

How to Select an Executive Coach

Executive coaching has become one of the preferred approaches to developing senior and high-potential executives. The connection or “fit” between you and your coach is the strongest contributing factor for a successful partnership. It’s so important that we recommend interviewing multiple coaches and using the following process to prepare, assess and select the right coach for you.

1. PREPARE – Consider the following in preparation for meeting with potential coaches:

- **Review Coach bios/resumes.** Highlight similarities in industry/functional experience as well as coach training and certification credentials.
- **Schedule coach interviews or “fit” meetings.** In-person meetings lasting 45-60 minutes are recommended.
- **Prepare for coach interviews.** Review and be prepared to share responses to the following questions with prospective coaches:
 - *What are my expectations of my coaching?*
 - *What are my leader’s and/or HR’s expectations?*
 - *What challenges would I like to address through coaching?*
 - *What recent or current transitions are occurring that affect my role/organization?*
 - *What do I know about working with a coach? What would I like to know?*
 - *How do I best learn? What characteristics in a coach would most motivate me?*



2. INTERVIEW AND ASSESS – Use the following approach when interviewing potential coaches:

- Summarize your situation and the challenges you’d like to address through coaching.
- Ask the coach relevant questions to assist with questions as well as observations you will want to note. (See AJO’s **Executive Coach Interview Worksheet.**)
- Share with each coach where you are in the selection process; any preliminary feedback on your interview with him/her; and when you expect to communicate your decision.

3. SELECT – Consider the results of interviews with potential coaches using the Executive Coach Interview Worksheet covered below:

- **Reflect on, and contrast each coach interview.** Did one fly by? Was one more labored?
- **Compare coach strengths and elements of fit.** Which coach would challenge you most? Who has the most experience from which you can benefit? Who has the most compelling approach?
- **Share your observations with your leader, mentor or coach manager** for additional feedback and insights of an objective observer. This can be especially important if you are struggling with your selection decision.
- **Communicate your decision to the prospective coaches** and provide as much feedback as possible about your selection decision. Coaches love feedback and appreciate understanding why, especially when they were not selected.

97% of leaders who have worked with AJO would recommend their coach to others

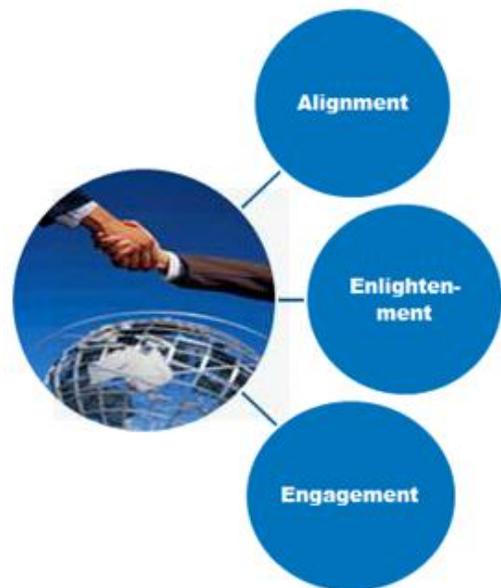
EXECUTIVE COACH SELECTION MODEL

There are three “elements of fit” that we consider critical to assessing each coach:

1. **Alignment:** How well the coach aligns with your developmental goals and objectives.
2. **Enlightenment:** The chemistry you have with him/her.
3. **Engagement:** The process and logistics of working together.

These are addressed further in the **Executive Coach Interview Worksheet**.

In summary, finding a coach who is a strong fit for your needs is a key step at the beginning of the process and one which we recommend you invest time wisely to complete.



Additional recommended resources:

- [How to Get the Most out of Coaching](#) offers strategies and guidelines to ensure optimal results from your coaching engagement.
- [Executive Coach Interview Worksheet](#) will guide you through the process of selecting the best coach for your needs. It provides recommended questions to ask and observations to make when interviewing potential coaches.