Ten Questions to ask a coaching provider

1. How long have you been coaching?

I have been coaching for over five years. For the past nine years I have been working as a trainer specialising in management development. After a few years my clients started asking me to coach their people.

2. What kind of experience, ie, public or private sector, do you have?

Over the past nine years I have coached and trained people in a range of sectors; my current client base is predominantly SMEs and listed companies in the media and marketing communications sector. Prior to this career I worked in advertising and marketing for fifteen years, both in the UK and overseas.

3. What kinds of people, in what kinds of areas, do you coach?

Predominantly senior executives, board directors and high-potential individuals. My speciality is managers in transition, for example, people who have been good operators and now need to make the shift to being great leaders of others. They may be new hires, new promotions or simply at a career stage where feedback has highlighted this need.

4. How do you measure the effectiveness of coaching?

My coaching work is goal-focused, results-orientated and flexible. Evaluation uses before and after benchmarks including 360-degree feedback and other performance metrics such as tracking project delivery, employee departures or promotions, successful implementation of new ways of working.

5. How does the process work?

Different packages are available; what follows is a typical process. I offer free 'chemistry' meetings with potential clients to take them through the process and answer any questions. The client is then sent a joining pack which includes a contract for them to sign and indicate their commitment. This is followed by an 'intake meeting', which is ideally attended in part by either a line manager or HR representative, benchmarks and desired outcomes are discussed and the process for evaluating them agreed. Intake often includes psychometric instruments. Regular coaching sessions then work towards the set goals with a review halfway through the process and at the end. Coaching clients are sent a reminder about the next session, which also asks them to update the coach on progress made via e-mail before the session takes place.

6. Which tools, techniques and methods do you use?

I use a range of tools and techniques to support the client in achieving their goals; I believe in maintaining and developing an extensive ‘toolkit’ as each client is different, so methods can vary. Psychometric assessments, for example, can greatly aid self-awareness and illuminate development needs; cognitive approaches can help build positive habits; creative techniques may help someone think beyond the obvious.

7. What qualifications and professional memberships do you have?

I have a BSc (Hons) in Psychology and am a Graduate Member of the British Psychological Society (BPS); I am a CoachU-qualified coach. Via the Certificate in Training Practice and Professional Assessment of Competence I am a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development; I am licensed by the BPS at Level A & B to use a range of instruments, including the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). I am a Master Practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). Finally, I am a Member of both the International Coach Federation (ICF) and Association for Coaching (AC).

8. What about ethics? Are you supervised?

My professional memberships all stipulate codes of conduct and require on-going supervision to ensure ethics and quality are maintained. I participate in monthly peer supervision and have my own coach. Each year I undertake extensive continuous professional development. I hold professional indemnity insurance.

9. What references can you provide?

I can provide contact details for sponsors, ie, HR director, at client companies with whom I have worked; these people will be happy to testify to my competence as a coach. However, individual confidentiality (and sensitive corporate issues) is of course respected. I can also provide case studies to illustrate the results of my work.

10. What are your terms of business?

These are discussed in detail at with the sponsoring client and with individuals at chemistry meetings. In summary, invoices are issued at the start and end of each coaching contract. Both the client and myself commit to the terms of the contract, which includes terms for cancellation of coaching sessions at short notice. The contract stipulates boundaries of confidentiality and what will happen to data such as 360-degree feedback and psychometric assessments during and after the contract.

D Sillett Ltd Trading as DSTC VAT Registration Number: 745 2560 32.
Company number 6397277. Registered in England