



## How does coaching differ from mentoring or consultancy?

Coaching in a business environment differs from mentoring or consultancy with which it is sometimes confused.

A mentor will generally guide and teach someone in a specific task or job. The mentor will draw significantly on their own experience, will pass on short cuts and tricks of the trade and will teach the acolyte how to gain a specified result. The mentor will be expected to know the answers to a task-related situation.

Like a sports or physical fitness coach, the mentor has often 'been there and done that'. Effective coaching does not require that the coach have the personal hands-on experience of the client's job, profession or occupation. Some would even claim that it is the very absence of this experience that adds to the effectiveness of the coach who, by standing apart, can still see the wood from the trees.

A mentor knows the answers. Your coach works with you so that you discover the questions and their answers for yourself, not just for a particular task but also for all your life situations.

Consultants are invited to investigate a particular work-related situation. They gather facts to support their qualified and quantified proposals. Then they may be involved in the implementation of their proposals.

As with the mentor, their focus is on resolving one particular issue. The coach will adopt a people and personality behavioural approach where the task or job is a by-product of the process. With their breadth and depth of understanding about attitude and results, your coach will often achieve benefits that are realised faster and will last longer than those resulting from a mentoring or consultancy approach.

***"I was worried that I didn't know the answers. My coach showed me that I did know them all along; it was just that I hadn't seen the problem from every point of view. "***