaching pays off very well when you design your goals to more than pay for the fee.* You can afford coaching if this is the right time for you to be coached.

Isn't it amazing how money is always available for the things we really want or need? Coaching is no different. People are cautious about spending money and they should be. Here's how to keep the cost affordable, and still get the coaching you need to achieve what you want:

1. Hire the right coach for you.

Every coach has specialties. Interview several; ask tough questions; speak with at least two references that were in similar situations as you are now.

2. Try coaching for 90 days.

Link the fee to a 90-day goal. If you reach this goal, you'll be happy about having paid the fee. (Coaching fees typically are paid in advance or as you go; they are not billed.) This way, you and the coach can determine how to best continue. Coaching can be a lifetime relationship, based on interdependence and growth between you and the coach.

3. Bring in a partner.

Is \$400 or \$750 per month too steep? Why not bring in a friend, colleague or associate and have a joint call or session? Find someone you like who is facing a similar challenge or is working on a similar project. In each session, you each have your separate time and joint time. It sometimes surprises me how well this works for both parties.

4. Offer a trade.

I am against trades or bartering services. But I do make exceptions. If there is a client I really want to work with and they really want to work with me, but the money isn't available, there's usually a deal we can work out. I structure those deals to have me get paid in some way - either deferred (rare), contingent (rare) or have the client be an agent for a workshop or program I offer (sometimes) or another service. If you've got something worth accomplishing, speak with the coach of your choice. Ask him or her to work something out with you.

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5. Make the most of your coaching time.

You may be buying only a 30 or 60-minute session per week, but you're getting a coaching relationship 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I used to feel funny about charging \$150+ per hour to clients, but enough of them have said they know I am there all the time, and when faced with an immediate challenge, they ask themselves; *"Now how would Jim handle this?"* And, you do want to make the most of the time you have with your coach. Here are several tips on doing just this:

1. Come to the call with 5 questions, wins or concerns.
2. Call in on time.
3. Save the long stories for your best friend.
4. Tell the coach what *you* want by the end of the session.
5. Listen fully or arrange to tape the call. Don't struggle with taking detailed notes.

There is something very special about the coaching relationship. It is more than the time we spend together; it is also the time we don't speak together.

6. Make coaching a priority.

I am not afraid to ask clients to cut other expenses significantly to be able to afford the level of coaching I think they need. I don't suggest that you suffer, skip the mortgage payment or not have medical insurance, but you may need to make other changes and priorities. Work with the coach you've selected to see what changes, if any, you can make that will not only take care of the coaching fee, but also free you up financially. *Always pay your medical insurance premiums before you pay your coach.*

Coaching is worth it. Trust your heart to tell you if this is the right time. Trust your intelligence to work out the money appropriately.

100% No-Risk Guarantee

I want my clients to be pleased – in fact, absolutely delighted – with every aspect of the coaching process. So my work comes with this 30-Day ironclad guarantee: If you aren't happy with our work together, for any reason, you can quit at the end of 30 days and receive a full refund – no questions asked. Nothing is more important than our client's complete and total satisfaction – and we stand behind our work 100% - guaranteed!



4 Steps to Finding the Right Coach For You!

Step #1 - Be clear about What You Want

A good coach is going to ask what it is that you want. While it may seem elementary, not everyone knows the answer to this question! Most people are not used to being asked what they want in life or in work. If it helps, start by listing all the things you know you do NOT want – and go from there! People hire coaches either because they want more of something and less of something else – or because they are facing a personal or professional dilemma. Still others see something in the coach that attracts them, whether they can articulate what that may be, or not. The job of a coach is to model a great life!

Step #2 - Understand that Coaching Is All About YOU!

Coaching is about YOU – YOUR life, YOUR work, YOUR goals, YOUR needs, YOUR desires, YOUR dreams, YOUR values, etc. – and is NOT about the Coach's life, work goals, needs, desires, dreams, values, etc. This is YOUR time and YOUR space – and a trained and qualified coach is going to make this all about YOU! I like to think of it as offering my client a "sacred space" wherein they can come to share any and every thing on their mind and heart. And, like a fitting room, they can try on new ideas like trying on a new suit of clothing - without fear of recrimination, competition, or rejection.

Step #3 – Interview More Than One Coach & Have Your Own List of Questions Ready ...

The most important thing to look for in selecting a coach is finding someone with whom you feel you can easily relate in order to create and the most powerful partnership possible. Here are some questions you may want to ask prospective coaches:

- What is your coaching experience? (number of individuals you have coached, years of experience, types of situations, etc.)
- What is your coach specific training? Do you hold an ICF, IAC or WABC Credential? Are you enrolled in an ICF Accredited Training Program?
- What is your coaching specialty or client areas you most often work in?



- What specialized skills or experience do you bring to your coaching?
- What is your philosophy about coaching?
- What is your specific process for coaching? (how are your sessions conducted, frequency, etc.)
- What are some coaching success stories? (specific examples of individuals who have done well and examples of how you have added value)
- What's the average length of time you work with clients who are addressing situations similar to my own?
- What are your fees and how are they normally paid?

Step #4 - Retain *YOUR* New Coach!

When you're ready to retain the personal or business coach that you've selected, be ready to do some work! Most coaches will have you read over and sign a "Coaching Agreement" form that specifies the specifics you both have agreed upon with regard to the number and length of sessions per month; the initial duration of the coaching agreement; the agreed upon fee, etc. You may also be asked to sign a credit card authorization form to make convenient payments. Many coaches also have a series of documents they call a "Welcome Pak", or the equivalent. These documents are designed to assist the coach to know a lot about you quickly, as well as assisting you to work through some things that will enable you to be clear about your priorities, long and short-range goals, and more.

THANK YOU, AGAIN ...

for taking the time to review my new Consumer's Guide To Hiring a Personal or Business Coach. I hope you found this information helpful.

*If you have any questions or comments – or if you'd like to schedule a **COMPLIMENTARY 15-MINUTE COACHING AUDIT** without cost or obligation – please call me at 909-794-2136 during normal business hours, Pacific Time. I've dedicated my business to customer education and service. I look forward to your call!*

Coach Jim

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This document, in it's entirety, may be shared with others.



What Others Are Saying...

In the six (6) months that Jim and I have been coaching together, I have found Jim to be perceptive and direct. Jim's coaching style is real, yet humorous. I have enjoyed working with Jim to break through the blocks that I had with where the direction of my life was going. Our coaching relationship has assisted me in breaking through to a clearer vision and deeper purpose for my life. I have also found Jim to have a softer side on occasion and when needed. Jim's quick wit helps lighten the moment, yet he's also aware when to be serious and just be with me when I've hit something that's thrown me off balance and hard to discuss. Jim's breath of knowledge, depth of skill and plethora of tools work together to provide me with the insight I have needed to move forward into the next level of my career. I have enjoyed working with Jim and I have also enjoyed receiving his monthly letters of encouragement and thought provoking material. Thanks Jim for your commitment and dedication to me and the coaching profession. God Bless.

Lizette B. Sundvick, Esq.
Life & Estate Planning Attorney,
Las Vegas, NV

"Probably the highest compliment I can give Jim Vuocolo is that, now, 1 1/2 years later, it is hard for me to tease out his "value-added", it has become so much a part of me. On the other hand, I notice that my relationships are working, sometimes brilliantly, despite huge strains on them. I have a life plan/career path/contribute-to-the-world plan which is challenging, surprising, and exciting. Financial planning until the end of my life is falling into place. Most days I find myself at peace. I even laugh a lot. All this was very, very untrue 1 1/2 years ago. Do these words give you, the reader, a sense of how astronomical this change has been and Jim's role in it? Thank you, Jim!"

Tamsin Taylor,
Seattle, WA (USA)



"I am writing to thank you for the insight and focus your coaching has generated ... From the start, I was impressed with the Assessment Reports. They were strikingly accurate and saved us a lot of time in 'getting to know each other'. It is clear that they also enable you to provide coaching advice consistent with my motivations and personality. Whether you are offering guidance on work, team building, family relationships, time management, thesis writing, ADD or fee negotiation, you have been supportive, direct, concise and practical. I am totally committed to the coaching process. I feel as though I have found in coaching a whole new resource. More importantly, I have found the right coach."

**Dr. Trevor L. Thomas,
T. L. Thomas & Co., A Tax Consultancy,
London, England (UK)**

"When the student is ready, the teacher appears! From the time we 'met' Jim as our coaching instructor we knew we must have him as our coach. Working with him for over a year has proven us so right. Jim gets us! He is a talented, caring, and slightly quirky coach. Jim keeps us on our toes, constantly encouraging us to stretch beyond our comfort zones both in business and personally. Because of Jim's coaching we are braver, more confident, more focused and have a lot more fun at our business. Jim has led us to believe in our own coaching business by setting a true example of a coach that keeps evolving and intuiting the marketplace. Thank goodness we have him out in front leading the way. We couldn't ask for a more successful combination: we found a coach, a mentor and a friend in Jim."

**Toby Silverton, PhD. & Bev McLagan, PhD.
Silverton McLagan Coaching,
Vancouver, B.C., Canada**

www.Soulbusiness.com

www.LifeCoachConsulting.com

