

The MindOptions Approach to Coaching

Professional coaching focuses on identifying, exploring and setting goals, creating outcomes and managing change. It is distinctly different from, but often confused with, therapy, consulting, mentoring and training. A coach creates the right environment to enable the client to self-initiate positive change that is future focused and develops a framework that supports the client's commitment, and efforts, to achieve the objectives they have set.



What is coaching?

A coach partners with his or her client to take them through a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to improve their performance and fulfil their professional and personal potential. This process not only helps the client discover and clarify what it is they really want to achieve, but also improves the individual's emotional intelligence. This helps each client know and manage their emotions, become more motivated, improves their recognition and understanding of other people's emotions and helps them manager relationships better. By doing so, the process encourages and promotes client-generated solutions and strategies and helps maintain the client's focus, motivation and responsibility for achieving their objectives.

How can coaching help an individual?

There are a number of reasons why individuals choose to commission the services of a coach. These can include:

- Helping the client achieve something that is challenging, exciting or urgent
- Helping the client plug perceived gaps in their knowledge, skills, confidence or resources
- Helping the client to sustain success or high performance
- Helping the client to gain greater focus on what is significant and important in their lives
- Helping improve the client's health and wellbeing through greater ability to manage stress and develop greater emotional resilience
- Helping the client in terms of career transition and progression

How can coaching help an organisation or business?

Coaching is not just beneficial to individuals. It's a process that is effective in thriving situations to create a stronger platform for continuing success, achievement or high performance, as well as help organisations and businesses when faced with challenges, including:

- Rapid or unexpected changes in the external environment
- Downsizing, restructuring, merging, expansion or other organisational change

- Retaining and developing talent within the organisation
- Reducing the impact of sickness absence or other employee health and wellbeing challenges
- Creating an environment that delivers an improved customer experience, stronger internal relationships and better communication

How is coaching delivered?

Typically, the process begins with a face-to-face or telephone conversation to identify the individual's or organisation's current challenges and opportunities, define the scope of the relationship, identify priorities for action and establish specific desired outcomes.

The coaching sessions themselves can be carried out either face-to-face or over-the-phone and can take between one to two hours depending on the client's preference and time constraints. The number of coaching sessions will be agreed at the start of the process based on the initial interview.

In the sessions the coach will be able to draw on a variety of concepts, models and principles from behavioural sciences, neurosciences, positive psychology and management theory. These are used to help the client increase self-awareness and the awareness of others, foster shifts in perspective, promote fresh insights, provide new frameworks for looking at opportunities and challenges, and energise and inspire forward actions.

There are three main types of business coaching:

- Developmental coaching: identifying and prioritising developmental needs of individuals, often in partnership with the HR department/business owners
- Executive/leadership coaching: identifying and prioritising personal development issues as well as addressing and focusing on strategic organisational issues
- Team coaching: an initial, often off-site, team review and commitment to shared coaching objectives that are then followed up regularly with individuals (using one of the methods above) and often quarterly as a team

How long is coaching required for?

It varies on the needs and preferences of the individual, team or business. Sometime three to six months of focused coaching can achieve the results desired; for other times a longer period of partnership working may be required.

There are lots of coaches out there. How do I know who is the right one for me?

Good question! Whilst many professional coaches may have gone through the same training and achieved the same qualifications, you shouldn't assume that one coach is pretty much the same as every other coach. It all comes down to chemistry – you need to feel that the coach you employ has the style, approach and personality that suits you. Clients tell me they value the fact that during their coaching sessions, they feel I come across as warm, supportive, open, positive, compassionate and there to help them.

Of course, everyone is different so whether you're considering MindOptions or any other professional, feel free to interview your coach – after all, you're employing them not the other way round. A good coach will be happy to be interviewed as they know that for you to get the full benefits of coaching, the partnership has to be right for both parties.

What can I expect from a coach at MindOptions?

It's difficult to be precise as every client and their needs will be different. However, my role as a coach at MindOptions is not to impose my opinions, to judge you or your situation, and it's not my style or approach to try and 'fix' you into my way of thinking.

I recognise that many people come to coaching because they're over-whelmed, over-worked or over-stressed. You might not even recognise the need for, or benefits of, a professional coach. I will therefore work with you, at your pace, to create some much needed space that enables to see, hear, feel and think with greater clarity. In doing so, you should find you're able to become more open, more curious, more focused and more clear about what it is you want to change, for good, and what support you will need to achieve this.

This can be achieved through a number of techniques, including:

- Providing objective assessment and observations that foster the individual's or team's self-awareness and awareness of others
- Listening closely to fully understand the individual's or team's circumstances and perspective, and reflecting back what the coach hears without imposing any judgments or opinions

- Acting as a sounding board in exploring possibilities and implementing thoughtful planning and decision making
- Championing opportunities and potential, encouraging stretch and challenge commensurate with personal strengths and aspirations
- Fostering shifts in thinking that reveal fresh perspectives, along with creative options and solutions
- Highlighting and exploring any blind spots to illuminate new possibilities and support the creation of alternative scenarios
- Maintaining professional boundaries in the coaching relationship, including confidentiality, and adhering to the ICF and EMCC coaching profession's code of ethics

Is there anything that I, as the client, need to bring to the coaching partnership?

Yes. Coaching is very effective when the client is open to exploration, has a sense of adventure and discovery, and is willing to learn, grow and try new approaches. Coming to a coach should never feel an arduous challenge. Rather, as a client, your approach should be one of willingness to step out of existing comfort zones, to want to be supported to stretch existing boundaries or beliefs and to be ready to find the right levels of support to make meaningful, lasting changes.

How do you measure success?

There are two ways to measure the success of the coaching process: external indicators of performance and/or internal indicators of success. The specific measures for each client form part of the initial interview so that evaluation can be clear and transparent from day one of the coaching process. Examples of some of these measures are given below:

- External measures
- Increased income/revenue
- Performance feedback from line managers/colleagues/customers
- Productivity/efficiency improvements
- Internal measures
- Self-scoring assessments
- Changes in self-awareness

- Positive shifts in thinking and/or emotional state that inspire confidence and a greater sense of purpose

Is there anything that makes a difference to the likely success of coaching?

Absolutely. There are a number of factors that make the coaching process more likely to succeed. Here at MindOptions we believe the top factors that help achieve successful outcomes for clients are:

- Starting with the right attitude
 - Setting the right intentions at the beginning and throughout the process and developing a positive mindset that is open and curious and willing to explore new possibilities
- Committing the right resources
 - To achieve the objectives you want (individually or organisationally) you need to commit the right level of resources both in terms of time and finance
- Achieving compatibility
 - The relationship between the coach and client is crucial, therefore getting the coach with exactly the style and approach you're most comfortable with is key
- Recognising the need
 - No matter how experienced or expert the coach, the client has to want to change, or at the very least recognises the need to change, for the process to work

Why coaching works¹

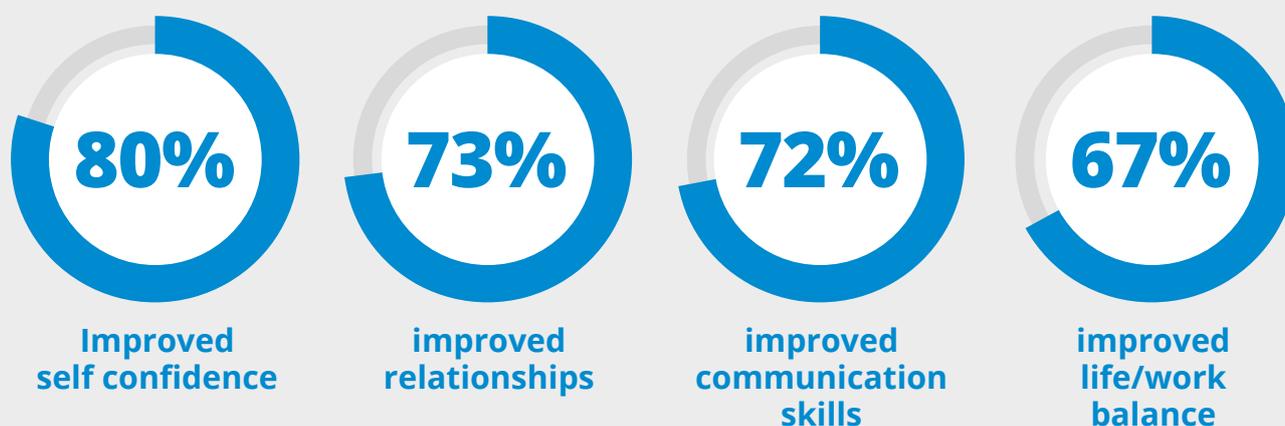
Coaching delivers...Increased Productivity

By maximising potential, in individuals and organisations, coaching unlocks latest sources of productivity and effectiveness. It increases the confidence with which to pursue new ideas and alternative solutions with greater resilience.



Coaching delivers...Positive People

The more challenging business environment has brought with it greater uncertainty. Increased worries about job security can have huge adverse affects on individual and organisational performance. Restoring self-confidence and self-trust is critical to meet future business challenges.



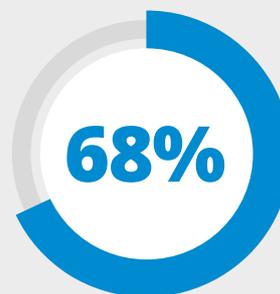
¹ ICFG 2009 Global Coaching Client Survey

Coaching delivers...Return on Investment

The partnership between coach and client generates learning and clarity for forward action that can be clearly measured against desired outcomes.



**of companies
made back
at least their
investment**



**of individuals
made back
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Ready to explore your full potential?

Contact MindOptions for coaching, Mindfulness skills training, leadership and development consultancy for organisations, business teams and individuals in performance improvement, communication, change and stress management.



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