



Lewis Center  
for Church Leadership

# Leading Ideas

August 19, 2009

## Tips for Selecting a Coach

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### **1. A coach does not need to be an expert in your area of ministry to be an effective coach.**

While there are coaches who specialize in coaching new church planters or revitalizing congregations, do not limit yourself to receiving coaching from a coach with an area of specialization. The power is not in the coach's occupation-specific expertise, but in the coach's ability to tap and unleash the expertise, passion and potential of the person being coached.

### **2. Credentialing matters!**

The International Coaching Federation (ICF) is the standard-bearer for proficiency in the field of coaching. Make sure your prospective coach is ICF certified and ask about their level of training and years of experience in coaching.

### **3. The United Methodist Endorsing Agency of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry has begun interviewing, evaluating, and endorsing ministers in the field of life coaching.**

To be endorsed, a candidate must be ICF certified, be an ordained United Methodist pastor, and pass the interview and review process for endorsement. A list of these endorsed coaches is available through the Endorsing Agency.

### **4. Interview several coaches.**

It will be helpful for you to find out as much about your potential coach as you can. A certain amount of information can be gleaned from a website, but it will also be helpful to find out the potential coach's "spiritual gifts," integrity of their personal faith walk, areas of expertise, and any training they may have in ministry. You will want to make sure your coach has agreed to the terms of the ICF Code of Ethics, and is committed to complete confidentiality in the coaching relationship.

### **5. Most professional coaches offer a free sample coaching session.**

Be sure to take advantage of this offer. You not only get the benefit of a free coaching session, but you also have a chance to evaluate the coach's style and approach before committing.

### **6. Chemistry above all else!**

Before you begin paying someone to be your coach, make sure there is strong positive chemistry between the two of you. Your coach should be someone whose coaching skills are obvious from the outset, whom you can trust, and with whom you look forward to talking about the things that matter in your life. Often there is a spiritual dimension to this chemistry.

### **7. Expect to pay for quality in coaching.**

While secular executive coaching can be quite expensive, the range today for many CTI certified, Christian coaches is between \$100 and \$250 per hour. An even more affordable alternative is to hire a coach who is in the process of being trained. These students will often request permission to audio record the coaching session so it can be played back for a professional supervisor as part of the coach's learning.

### **8. Expect to sign a "Coaching Agreement" when you begin coaching.**

The agreement is also sometimes called a "Designed Alliance" in which you and the coach set down in writing the expectations you each have for your work together, including scheduling, compensation, frequency of calls, etc.

### **9. Don't underestimate the power of phone coaching.**

There are clear benefits to being face to face with your coach in the same room when it comes to connection and communication that occur through body language. However, for practical reasons, most coaching happens over the phone and is highly effective. Coaches are trained to compensate for distance by being highly present to you on the phone and are trained in listening to you at deep levels.

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