

# 7 things to look for when finding your life coach

Posted 01.05.19 on LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/7-things-look-when-finding-your-life-coach-alice-dartnell>

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## First of all, what is coaching?

Whatever your goal, coaching is a powerful tool to help you reach your goals quicker and more effectively. Coaching is the professional support you need to get you from where you are now to where you want to be. Over the years, getting the support of a coach has become more and more popular which is great, but do have an air of caution when looking for your coach that is going to help you, as it is still an unregulated industry. This means anyone can call themselves a 'coach' but not have the right skills, experience or know-how.

I have put this together to act as a useful guide to help you chose the right coach for you to ensure you get the support you need.

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## Tip one: Look for a coach that is going to empower you to reach your goals even when they are not present

Personally, for me, a coach has not done a good job if you feel empowered throughout the session you have together... but then afterwards you feel completely lost without them.

Coaching should provide you with the tools, strategies and processes to help you work towards your goals even after your session with the coach too. Just being empowered in your session together isn't enough.

That is not to say that you can't have a coach for every aspect of your life, or that you can't have the same coach working with you on new goals one after the other (e.g. once you have achieved your initial goal, you can move on to the next goal). After all, I have support in key areas of my life: a PT to help with my fitness goals, a coach for my online business, a mentor for my public speaking, and a coach for general life and

business goals! Ensure your coach is going to support you, lift you up, and empower you for success... now and in the future.

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### **Tip two: Work with a coach who is passionate about coaching**

This may sound obvious now I have mentioned it but maybe this isn't something you thought of before, but there's nothing worse than a passionless life coach. Your coach doesn't have to be overflowing with inspiration and a "you go get them tiger" attitude (as a matter of fact, that can feel false and forced) but you want to know they have passion for their vocation.

How you see this passion is up to you – it may be through their style of coaching, the reason they got in to coaching in the first place or the fact that they have gone through their own personal hurdles as part of their journeys.

### **Tip three: Find a coach you feel 100% comfortable talking to**

You will only get the most from your coaching sessions by opening up to your coach – you therefore need to be comfortable with them so that you can be honest and feel that you are able to share with them.

A professional coach will always respect the confidentiality of what you say to them and should follow a set of Code of Ethics. For example, I follow a Code of Ethics based upon the principles of [The Coaching Academy](#) (the world's largest training provider as that is who I trained with) as well as the [ICF](#) (International Coach Federation). A coach should remain empathetic not sympathetic, and should never judge your situation, decision or actions.

Clients have told me before that it is important that they find their coach relatable, but this is totally up to you – as long as you feel 100% comfortable, you are likely to be the right coach for you.

I know my style of being straight talking yet supportive, encouraging yet thought provoking isn't everyone's cup of tea and that is ok – finding the right coach for you is about finding the coach who you feel comfortable in front of and working with.

*Work with a coach that you respect, find it easy to talk to, and who has a proven track record of helping others reach their goal.*

### **Tip four: Work with someone you respect**

It is a misconception that a coach must have gone through your experiences, be the same as you and already achieved your goal in order for them to effectively coach you. I have helped people reach their goals of writing their first book, achieving their PhD and regain their confidence to sing in public but these are things I have never achieved myself!

What is important is that you have respect for your coach so that you can work well with them.

A coach is not there to lecture you and tell you what to do, but they will be challenging you to help you break free from assumptions and beliefs that hold you back, and they will ask questions that will allow you to expose realisations.

As you are working in this close way, I think it is important that you have a healthy respect for your coach.

### **Tip five: Ask, do they work to your schedule?**

You have a busy life and you have big goals – if you didn't then you probably wouldn't be having coaching right! So, it is important that coaching is convenient for you and works to your schedule, in order that you enjoy the process and can fit it in to your life.

Before engaging in a contract for coaching services, make sure the coach can work to your schedule.

For example, I am London based but you can often find me travelling, so I regularly work with clients online from all over the world as well as face to face. I personally work a flexible schedule (e.g. early mornings, late night and weekends) because I think we no longer live in a 9 to 5 world.

### **Tip six: Work with a coach that has a proven track record of helping clients**

This might sound like an obvious one but an easy one to forget so it deserves a place in the top 7! The coach doesn't necessarily have to have helped people in *exactly* the same situation as yourself (after all we are all unique and have different goals) but you do want to see some 'evidence' from the coach that they have a track record in supporting and helping others.

Don't be afraid to ask for testimonials or check for reviews.

### **Tip seven: Be cautious of a coach that blurs the boundaries of coaching and counselling**

Coaching and counselling are two very different interventions. Whilst there are similarities in the skills of a coach and a counsellor (for example, active listening, questioning etc, it is important that the boundaries are not blurred because the two are based on very different principles.

Counselling is about looking back to the past to uncover why the client is experiencing difficulties (and this is often related to mental health) whereas coaching is about looking forward for solutions and taking action to achieve a goal or success.

I am a life and success coach, not a counsellor, so I help people to focus on the NOW and look forward for solutions and positive actions to achieve a goal or success. I listen carefully, ask key questions that allow you to gain a deeper understanding, clarity and insight so you can reach your goals.

Just to note: This is not to say you cannot successfully have coaching and counselling at the same time, it is for the client to decide what is the best form of support, but do be cautious of a coach that dips between coaching practices and counselling with you at the same time in the same session.

*by Alice Dartnell*

I hope you have found these tips useful whilst you look for the right life coach for you. Coaching is a fantastic way to get you from where you are now, to where you want to be. Everyone can benefit from having coaching - life coaches have coaches you know!

I am passionate about helping people achieve more, fulfil their potential and live life to their fullest, because I know we ALL have it in us to do so! I spent years wasted living in my shadow thanks to issues such as depression, an eating disorder and feeling a victim, but now I am living a life I want to live and working on the goals I want to achieve. This is why I am so passionate now to help others live full, achieve more and reach their potential! Reaching your goals can be hard at times, but with the right mindset, support and tools, I know you can achieve your goal whatever it is.

*For more information about my services as a life and success coach, please contact me directly on +44 (0) 7506 363 394, or email me at [alice@alicedartnell.com](mailto:alice@alicedartnell.com), or visit my website [www.alicedartnell.com](http://www.alicedartnell.com) (the website will be live at the end of May 2019). I offer 121 coaching, courses and resources to help you transform your life and achieve more.*