

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SMALL BUSINESS COACHING

### **What is coaching?**

Coaching enables you to get greater clarity in identifying and setting your goals, helps you to define the actions you need to take in order to achieve your goals and empowers you to take the extra steps required to make positive and long lasting changes in your personal and business life. For many small business owners, this can be a regular way of focusing on their business without having to deal with interruptions to seeing new targets/goals.

### **How does coaching work?**

The coaching process creates a unique relationship between the Coach and the individual being coached. The coaching relationship is non judgemental and non directive. This means that the Coach does not bring personal biases to the coaching relationship to sit in judgement of you as the person being coached or tells you what you should do. Rather, the Coach acts as a sounding board to help you define your goals with greater clarity, to break larger and longer-term goals into smaller and more manageable short-term actions. This helps you to establish a vision for the future as you explore various options to help you achieve your goals before deciding on the best way forward to success.

### **Who is responsible for implementing the actions agreed in coaching sessions?**

You are responsible for achieving your results, you own your successes. The Coach is there to support you as you pursue your goals and in exploring the best option for you to achieve specific goals.

### **How is coaching done?**

Coaching can be done in face to face situations, on the telephone or using the internet (this includes email, instant messenger, Skype). Alternatively a combination of the three can be used for coaching individuals. For the coaching of teams, face to face coaching is the most frequently used method.

### **How long does a coaching session last?**

In general, coaching sessions can be as short as 30 minutes or as long as 90 minutes. This does not mean that shorter or longer coaching sessions are not done.

### **In which situations can a longer or shorter coaching session be suitable?**

For some, the use of a Coach to provide clarity to problematic areas of the business as they work on increasing profits, functioning as part of a management of team or even trying to get more time to spend with their family. In some of these situations, coaching can be effective in just 20 minutes as the Coach allows the Client to explore the issue in an unrestrictive manner. This can lead to quick flashes of brilliance as obvious solutions are realised by the Client. Longer sessions can be quite useful for work with Directors in the business or the management team, as there may be issues that the Coach needs to challenge the team to address in order to have greater clarity and agree a common goal for the team.

### **How often and for how long is coaching required?**

The frequency and length of the coaching arrangement is agreed between you and your Coach. In the early stages of a coaching relationship you may find it useful to have 2 – 4 sessions every month with your Coach and then reduce to twice monthly. To get maximum benefit from the coaching sessions, you should allow enough time between sessions to complete tasks that will help you achieve your goals.

The length of the coaching relationship varies also. For example, some people may find it useful to work with a Coach for three to six months on a regular basis then have one off sessions thereafter. For others, a longer term 12 to 18 month relationship with a Coach will be best to support them in achieving several goals that address various issues arising from their work or in their personal circumstances.

You should discuss with your Coach and agree what will be best for you, the Client.

### **What is the difference between Coaching and a Business Adviser?**

A Coach facilitates the setting of realistic and achievable goals by the Client and supports the Client to achieve those goals through providing encouragement each step along the way without being judgemental. A Coach does not need to be an expert in your field to provide such support. A Coach can recommend the services of others with specialist skills, but would not profit from the recommendation.

In general, a Business Adviser is contracted by the business owner to share specific knowledge (advice) about a part of the operation that the business wants to improve and may assist in doing work such as preparing tenders or making introductions to clients. The Business Adviser would not invest time in helping the business owner to plan strategies for the business or improve the work life balance.

However, business owners can work with both a Coach and a Business Adviser or even a Mentor, once they recognise the difference between the three.

### **Does coaching involve counselling?**

No. Coaching is distinct from counselling. Coaching focuses on the present (reality) and sets goals for the future, it does not dwell on the past. Counselling seeks to understand the past in order to help you deal with the present and manage better in the future. Coaching is neither therapy nor counselling.

### **Is coaching confidential?**

Yes, coaching is a highly confidential service. The Coach recognises that anything the Client shares with them is regarded confidential, whether it is business or personal information. The Coach undertakes not to, at any time, either directly or indirectly, use or disclose any information the client shares with them during their sessions, unless they have the express permission of the client, or it is a situation where the withholding of that information would be contrary to the laws of the country. When required by law to provide information, I will notify you.

### **Is it only during coaching sessions that I can contact the Coach?**

No. You may e-mail or call me between scheduled sessions if you need urgent feedback, have a problem or want to share a success with me. If I am not immediately available, you can leave a message, send me a text or email and I will get back to you within 8 hours during Mondays to Fridays. At weekends or holidays, I will respond to your request in 24 hours.

### **As a small business owner, how can I use coaching to make my business more profitable?**

A small business Coach can work with you to help you achieve goals associated with:

- ❖ Increasing your customer base
- ❖ Winning more business pitches/tenders
- ❖ Updating/creating a business plan
- ❖ Developing your marketing plan
- ❖ Increasing your confidence to go after larger contracts
- ❖ Increasing profitability of your business, without expanding the customer base
- ❖ Managing staff and line managers
- ❖ Managing conflict
- ❖ Improving communication and rapport
- ❖ Improving work life balance
- ❖ First six months in the business
- ❖ Launching a new product/service
- ❖ Setting up a new business

### **Here's what others have said about being coached by Veronica Broomes:**

I have benefitted from the sharper focus that I have been helped to achieve, the time spent and the challenging questions that were asked. **CO**

Before working with Veronica, I had taken steps forward in my business but was not really getting anywhere fast. Veronica kept me focused on my goal and the actions needed to complete. I have felt 100% supported and encouraged throughout our coaching sessions together and have moved forward towards my goals in relation to my businesses. Veronica is very calm, reflective and professional and really listened to what I was saying. **SV**