GCG

Global Coach Group
Lead for Good



EXPERT GUIDE TO SELECT THE RIGHT LEADERSHIP COACH

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Introduction

Selecting the right leadership coach is essential for both a leader and their organization. An effective coaching partnership can help develop skills, enhance leadership impact, and foster sustainable growth for teams and the business as a whole.

Engaging the right coach is an investment that yields short-term and long-term benefits. In this guide, based on our experience coaching over 100,000 leaders from Fortune 500 companies to SMBs, public-sector organizations, and government agencies, we will outline the crucial steps and provide valuable insights to help you make that critical choice with confidence.

Key Considerations

- **Why Leaders Turn To Coaching**
- **What Leaders Often Look for in a Coach**
- **How to Shortlist Candidates**
- **How to Interview Potential Coaches**



Why Leaders Turn To Coaching

Understanding the reasons leaders seek coaching will provide a clearer perspective on the essential qualities to look for in a prospective coach. Based on our experience, the most important needs of executives and business leaders can be categorized into **three main areas:**



Improving Performance

Leaders are driven to enhance the effectiveness of their leadership behavior and its impact on their teams and business results. Through coaching, they can refine their skills and adopt new strategies for driving continued success.

Enhancing Leadership Brand

Leaders want to strengthen their personal brand, ensuring they are consistently recognized as high-potential or executive-level leadership material. A knowledgeable coach can help sharpen their skills, improve their effectiveness, and expand a leader's professional stature.

Improving Mobility

Continual growth is essential for leaders who aspire to move forward in their careers. By working with a coach, they can identify areas for development, enhance succession readiness, and better position themselves for upcoming promotions and performance reviews.

What Leaders Often Look for in a Coach

Knowing what to look for in a leadership coach is essential for a successful partnership. From our research, we found the key factors leaders value in their coaches, listed here in order of importance:



Rapport

A strong personal connection and psychological safety are vital for open communication and trust. Leaders should feel comfortable sharing their challenges and successes with their coach, fostering a productive and supportive relationship.

Example

A leader might connect with a coach who shares their values or communication style, ensuring they feel understood and supported throughout the coaching process.



Experience in addressing specific leadership challenges

Coaches should demonstrate knowledge of the leader's unique challenges and be able to provide guidance on tailored solutions. This expertise ensures that the coaching sessions remain focused and effective.

Example

A leader facing difficulties with employee engagement might choose a coach with a strong background in team building and motivation strategies.



Business, industry, and cultural experience

Coaches need to understand the leader's diverse professional environment, industry nuances, and organizational culture. This understanding will ensure that the guidance provided is relevant and actionable.

Example

A tech company leader, for example, might prioritize a coach with experience navigating the challenges of a fast-paced industry filled with young, motivated, and talented engineers across various countries.



Value from coaching

Results-oriented coaching includes better performance, recognition of sustained change by managers and other coworkers, and consistent progress towards career goals. Seek out coaches with a track record of delivering measurable and meaningful growth.

Example

A leader seeking to improve their team's effectiveness might select a coach with a history of helping clients successfully transform their leadership styles, resulting in measurable outcomes for both themselves and their teams confirmed by coworkers.

Proven expertise

A coach with proven expertise in their field often demonstrates their ability through testimonials from former clients, certifications, accreditations, advanced degrees or publications, providing a credible foundation for the coaching partnership.

Example

A leader might opt for a coach who holds an MBA or an ICF accreditation, as well as testimonials from satisfied clients demonstrating their effectiveness in coaching and developing leaders across various industries.



How to Shortlist Candidates

The shortlisting process should focus on the candidates that meet your specific qualifications and differentiate them based on their unique capabilities and experience. As we have worked for decades with clients all around the world, here is our advice on how to create a shortlist of potential coaches.

Qualifiers

Qualifiers are the fundamental criteria that a potential coach should meet. These factors include their certifications, training, and professional accreditations. By focusing on these qualifications, you can ensure that the coaches you consider possess the foundational skills, knowledge, and professional standards necessary for successful coaching engagements.

Accredited by international coaching bodies like ICF

Accreditation from reputable coaching federations guarantees that coaches meet the necessary ethical and professional standards. Prioritize coaches accredited by the International Coach Federation (ICF) or other respected organizations that adhere to global standards.

Certified and trained coaches

Ensure that potential coaches have undergone certification training in one or more coaching methodologies and offer a well-defined and organized service with clear results.



How to Shortlist Candidates

Differentiators

Differentiators distinguish potential coaches based on their unique experiences, expertise, and approach to coaching. These factors allow you to identify which coaches are best suited to meet your specific needs, professional setting, and coaching objectives. By differentiating potential coaches in this way, you can find a coaching partner who is better equipped to help you achieve your leadership goals and address your unique challenges.

With these introductory guidelines, you can create a shortlist of potential coaches more effectively, focusing on those who are not only qualified but also possess the unique capabilities and expertise that align with your individual and organizational needs.



ICF accreditation level (ACC, PCC, or MCC)

Higher accreditation levels indicate advanced experience, expertise, and commitment to coaching best practices. Prioritize coaches who are at least ACC (Associate Certified Coach), PCC (Professional Certified Coach), or MCC (Master Certified Coach) if you are seeking advanced coaching expertise.



Years of coaching and professional experience

Evaluate coaches based on their professional experience in leadership during their corporate careers and their experience coaching leaders of similar caliber, industry, and (cultural) background to yours. Choose a coach with a proven track record of coaching leaders in the same industry or handling similar leadership challenges.



Variety of leaders coached across industries, countries, and cultural settings

Coaches with a diverse portfolio may be more adept at addressing unique needs and challenges. Look for coaches with experience ranging from start-ups to Fortune 500 companies and across various geographical regions and cultures.



Coaching results and measurable impact

Identify coaches who demonstrate their ability to create a significant impact on leadership performance and team culture by measuring the results of the coaching as confirmed by coworkers. Seek out coaches with testimonials and case studies showcasing their ability to drive meaningful change and success for their clients.

How to Interview Potential Coaches

After shortlisting some candidates, a well-conducted interview with each coach can provide you with specific insights into how they can address your unique needs and demonstrate the value they bring to the coaching partnership. By focusing on their business and professional experience, proven expertise, and rapport-building skills, you can ensure that the chosen coach will be an ideal fit.



First, Share Your Context and Expectations

When interviewing potential coaches, it's essential to share relevant information about yourself to help them better understand your needs and expectations. Providing this context enables a more productive interview and facilitates the coach's ability to provide tailored responses and recommendations. Here's what to share during the interview:



Professional context

Discuss your organization's industry, size, culture, and team dynamics to give coaches an understanding of your work environment. This information enables the coach to understand your unique reality within your broader world of work.



Your leadership style

Be transparent about how you lead, manage teams, handle conflicts, and make decisions. This type of information will help the coach understand your approach to leadership and the areas in which you excel.



Areas for improvement

As you share how you lead and interact with your team, manager, and other coworkers, acknowledge areas that require change or personal development so the coach can provide targeted advice and strategies on approaches to coaching and leadership development. This focuses the discussion quickly on the heart of the matter. This does not mean that you and the coach are deciding now what issues to address, but it makes the discussion relevant and to the point.



Challenges

Share the most pressing challenges you're facing, both short-term and long-term, so coaches can provide insights into how their expertise and approach may help you address them during the coaching journey.



Goals and objectives of the coaching relationship

Clearly articulate your expectations and what you hope to achieve through the coaching partnership. This alignment ensures that the coach is on the same page as you regarding what you'd like to accomplish and that they can provide the support you need.

By giving potential coaches a clear picture of your context, expectations, and professional challenges, you set the stage for a more productive interview and increase the chances of identifying the ideal coaching fit for your leadership development.

Now Let's Ask Some Questions

Start with What Matters Most



What value do you bring as a coach? By the end of our coaching engagement, what accomplishments should I expect based on the value and guidance provided?



Can you provide examples of companies and executives you've coached within our industry or country, the challenges you addressed, and your approach to solving them?



Let's say I decided to improve my empowerment skills as a leader; how would your coaching approach address this challenge?

Understand How the Coaching Service Will Be Adapted to Your Needs



How does your typical coaching service unfold, and how will it be adapted to my situation? Can you describe the structure and flow of a monthly coaching session?



How do you assess and manage a leader's coachability?



How can you ensure that your approach is effective for me, and what are the critical success factors for our coaching engagement?



What additional resources can you provide, and are there any limitations I should be aware of? If I require assistance between sessions, will you be available, and are there additional fees involved?



How do you balance coaching and advising in our sessions?

Measure Leadership Change Results



How do you measure leadership change results?



How do you engage with HR and a leader's manager throughout the coaching engagement?

Now Let's Ask Some Questions

Address Challenges to Success

Have you used a coach yourself, and what have you learned about leadership and coaching from that experience?

Describe your most challenging coaching engagement. How did you manage the outcome, and what did you learn from the experience? When has coaching failed, and what are the pitfalls to avoid?

How do you draw the line between professional and personal matters in coaching, and how do you address the whole person?

How does your coaching approach align with our organizational and cultural context, and how do you handle culturally sensitive issues?

By exploring these questions during the interviews and sharing relevant information about yourself, you can better identify the coach who is most capable of addressing your unique challenges, significantly impacting your leadership growth, and advancing your career trajectory.



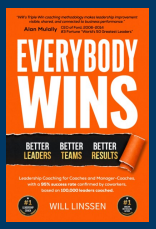
In Conclusion

Selecting the right leadership coach will make a significant difference in your professional growth and overall success. This comprehensive guide equips you with the tools and insights necessary to identify a coach who possesses the experience, qualifications, and cultural fit most suited to your unique objectives and challenges. By thoroughly examining key factors, vetting potential candidates, and conducting in-depth interviews, you'll be laying the groundwork for a results-driven coaching partnership.

At Global Coach Group, we recognize the significance of working with the right coach to propel your leadership performance. Our extensive network of over 4,000 certified and accredited coaches spans a wide range of industries, regions, and cultural settings, providing you with tailored coaching options to meet your specific requirements. Take control of your professional development and unlock your full potential alongside a knowledgeable and experienced leadership coach.

For Clients

We Deliver a Triple Win



Better Leaders, Better Teams, and Better Results — boasting a 95% success rate confirmed by coworkers, based on more than 100,000+ leaders coached.

Global Coach Group delivers the best results-based coaching worldwide through our network of over 4,000 world-class certified coaches, powered by our proven Triple Win Leadership Coaching approach and proprietary digital tools.

Triple Win Leadership Coaching, captured in Everybody Wins by Will Linssen — Amazon #1 International Bestselling Author.

Author

Will Linssen



Will Linssen has been ranked World's #1 Leadership Coach by Global Gurus (USA) and World's #1 Coach Trainer by Thinkers50 (UK), serves as advisor to the Harvard Business Review, and is recognized as a LinkedIn Top Executive Coaching Voice. He is an Amazon #1 International Bestselling Author. With more than 30 years of experience in executive leadership across Europe, North America, and Asia, Will holds the International Coaching Federation's highest accreditation: Master Certified Coach.

He is the founder and CEO of Global Coach Group, the world's #1 international leadership coaching network, with over 4,000 coaches worldwide serving Fortune 500 companies and leading multinational corporations.