



Top Tips for Choosing The Best Coaching Skills Course

There are so many training organisations out there claiming to deliver effective coaching skills training. The array of choice can be overwhelming and is enough to turn the task of choosing your course in to a real chore.

So here are our 'top tips' for choosing the best coaching skills course.

1. Know what you want

Start with the end in mind and make sure you choose a solution that delivers it! What would be different about your solution if you asked yourself:

- What do we want to achieve?
- What will good look like?
- How will we know when we have been successful?
- What will have changed in the organisation?

When organisations tell us that they have already invested in high levels of training yet still haven't achieved a coaching culture, we typically find that one of the fundamental reasons is that whilst the training was very good, it was not necessarily focused on any specific strategy or outcome.

So it is also worth knowing whether you are looking to develop everyday coaching skills to change the culture of your management or whether you want to train coaches to operate formally as internal executive coaches.

For example, training people in formal coaching skills is a perfect solution if you want to create an internal coaching function but this in itself will not change the culture of an organisation. A more pragmatic approach that helps people adopt a coaching style in their day to day interactions would have the greatest impact, but conversely would not give you fully trained coaches.

Choose organisations that understand your desired outcomes and are able to ask insightful questions that help you clarify your goals.

2. ...and know what you NEED!

If you have chosen to develop formal internal coaches, the next thing to consider is what level of training is required. Don't assume everyone needs a formal qualification. Gaining a coaching qualification isn't for everyone. If you are concerned that you, or your team, don't have the time, or can't face the academic challenge, you may prefer to **select a coaching organisation that offers a flexible approach and a range of options.**

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Our Coaching Director, Laura Ashley-Timms says that, “sometimes you can lose your best ‘natural’ coaches by overplaying the requirement for an academic qualification. We offer an excellent ILM7 post graduate certification programme however I often recommend that less than 25% of delegates really need to achieve this in order to be fantastic internal coaches.”

At Notion, we have broken down our full academic qualification in to three modules. This gives our clients the flexibility to develop the skills they need, that might include:

1. Developing operational coaching skills for an everyday coaching management style
2. Developing internal coaches for your organisation
3. Gaining a formal post-graduate qualification

Whatever you decide, find an organisation that can help you build the skills you need, at a pace that suits you or your organisation.

3. Bespoke, or not?

You may be wondering about whether to opt for an open coaching skills course or a bespoke programme for your organisation. Both approaches have their own merits - so which is right for you?

Open programmes are a great way to **build expertise and gain an external perspective.**

Past delegates of our own open programme have told us that they really benefited from building coaching skills with a diverse group of senior professionals. Open programmes are also an excellent way to ‘test’ what a coaching organisation can do and how they can help you deliver a customised coaching strategy.

Bespoke programmes are better for organisations wanting to either develop larger numbers of their leaders and managers or where they want the content designed to support specific organisational strategies, e.g. change programmes, team working, leadership, and so much more. In our programmes, another key

advantage is that by taking a bespoke approach we can evolve processes and paperwork that fully integrate with the organisational agenda to ensure they are fully embedded.

4. Decide whether you want to impart knowledge or change behaviour

Changing behaviour takes time. A short classroom based workshop will be sufficient to impart knowledge and information but if your goal is to change behaviour, the learning needs to be applied, practised and embedded over time.

We believe that you can inform in a day but you cannot change behaviour. That’s why even our two day programmes are supported with at least two months of consistent and high quality touch points. This includes time for delegates to practise their newly acquired skills in real life scenarios before returning to a safe environment for feedback and discussion about early wins and experiences. This reflective process helps to embed changes over the longer term.

So, if you want to change behaviour that is sustainable over time, **look for organisations that provide practical support and assistance before, during and long after the training event.**

5. Include Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Supervision in your decision

Where you specifically want to develop internal coaches, **a critical part of a sustainability programme is to ensure that coaching quality and standards are maintained** and that the impact of coaching continues to be leveraged by the business.

Frequently, however, the professional development and welfare of the coach is often overlooked when selecting your organisation’s partner.

We know first hand how important CPD and Supervision is for long term coaching effectiveness. That’s why we have one of the

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most experienced and highly qualified Supervision teams in the UK. Our Supervisors work with your coaches to help them grow professionally, extend their toolkit or deal with subjects that are new to them or where they feel a little out of their depth.

So, when developing coaching skills, look beyond the bounds of the training event, at what support is needed to ensure coaching is leveraged in a safe and effective way.

6. Look for a partner not a provider

Whilst training provision has its place, in a personal development area such as coaching, a partnership approach will provide the continuity and depth needed to establish genuine change and return on investment.

Entering into a partnership with an organisation requires a different mindset. **A partner will seek to build an authentic relationship with you, understand your needs and support you in the long term success of the programme.** Taking a consultative approach, we work hard to make our clients lives easier. Whether we are training one person or helping to set up an internal coaching pool; we get involved from the outset until the desired change is embedded.

An organisation that takes accountability for results as well as delivery will be more invested in your success, so look for organisations with whom you can establish an effective partnership.

7. Select experts in their field

When trying to learn something new, what better way than to work with some of the most experienced and talented coaches in their field. Many trainers and institutions offer coaching skills training, but imagine the level of insight and knowledge delegates will gain from some of the world's top coaches who operate in environments just like their own.

All our coaching skills courses are led by expert, practising coaches who have both thousands of hours of experience coaching senior leaders across all sectors as well as having impressive senior leadership careers in their own right.

In your search for a coaching skills course, we suggest you **ask for social proof, references and testimonials** demonstrating the quality of the coaches who will be leading your programme.

8. Ask for a Return On Investment (ROI)

Whether you are training one person or a group of people, you still want to see a return on investment. It is often erroneously stated that the ROI of coaching is difficult to measure, nay impossible. Don't be fooled, you CAN measure coaching ROI - we do! For each programme we deliver, our clients receive a detailed report based on data and hard evidence. The reports demonstrate how well the original programme outcomes have been met alongside many other indirect benefits. Typically, the reports show results ranging from 5X ROI up to 100X ROI. We have found that this information is essential to the long term sustainability of coaching practices.

Narrow your options, by identifying organisations that **pro-actively provide ROI reports showing real commercial results from their training activity.** An organisation that is prepared to stand by its results is more likely to deliver the coaching skills training that you need.

Notion is an expert in coaching skills. For more tips about how to choose a coaching skills course visit us on our website by [clicking here](#) or call us for an informal chat on +44 (0) 1926 889 885.

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