

Reprinted from the August 2014 issue of BIC

# Need a career coach? Five key factors to consider

**J**erri Udelson, master certified coach, founded International Coaching Week in 1999 as an annual opportunity to provide a week each year to educate the public about the value of working with a career, life, business or executive coach. Though this year's week has passed, the information provided is still extremely viable.

Career coaching is a viable option for those in need of its services. Based on research data from a study conducted by the international outplacement firm Lee Hecht Harrison, "... people who work with a career coach

## People who work with a career coach find jobs 15- to 46-percent faster than those who don't.

find jobs 15- to 46-percent faster than those who don't" (varies by income level). So, if you're thinking about hiring a coach, there is much information that needs to be understood for you to make an informed decision. The five factors in this column can be beneficial to those currently considering the use of a career coach.

1. What is coaching? Coaching is a supportive relationship with a trained professional that enhances your ability to learn, make desired changes, resolve issues and move forward to achieve goals. Coaching differs from consulting or therapy because it is not focused on giving advice, healing dysfunction or analyzing behavior. A coach acts as a catalyst who will

support you in strategizing solutions, choosing the right direction, building your personal skills and raising your awareness. Coaching doesn't spend time in the past; it concentrates on where you are today and how to get where you want to be tomorrow.

2. How will career coaching benefit me? If you have recently lost your job, are in a career transition or need to find more fulfillment in your career, coaching can be a tremendous asset to you in today's competitive market. Regular coaching sessions provide clients with dedicated time to focus on what they truly want and what must happen to create it. Coaches help their clients design action steps to meet their goals, then hold them accountable to their own stated desires — providing perspective, feedback and smart questions along the way. As a result, clients stay motivated, make significant changes and achieve more than they may have thought possible.

3. How much does coaching cost? The typical investment for individual coaching can range from \$300 to more than \$800 per month for a series of regularly scheduled sessions (this varies depending on experience of coach and specific geographic region). To achieve significant results, most coaches ask clients to commit to work with them for at least three months. When considering the cost, ask yourself three questions: 1) What is the value of the results I am seeking? 2) Is it in keeping with the fee? 3) Do I currently have the resources to pay the fee without straining my finances?

4. How will I know if I'm coach-

By: SHIRLEY A. WHITE, President  
Success Images



able? To get the most from a coaching relationship, you need to be willing to learn new ways of doing things and make changes in your attitude and behavior. Anyone who is open to considering new perspectives, is willing to question how they are currently acting and clarify values/priorities, and is ready to take on new challenges in their careers or lives will likely be coachable and can benefit from working with a coach.

5. How can I find a reputable career coach? To locate a career coach, begin by asking friends or colleagues if they can recommend a coach they have worked with to accomplish similar goals. To widen your search, use one of the many coach referral services offered by training schools and coaching associations, such as the International Coach Federation ([www.coachfederation.org](http://www.coachfederation.org)). Interview two or three possible coaches for comparison. Ask about their backgrounds and the type of results they typically help clients achieve. You should also ask to speak with two or three references.

The personal fit between client and coach is important as well. In your initial conversation, assess not only the coach's ability to assist you in reaching your goals but how comfortable you feel interacting with him or her. Some coaches offer complimentary coaching sessions for prospective clients so you can experience what it would be like to work with them.

**For more information on Dr. White's programs and publications, visit [www.successimages.com](http://www.successimages.com) or call (225) 769-2307. ●**