

What is coaching?

Coaching is a process of partnering with people while focusing on solving their problems and achieving their objectives. Coaching can address business or private matters. It is an interactive, people-centered and process-oriented practice. A coaching process increases self-reflection and improves cognition, perception, experience and behavior.

Interactive means that coaching is not some kind of service that hands out information or recommendations to the client but creates an environment in which the coachee can reflect on their own solutions. Coach and client both take ownership of the process and are mutually challenged for a successful coaching. The client is the expert when it comes to his own life, his professional or private situation. The coach is setting a constructive, safe and confidential environment for the coachee's reflections. Coaching is all about finding the very individual solution for a client. A client's own resources that might seem unavailable will be unveiled and personal coping strategies will be worked out. Coaching follows the pace and the concerns of the client and his/her very personal situation. This is why coaching on a same problem (e.g. exam anxiety) with two different clients will probably entail different paths, methods and pace, and will reach different solutions. This makes coaching people-centered and process-oriented.

Coaching can take place in a face-to-face setting, by phone or Skype, as well as by accompanying Email.

What's the difference between coaching, training, mentoring, counseling or psychotherapy?

The term coaching is often used interchangeably with consulting, training, mentoring or counseling. However, these are different approaches. Coaching is, as described above, a professional environment to help a person get back on track into their own sphere of competency. Sheer knowledge transfer or specialist consultancy is not part of coaching. On the contrary, often it is not information that is missing to reach a specific goal but figuring out how to get there. There is for instance a lot of literature on time-management, conflict resolution or overcoming exam anxiety. And yet, we often feel caught in the same position or situation or we "just don't get there". Coaching can be helpful to fill that gap.

Coaching is not psychotherapy. Coaching is for healthy people who are highly motivated to tackle their issues or difficulties. The coach assumes that the client is an emotionally sound, relatively well-adjusted and well-functioning individual who might be facing a roadblock or finding it difficult to get over the next mountain to greater fulfillment.