



Jennifer Bellingrodt, Psy.D. Executive Coaching

Executive Coaching Goals

Let's talk about why a person should sign up for executive coaching and what the typical client is looking to accomplish when hiring an executive coach. For starters, data gathered over many years of coaching tells us that executives with coaches consistently have higher revenue and more engaged employees than those who don't. We also know that coaches are being used in Fortune 500 companies with greater frequency and success than ever before.

According to the American Psychological Association, executive coaching is "one-on-one, customized counseling and feedback provided to managers in an organization to develop their interpersonal and other managerial skills and enhance their ability to achieve short- and long-term organizational goals." Executive coaching is "provided by external consultants or similar professional coaches, rather than by managers, peers or human resources personnel within the organization."

So, what can coaches truly help with? What are some examples of specific goals that are appropriate for executive coaching? Let's walk through 10 possibilities:

1. Confidence

- The coach helps the client assess the negative automatic thoughts and underlying self-limiting beliefs that are blocking them and preventing them from making important decisions or moving forward in their career.

- Overcoming these thoughts and building the confidence to act on goals is a crucial first step in helping clients unlock their potential and evolve into the best version of themselves.

2. Emotional intelligence

- Emotional intelligence often escapes people who are otherwise smart and successful.
- The coach can help the client with things like self-awareness, insight, empathy, compassion and relationship-building.

3. Improved interpersonal skills

- Interpersonal skills are crucial to success at any level and especially in leadership positions.
- A coach can help a client learn to influence and motivate others, coach peers and subordinates, improve communication skills and handle conflict.

4. Team-building skills

- A client looking to advance or be successful in leadership will likely be in charge of at least one team of people.
- The coach can help the client build cohesive and productive teams, delegate tasks effectively, manage team member performance and navigate the complex interrelationships between team members that may exist.

5. Focus and clarity

- The coach provides an objective perspective regarding the client's focus, which is very often too broad to actually be successful.
- Coaching helps narrow the focus and create clarity about specific areas to which the client should direct the most energy.

6. A greater leadership presence

- There's a difference between managers and leaders, and much of that has to do with presentation, concern for others and whether you lift others as you climb.
- Leadership coaching addresses things like assertiveness, boundaries, an authoritative presence and public speaking and presentation skills.

7. Improved decision-making

- The coach provides insight regarding prejudices and opinions that cloud the client's judgment and helps them overcome these things that get in the way of true discretion and discernment.

- Coaching highlights the difference between reality and perception and helps the client see things as they are, which better informs the decision-making process.

8. Creative thinking and strategizing

- Clients may have a tendency to dismiss good ideas because of fear, often leading them to take the easy way out and not fully actualize their potential.
- The coach helps the client really dig in and evaluate ideas to assess their feasibility and create strategies to improve on them and prepare for implementation.

9. Accountability

- Most of us do better with accountability than when left to our own devices because we generally do not want to disappoint other people. We should be equally bothered by disappointing ourselves, but the fact is that we just aren't.
- An executive coach provides accountability that helps eliminate excuses and keep the client on task to make important changes and accomplish goals.

10. Stress management

- It's no secret that executives and other professionals often take on a lot and may become very stressed at times. Stressed is just a busy person's way of saying anxious or afraid.
- The coach can help the client locate the source of these feelings and unpack the maladaptive thoughts that drive them, as well as teach the client how to have greater work-life balance and improve resilience and overall well-being.

These are just a few of the many possible goals that can be set when working with an executive coach. Clients can certainly achieve personal and professional improvement by doing things like reading books, attending seminars and working through various trainings; but real, significant progress is most likely to occur when you have a coach working with you to create an individualized plan designed around your strengths and weaknesses and holding you accountable for your work.