



What makes a Great Coach

Sharon Jurd
Author

Introduction

In this highly competitive world of entrepreneurship, you need to know how to step up your game in order to survive. Business isn't just about buying and selling; it involves strategies that will help get you from Point A (a budding business) to Point B (a successful and profitable one). If it is your dream to grow and expand your business then you need to consider investing in a business coach.

Now a lot of people don't see this as a valuable investment. As a matter of fact, I know quite a number of business owners who dismiss the very idea of hiring a business coach. Do you want to know why? The answer is simple. In the back of their minds they are thinking, "Why should I spend hundreds and even thousands of dollars on a business coach when I can always learn it myself?" Perhaps the most overused line I hear every single time I suggest they engage in a business coach is, "I can do it on my own but thank you for the suggestion." Well, I'm sorry to say that only very few businesses make it without a business coach, if they ever make it at all.

If you want to grow a business, the fastest way to do it is to be mentored by someone who has been successful at it. Business coaches have the knowledge, the wisdom and the experience to guide you through your business.

Although there are no guarantees, the difference of having a business coach at your disposal is that you will have someone to guide you on what to do, how to do it and when to do it. It goes without saying that it is indeed much easier to follow a tried and tested pattern than to experiment with one on your own.

When you go about your business without really knowing the outcome you are only wasting precious time and resources. So instead of holding onto your pride and saying, "I can do this without any help." For the sake of your business, you may need to engage a business coach.

One of the most valuable lessons taught to us as students is that *learning never stops*. In the long run, you will realise that investing in a business coach is in fact one of the ways for you to continually learn and it will grow you as a business person.

It is important to note that finding a business coach; a great one at that, can be challenging. Why? Because business coaches are very diverse in terms of the services they offer. It's safe to say that some business coaches are better than others. By better it means they have more knowledge, more wisdom and more experience compared to others. And with the increasing demand for business coaches, it does not come as a surprise that you will likely encounter a lot of people offering their coaching services to you online. Before you jump in and sign contracts, you need to know what makes a great coach. Here are some of the qualities you should be looking for in a business coach who wants to help your business.

What makes a great Coach

www.sharonjurdevents.com.au

Quality 1: A great coach creates relationships.

One of the qualities you should be looking for in a coach is that he/she is capable of creating relationships. Why is this important? A great coach who knows how to build relationships also knows the significance of trust. They know it is easier for you to learn from a coach whom you trust. Establishing trust is one of their priorities to make the relationship work. How do you know if a coach is capable of creating relationships? Well, coaches need to establish firm boundaries. They also need to build trust by being transparent about the development and learning objectives you both set. Great coaches show good judgment, they are patient and they fulfill what they promise or whatever agreements they have made. Great coaches take the time to understand your needs in a very intimate way because coaching is really about people coaching. You cannot coach a business; instead you coach people in the business.

Quality 2: A great coach is an active listener.

What do I mean by active listening? Active listening isn't just about listening to the words but truly understanding the message behind it. For you to do this, you need to pay close and careful attention to what your client is saying.

A great coach should not allow himself or herself to be distracted. Active listening requires a lot of self-discipline so if you see a coach that has this rare quality, engage with them.

Business coaches are not just paid to guide you, they are also paid to listen, understand and ask relevant questions and more importantly to give advice. This can only occur if they know how to listen. I notice that there are business coaches who ruin a coach-client relationship all because they don't know when to be quiet. They keep on talking and talking without taking the time to listen to their clients' concerns. A great coach must know how to listen because doing so allows them to ask more targeted questions to get to the bottom of the problem.

Quality 3: A great coach has compassion and empathy.

A great coach offers compassion and empathy to their clients. There is a difference between offering sympathy and offering empathy. Sympathy is when you feel pity for your clients while empathy, on the other hand, is having the ability to not only understand the person but to experience their emotions as well. If a coach has empathy he or she is able to build an interpersonal connection with the client making coaching effective.

Keep in mind that when looking for a great coach don't just focus on finding the experts. What you do need is a coach that has compassion and empathy towards you because these coaches know how to connect with you and they know how to inspire you to do your best so you can independently come up with your own solutions.

A great coach is someone who knows what their clients feel, understands their pain and is able to relate to them, this helps the business coach guide their clients on tracing the root cause of their problems and ultimately find solutions together.

Quality 4: A great coach has the willingness to help others.

You know you have found yourself a great coach when he/she shows willingness to help you. Coaching is all about having compassion to help other people. Unfortunately, as I've mentioned earlier because of the increasing demand for business coaches almost everyone is interested in becoming a business coach. This means the quality of services they offer varies since some just want to become a coach for the money. If money is the motivation behind being a coach then you're in deep trouble.

You should look for a coach who is willing to share his/her knowledge, expertise and skills to his/her clients. He/she is willing to impart what he/she knows and adjust to his/her client's current professional development. Furthermore, a great coach knows that you need time and commitment to continually share all pieces of relevant information their client might need in order to grow professionally.

Quality 5: A great coach asks quality questions.

During a business crisis the best person to seek help from is a business coach. A business coach is far better than a consultant for a lot of reasons. Why? Well, your business coach can help you create short-term and long-term goals and they are well equipped to help you improve your business in certain areas that you may have missed. Although you could say that you've survived and gone this far without a business coach, you will see the difference once you've engaged with one. It's not about surviving, it's about thriving. But how do you know if the business coach you are engaging with is the best one?

You know you've got a great coach if he/she asks you questions, and not just any questions but quality, in-depth questions; questions that will give your coach a better understanding of your situation. Questions are important because it helps connect a business coach to his/her clients in a more meaningful way. Your business coach will also get a full understanding of your problems and the crisis you are going through. When your coach asks quality and targeted questions together you will come up with a solution.

Asking quality questions draws the line between one-way questioning and an interactive learning session. When a business coach asks the right questions, he/she is capable of stopping a client in their tracks and examine if their actions are helping their business. Good questions allow a person to see his/her own actions from a different point of view or they are able to come up with new and better solutions to an old problem.

Quality 6: A great coach has life experience.

The qualities that are listed here are not in chronological order but if you are going to engage a great coach, I suggest the first thing you should take note of is experience. This is perhaps the very first thing that you should look for in a business coach's resume. Know what your coach has accomplished and ask yourself if those accomplishments are what you want to happen to your business as well. A great business coach must know how to walk the walk.

A great business coach is someone who can give you advice based on real-life experiences. In my opinion, it is ideal that you look for someone who has had their fair share of failures and successes because a business coach who has experienced both the ups and downs of a business and yet managed to pull themselves up and achieve success is the best person to ask for advice. This person possesses the knowledge and experience to guide you in whatever crisis you are going through. Their insight and knowledge will help you in a lot of ways such as avoiding making the wrong decisions and expediting your journey towards success.

How do you know if the business coach you are talking to has experience? Well, you need to do your research. Ask for testimonials and feedback from other business owners. Ask what his/her clients are saying about them. You can also use search engine sites like Google to read about reviews.

Quality 7: A great coach wants a better life for themselves, their clients and their client's children.

It is equally important that you look for a great coach that has good intentions, a coach that wants a better life not just for himself/herself but wants a better life for his/her clients as well. A great coach always strives for something better and this in turn flows onto their clients.

When a business coach has high hopes for themselves and for their clients, you know you are in good hands because it shows that they are not only after the money but they genuinely want to see results and this in turn can help boost your business. You know you've found yourself a great coach the longer you engage in a conversation with them. You can see through them and know what their intentions and plans are, what their missions and visions are. It also helps if you ask how they continually expand and grow themselves. Learning is a never-ending journey and shouldn't be for your coach.

Conclusion

So there you have it, 7 qualities that comprise a great business coach. Again, it is not enough to engage just any business coach because as I've said, business coaches are everywhere. They can be found both online and offline and some would even come to you voluntarily to ask if you might need some help. While we all know business coaches are capable of boosting our business to greater heights, not all business coaches are worth the investment because not all of them are the same and not all of them are considered to be "great coaches".

If you are going to engage a business coach then you should get the best one you can afford. While engaging a business coach is an expense, it is also a worthwhile investment; the right coach will complement your business and make it thrive.

Engaging a business coach is very important for your business no matter what state it is in because you cannot solve tomorrow's issues with the strategies you've read just anywhere. You need a knowledgeable and experienced business coach to guide you through and teach you to think independently and create your own solutions.



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