

How-to: Find a Coach

Intention

You're in the middle of a lot of different challenges - or just maybe one big thorny one. You're considering getting a coach but aren't 100% sure that's the route you want to take.

Maybe it's too much money? Maybe you can do this on your own? Maybe you already have the help you need? This could all be true - or maybe you want some help to see the value of making the investment.

This will help you sort out what is actually happening, and what a coach could look like. Then you can decide what's right for you.

Step 1 - Clarify what exactly you need help with

End Goal: You want to end up with a short bulleted list of things you want to help with right now. If you're not sure, use one of these two exercises. The first exercise takes longer but will give you a lot more clarity on your longer term life and work goals and bring that back to what you need help with now to get there. If you don't have time or interest, start with the second exercise. It helps clarify based on what challenges you're facing now.

- ☐ [Ideal Outcome Exercise](#) (~90 minutes) - Check out step 1 to budget the time. This will help you start to get clear on short-term and long-term goals to help make decisions on where to spend your time. This will also help you decide what you want / need out of a coach (or other support structure). Don't worry about it being perfect - directional is great to start.
- ☐ [Short Version](#) (~20 minutes)

Step 2 - Who's your ideal coach?

End Goal: You'll want a really concise picture of what characteristics and other factors you want in a coach. This will clear your head on what you want and help others refer the right people to you.

- ☐ **Visualize first:** Set a timer for 5 minutes. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths until your mind calms a bit. Imagine it's 3 months from now and you have a really great coach. Visualize what that would be like for you as if it were already true.

- Think about: *What would your interactions be like? What would they be helping you with? What would no longer be on your mind? How would you ideally be showing up with them? What goals would you be on track to accomplishing or already have completed? What would make it totally worthwhile for you?*
 - Then journal / write down whatever comes to mind.
 - Don't worry about one person solving all of your needs. Just surface what you'd ideally want.
- ☐ **Outline other basic parameters** - e.g. remote vs. in person, gender, sponsored by company or not, tenure, industry, certification, style, etc. What are must haves vs. nice to haves?
 - ☐ **Draft what you're looking for.** You can write 5 bullet points or a whole job description. Here's [one](#) I wrote for myself for a coach (*I don't recommend reading it until you do your own visualization!*).

Step 3 - Find a coach

- ☐ **Find potential coaches:**
 - Ask friends, family, colleagues, HR teams, ex-coworkers, etc.
 - Check with your alumni association
 - Do a google search on coaches for your specific needs
 - If you have access, check with VC and PE friends - they often have access to lists
- ☐ **Make a short list of 3-5 coaches** - Based on recommendations and their website / info pick a few that feel like they resonate with what you want. Don't overthink too much. It's better to have conversations than try to gauge someone fully by an online profile.
- ☐ **Write out questions** that will help you decide if they meet your criteria
- ☐ **Have intro calls** - come with any questions, get a sense of whether it feels like a fit or not. If one does, move forward. If not, go with another batch of people.
- ☐ **Pick one** - pick one that feels best, and don't worry too much about perfect fit. It can be incredibly valuable to get started.
- ☐ **Revisit once it's been awhile** - are you making progress on what you wanted to make progress on? Do they still feel like a fit for your needs? Is there anything you want to give them feedback on or something they could do differently to help you more?