

## Career Coaching: Things you should know

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### Introduction

A famous quote by Mueller (2014) reads, “Successful and fulfilling careers are the result of ambition, vision, planning and lots of determination. This may sound daunting, but when we take on this challenge, we take ownership of our professional development and our chances of building a satisfying career increase.” Have you ever sat down and thought deeply about what you want to do with your life careerwise? Some people have always known, some are not too sure, and some have no idea what they want. All these are normal, and many people go through uncertainty in their lives. Now more than ever, career coaching has become an essential aspect of how someone navigates their careers. Even if you are sure of what you want to do, career coaching can also help in being confident in your choices.

### What is career coaching?

Before going any further, explaining what career coaching is, is the first step. Career coaching is the process that helps you understand what you want. A career coach will support you in making these initial steps, setting you on your way to a more fulfilling working life. If you’re unhappy in your job, this can deteriorate and spread to other areas of your life. It can harm your relationships, social life, and mental and physical health. (Feldman, 2021). Career planning is another essential part of your career, and you can read further about it here, although this article will mainly focus on career coaching.

### What can career coaching do for you?

Career coaching can help people in various ways, from discovering what career you may want to go into to how you can maneuver your way through your life.

- Identifying and overcoming potential obstacles
- Learning to utilize your skills and experiences and how to improve
- Interview coaching to help you stand out from the crowd
- CV writing to help you get noticed
- Support in changing career paths

### When should you hire a career coach?

Certain indicators point you in the direction showing you that you need the help of a career coach. Florentine (2019) explains these well and may get you to question whether you need one or not.

1. You are experiencing job anxiety – When you become bored or frustrated with your job, seeking the help of a career coach may be advisable.
2. You are struggling with your job search – If you are looking for a new job and sending out your CVs to various companies, but your job search isn't successful, a career coach can help.
3. Your professional brand needs work - To be marketable, you need to consider your professional brand, starting with a strong CV or LinkedIn profile. LinkedIn is a professional social network that allows job seekers and employers to meet. If you do not have one, it is highly recommended to create a profile.
4. Your career has taken a pause – One clear sign that tells you that you need to engage a career coach is when your career has taken a pause. When this happens, and you have no clear explanation of the cause, talking to an expert about it may significantly help you.
5. You are challenged to stand out as an individual - You're challenged to stand out from the crowd. When it comes to differentiating yourself from other job seekers, it's important to present yourself as more than just a collection of skills and credentials. In extremely competitive labor markets, honing in on your unique strengths and passion can make all the difference, and a career coach can help you identify and build on those strengths, helping you stand out as the perfect fit for that next role.
6. You struggle with self-motivation – Advancing your career is challenging work, especially during these trying times of Covid-19 and many businesses shutting down. People are experiencing serious demotivation and need help in that regard.
7. You are ambitious – On the other hand, talking to a career coach because you are ambitious is also very helpful. As mentioned previously, just because you are sure of what you want to do with your life does not mean that you cannot seek help from someone else. Having an objective view of the possible opportunities and threats, other than the ones you see for yourself, is a wise decision to make.

## Signs that you are not ready for a career coach

When you consider engaging external help when it comes to your life, always make sure that you are doing it for the right reasons. For example, looking for someone to change your life will not happen without your input. Always make sure that you are in charge of your own life and you have an idea of what you need to do to be successful for yourself. Some reasons below highlight when someone is not ready to engage a career coach (Florentine, 2019).

You are not ready for a career coach when you think a career coach possesses all the answers and will find you a job. If you approach a career coach expecting the coach to connect you with a top-notch job in one easy step, you will most likely be very disappointed. This is the biggest reason why many people

who become career coaches highlight that they do not have the recipe for this right from the beginning.

You are not ready for a career coach when you are reluctant to self-assess and self-examine. These three things are some of the steps to achieving greatness in your life. It is often said that the first step to moving forward is by accepting whatever issues you may be facing or going through. A career coach usually gives clients something to do or think about in preparation for their next session. The career coach can often ask the individual to take personality tests to get to know what kind of person you are. This is helpful for the coach and the individual, especially if they are not self-aware. They may also ask you to write down your best and worst experiences in your career, among other things that will paint a clearer picture of who you are as an individual. For this to work, one has to be willing to go through the exercises.

Lastly, you may not be ready to have a career coach if you have trouble opening up to others. If you need help, you need to be vulnerable to the person you need help from. For coaching to be effective, individuals have to be honest with themselves and their coaches. To be successful, both coach and client have to be open to feedback and constructive criticism. The keyword is “constructive”, as this helps to build someone positively. Good career coaches will not shy away from asking direct, probing questions and will be open to hearing constructive feedback on what is and is not working for you.

## Conclusion

Career coaching is critical, and it helps people to choose the right career for themselves. If you feel you need one, take some time to introspect and find healthy ways and people who can help you through the journey to the right career.

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