

Dear Reader,

If you are a business owner or top manager toying with the idea of teaming up with a management coach, but still have questions or doubts, you have come to the right place.

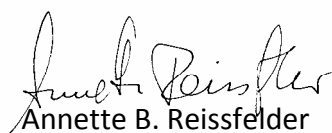
On the following pages, you will learn what you need to know about coaching and coaches. **In Part 1**, I will be addressing many issues that you might have asked yourself – such as what working with a coach entails, and obviously, the rewards of coaching. While this text is primarily designed to answer questions, a second aim is to provoke thought. At the end of Part 1, you should know if coaching appeals to you at this moment or not. **Part 2** will cover all relevant aspects for finding the coach that really matches not just your needs, but also your personality and style. In this part, you will also learn a bit about me and how I work. **In Part 3**, I have collected the most topical information that is relevant for people who have already decided that they want to work with a coach.

I am also trying to address a few serious issues that go deeper than just factual information – like the philosophical fundamentals of coaching, and also barriers for managers to working with a coach, as well as myths and horror stories surrounding coaching and coaches....

This e-book is about professional coaching – i.e. a complex service that takes years to learn and more years to practice. **This has nothing to do with simplistic techniques and coaching tools (like open-ended questions, or the GROW model) that can be picked up in an afternoon** or two. It is also NOT about professional service providers who have started calling their consulting or mentoring work coaching of late. This ebook is about **coaching services delivered by trained coaches** who have invested heavily into their professional development, and are committed to creating value for their clientele: competent and accomplished executives and business owners, plus occasionally first-time leaders.

Please feel free to browse this e-book! **BTW – it also exists in Czech or German, my other two working languages.** If you would prefer to read those versions, just [send me an email!](#)

I wish you a pleasant read – and an engaging coaching experience with the coach of your choice!


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PS I also recommend reading this e-book if you were offered coaching by your company and have no clear idea of what to expect. This information can save you a lot of time and energy, and will prepare you for the first meeting with a coach. What you need to know to get the most out of coaching is within these 26 pages; no need to sift through a 250+ page book to get a handle on this critical topic.

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A few excerpts of these chapters:

Coaching has gained momentum over the past 20 years, and will probably keep doing so: Well, when many people need to perform and be effective in complex and ever changing situations and under lots of pressure, sustainable ways of speeding up their learning curve have a high appeal. Coaching clients report that nothing supports people in bridging the gap between *knowing what to do* and *knowing how to do it* quite as effectively as working with their coach in the shortest time. **This is very relevant for people who have to be careful to invest their energy into the right things, and stay in optimum condition.**

Now how exactly does this work? I will go into this in a second. But before, let me mention the number one most important message of this ebook. **If you take only one thing out of this, why don't you take this one:**

Who Coaching Appeals To – page 6

(...) Generally, people will only consider (...) working with a coach in a special situation. This might involve a higher-level job, dilemmas, difficult decisions, crossroads, and the resulting negative

feelings. Some people however are able to anticipate such demanding or stressful situations and start working with a coach before they even occur. In other cases, people require shortcuts so that they are sure to tackle a new challenge successfully – e.g. when experts are posted abroad and propelled into CFO or even CEO positions, without necessarily having a lot of management experience. The number one precondition in working with top executives is that **they wish to convert the high level of stress they experience into eustress**, i.e. the kind that fuels and motivates them, rather than the kind that gives them stomach ulcers.

While every assignment is new and different, some typical perspectives and sample issues:

Entrepreneurs and company owners

This group is not easily inclined towards turning to others for help. They are very concerned about their budget and will ponder a decision to work with any type of consultant very carefully. What is more, structures and processes in their companies are usually quite simple, which further reduces the demand for coaching. Company owners have already successfully mastered many challenges and solved most issues successfully. However, there are some recurring motives:

- *The entrepreneur has sleeping or health issues and understands they need to let go more. They know that they will have to do some ground work first before they can start delegating and outsourcing things that they don't need to do themselves. In this situation, they have no time for frustrating trial-and-error learning but want to grab some know-how.*
- *The entrepreneur starts thinking about exit strategies from their company. Usually they understand that the company isn't of much value without them, because they are at the heart of all processes. This creates the motivation to work on structures that will allow them to leave the company after a sell-out (after a certain transition period).*
- *The entrepreneur has brought his company into a partnership and realizes that they are no longer used to taking decisions at a peer level, and notice how their engagement and commitment for the partnership/network drops. Although they want to take corrective action, they keep falling back into their old, now inappropriate and ineffective, patterns.*
- *After many years of doing what had to be done, exclusively relying on their own resources, the entrepreneur wants to take stock and do something just for themselves.*
- *Succession planning: torn between their responsibility as entrepreneurs and parents, they are looking for the best solutions - from „bringing the children into management positions“ to “hiring professional managers, family only in supervisory bodies“.*
- *Generational change: when two generations work together in the company, a lot changes, and not just for those two! Emancipating oneself from the role carried over from family life is a challenging task – but one that is necessary to tackle, for this can and will otherwise split the company into two camps.*

Mid management positions

In my experience, this is where the big numbers are in coaching. These days, while multi-nationals demand results within the shortest possible time, they often are also willing to support their managers to take charge of a new role. Examples:

- *Delegating a trusted professional and expert to a foreign subsidiary: if his new role will be a managing one, or even general management, companies decide to support him.*
- *Transitioning from line to project management: when having to lead very differently wired individuals and experts from controlling to production, sales and marketing in a room, the key to effective management is often in updating one's management repertoire in an emergency turbo-training designed to fit the client's personality.*
- *Promotions: some decisions to promote one person rather than another aren't completely undisputed, as decision-makers may assess the potential of a candidate differently. In this case, coaching can either help someone to master the new role, or to win the assurance and support of the relevant superiors even before he is promoted.*
- *Big-ticket jobs/„ejection seats“: when the promoted manager can't afford mistakes – when the job is not just about excelling in their area of expertise, but also managing a complex context and cobweb of expectations. Here, the external perspective of a coach can make the difference between just getting a job - and keeping and enjoying it (...)*

Top management positions in a corporate environment

- *The famous thin air at the top: top managers have great positions, impact and usually also compensation packages/schemes. But occasions where they can discuss their own matters openly, unfiltered and on par with someone without endangering their position are few and far between. Always being on the alert, moving between power parties, interests and coalitions, i.e. acting smartly in the political arena in addition to excelling in their field, requires a lot of energy. It also makes the faculty to look at oneself and one's own function from other people's perspectives an absolute must. A good coach will prove an invaluable asset in helping to build this faculty.*

I am a valuable partner for clients who want or need to look beyond their own nose and their positioning in the company. Often, I am the first person with whom they voice their deepest concerns and most fundamental goals (i.e. what they demand of themselves): for capable people usually act out of an inner motivation and drive – and things that society admires and envies may still fall short of what they need to achieve in order to feel successful. Many people I work with think in systems and know that they can only realize their potential impact by not just influencing their teams, but by actively influencing/co-creating complex contexts. This is where partners become scarce: people with whom they can discuss concepts that really help them make a leap forward are hard to come by. That's where coaches come in.

What goals - and whose goals?

You know that coaching is about your goals. When you are a top executive or business owner, you worry about results in a one-on-one conversation with the coach. You are concerned about value for money, but you don't necessarily need a full set of goals to start out with. You

can let possibilities emerge, as long as you produce some compelling results with your coach right from the start – otherwise, why would you ever meet with him or her again?!

What I have just said is very different from what many other coaches will tell you. Of course coaching does not seem to make a lot of sense with NO goals in mind. However, especially in top management coaching, dealing with competent, bright and demanding professionals, I am happy to work with a general vision and direction, and let specific topics emerge as we get deeper into strategy, personality, and context. In other words: when my clients tell me they are getting great value out of our conversations, I don't have to convince them that they need better, different goals. I let them be the judge of that (and because I am quite open and straight, I will tell them anyway if I ever think they are cutting corners).

The most fundamental barrier for managers to working with a coach

In my experience, the number one barrier to coaching relationships is that many **potential coaching clients simply cannot imagine that a conversation with somebody they have only just met can have such an impact.** Many people don't have much experience with professional relationships that are at the same time **exploring, inspiring, challenging and supporting.**

A paid consultant isn't necessarily where they expect to find that relationship of equals, where two highly skilled individuals are focusing on the goals and issues of one of the partners: the client. Relationships built on so much trust and respect for each other that very special things become possible, don't seem likely to happen. Managers will therefore be a bit sceptical when coaches offer these very things. Let's look at how many coaches come across, and what their background is, to understand why more often than not, the alarm bells start ringing when "manager meets coach". There are two common types:

The helper: With their rhetoric around help and empathy and process, those coaches are just not cutting it with their target audience. Even if our managers would pay anything (well, figuratively speaking) for a truly stimulating, inspiring and resourceful conversation – they just can't imagine having such a conversation with most coaches.

The know-all: There is a second group, dressed more like managers but often coming from a position of "I am 20 years more experienced than you" or "I might know better than you", which again are messages that don't cut it with managers or especially business owners. And I can't blame them!

Especially in executive coaching, **coaches are dealing with an extremely experienced and sophisticated target audience.** These people can tell a phoney from a professional in 30 seconds. And they want more than a professional: they are looking for a partner that leaves them inspired and energized! They don't want to meet any old coach for an hour to go through housekeeping issues, feeling **belittled** (the poor dears they are, for living in such a cruel corporate environment), **trivialized** (asked to fill in pointless questionnaires and then be told what they "really are like") or **lectured** on topics the coach thinks should be their priorities. The LAST thing they want to do is to discuss their goals with such a "partner"!

Sound familiar? Then don't worry: there is nothing wrong with you. Not appreciating these versions of coaching does not mean that you are in denial. You just don't want to waste your time and money with the wrong sort of coach. Seems logical to me! Read on and find out if you are in the right place. Here is a generic quote by a client who has found the right coach:

"Something I really don't want to do without any more is a person with whom I can discuss all aspects of my professional life, without having to be afraid that she might use her knowledge politically within the organisation, pass on information, and /or give me unsolicited, unqualified advice. I want someone who asks inspiring questions that encourage me to find new options in difficult decision-making situations, and rethink alternatives. This is a tough combination to find in one's circle of friends, colleagues or family. My sessions with Annette help me time and again to position myself within the company, find new energy to tackle issues, and stay focused on the real priorities."

Finding the right coach

At some point, only a face-to-face conversation will help you to get insights into what this issue is really about, and clarity over what the next steps will be. A confidential in-depth dialogue can give you new perspectives on yourself and others, and as a result you will be able to attain your goals quite differently than you might have expected. The coach's experience and their change management expertise are a combination that is difficult to beat in order to take full advantage of what you bring to the table – resources and solution ideas. This, in a nutshell, is the proposition of coaching. Let's assume you agree with all of the above to some degree. It becomes quite obvious from this definition that this is a type of conversation that you'd only like to enter into with the "right sort of person". **But what – and who – is the right sort of person for you?**

A coach is not just a process expert; first and foremost, (s)he is a human being. Coaches have bios and individual journeys of how they became a coach in the first place – for coaching typically is a second or even third career. I think this is even more important than the obvious next point on the list: the *professional* background of your future coach. It may matter to you whether your coach has had a career in business, or comes from a teaching or adult education background.¹ Personally, I don't think you need to know all the details about coaching schools, because at the level you are experiencing in a first meeting, they all do pretty similar things. What is dramatically different is the underlying belief systems about change that are the basis of these schools – and different belief systems will appeal to different people!

¹Unfortunately, there is an abundance of less-than-experienced and less-than-competent coaches around that we all hear about (as in "Oh, have you heard about Jenny? She's the girl who used to work in HR for XXX, and lost her job last month. She has just come back from her 2-week coaching course and already has her first clients... She loves it!" You get the picture. Stories like that send shivers down my spine. It's a bit like sending someone on an intensive 2-week piano retreat and expecting them to give concerts after their return...

When working with me is likely to suit you

You know that coaching works for curious, self-aware, results-oriented people who are ready to take action in order to achieve their goals. It is for people who want to take full ownership of their lives and decisions, and who feel they have outgrown general models, theories, and rules. They want to know what works for **them. Now.** Teaming up with a coach enables people to turn a vague feeling of what direction they should take into a specific action that gives them a solution. So much for coaching in general. Just like it takes two to tango, it takes two to coach... You know who you are - but who am I? First, let me establish some professional credibility. Experience and training aren't irrelevant.

As a coach with extensive international experience, I work with senior managers in board-1 and board-2 positions, as well as owners, entrepreneurs and professionals. I am fascinated by questions of transformational management, and by creating contexts conducive to growth. As a result, I work with my clients on applying the principles of good leadership in the practice of successful people in sometimes very challenging circumstances.

I combine a structured and pragmatic approach with creative perspectives that draw from a wide variety of backgrounds, ranging from classic management consulting, systemic organisational development to narrative therapy. I have nearly ten years experience working with and learning from my clients, who come from different countries and industries, have varied backgrounds and even more varied professional targets and personal goals.

*I am deeply committed to ongoing postgraduate education that allows me to access the resources to find solutions with my clients that really fit in a minimum of time. I work in my native German, as well as in near-native English and Czech, and am based in **Hamburg/D** and **Prague/Czech Republic**.*

Chances are we'll make a good team when:

- you expect your coaching to be a challenging, interesting journey;
- you want a coach who has an opinion when you are asking for one, but also gives you time to think;
- you appreciate experience and a varied background;
- you value a coach who has held management positions in their past career;
- you want someone with whom you'll still feel comfortable talking to when the going gets rough;
- you need someone who is pragmatic, but also resourceful and inspirational;
- you want a well-rounded partner who is on a par with you.

(...)

*The above six pages were taken out of my e-book
"Professional Coaching – The Insider's Guide to Coaching
for Managers and Business Owners".*

Here is how you can receive the full e-book:

Sign up [HERE](#) and receive the complete e-book FREE.

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Professional Coaching

The Insider's Guide to Coaching for
Managers and Business Owners



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