



How to select a life coach

13 April 2026

One of the easiest ways to select a life coach is to use the same method you would use for another professional – namely, ask for a name or referral from someone who has had a good experience with a life coach. Referrals are usually a good way to find the right person to see. Especially if you know the person giving the referral well and you tend to be fairly similar to them. If you don't have that option and need to do some research of your own, then consider some of the following points, especially if you are using search engines or AI.

1. Check the experience of the life coach. You want someone who has some experience and you want some testimonials or some idea that the coach will help you. Like most professionals, a life coach who has been in business for some time has to be quite good or they would never have lasted long enough to remain in practice. So, years' experience not only indicates knowledge, but also the ability to attract and retain clients. Which you won't do if you are not good at what you do. You also want someone who has experience in the particular areas you want to work on. So, check that out.
2. Note the qualifications of the life coach. Qualifications are not everything, however life coaching does require a body of knowledge, so you want to see some credentials and coaching certifications.
3. When you are looking for a financial planner to help you with your finances, you don't want to go to someone who is broke or bankrupt or in serious financial trouble. You want your financial advisor to have their own finances together to some extent. The same applies when you are looking for a life coach. If someone is going to advise you on how to improve your life and realise your potential, you want someone who has their life together. This doesn't necessarily mean have a perfect life (whatever that is), because life is challenging for everyone. It does mean that they need to have a good life and have shown the ability to themselves deal with life challenges. You don't want someone who has a life that is full of disasters, bad decisions, and no goal achievements. Someone who is incapable of achieving any of their own goals is probably not going to help you achieve yours.
4. Because the coaching relationship is quite a personal one. You are, after all, telling someone a lot of personal information about yourself, you want to feel comfortable with the life coach. You want to feel understood, supported, and encouraged. You want someone with empathy.

5. Linked to the above is ethics. You want a coach that has signed a code of ethics. And you want this for the same reason that you want a coach that is understanding and empathic. It is critical that the coaching discussions are kept confidential and that you feel comfortable the coach will respect confidentiality.
6. Don't always go for the lowest cost. This is a professional service, and cheapest is not necessarily best. This is your life and you want someone who will help you move ahead in the direction you want to go. A good life coach will help you make changes in your life such that you do improve your income and have the capability and know how to increase it even further into the future. It is usually a better idea to select a coach as an investment, rather than see a coach purely as an expense.
7. Character does matter. You want to see good qualities in the coach you choose, and often this means having leadership qualities. Whether you are aware of it or not, clients do tend to take on the thinking and behaviours of a coach. When selecting a life coach, ask yourself if you would like to have some of the same qualities? If it is a definite no, then you have your answer. You can also do a digital check online on the life coach and in that way get to understand more about the person, the character, and whether you would like to work with such a person.

If you do start working with a life coach and you get a sense that you are with the wrong person, then please change. The more you work with a particular life coach the more they will learn about you, and the easier it is to go back to that person because they already have your history and know so much about you. So, if you decide that you are not with the right person, it is better to change immediately. I know some coaches make you sign up for coaching programmes of a fixed number of sessions and that can make it difficult to change. But consider if in the long run it might be better for you. Because of this, I do not sign clients up for a fixed number of sessions. We take it on a session-by-session basis. If something is not working for you, then I believe you have the right to go elsewhere.

When you select a life coach to help you sort out life issues and help you realise your goals and fulfil your potential, think about who you want to see. Don't just go and see anyone. In all professions there are people who not only may not help you, there are also some people who can do harm. So think carefully and choose wisely.