

Coaching Testimonials

Since working with Annie, I am definitely taking more time to have those ‘meercat moments’ which are so important to my role but almost felt self-indulgent before. By taking time to work from home and spend more time on long-term planning, I have been able to give my team better direction and support. It is also helping me see myself more in the role of a leader which is something I have previously felt uncomfortable with, but spending more time on strategy and planning has allowed me to believe it’s something I can actually do. My direct reports have commented on the fact that they appreciate that I have been able to give them more direction. For example, setting mission, vision and values for the team and trying to instil a sense of purpose has helped during some very busy and difficult times for the team. I have previously struggled both with seeing myself as a leader and with organisation and as a result have never provided my team with a path to follow. As a result of doing this, we not only have a clearer view of our purpose and where we are trying to get to, but we just generally feel more like a team! It has been very helpful having someone from outside of the organisation to challenge my way of thinking and help me look at things in an alternative way.

Mhairi Edwards, Head of Ford Insure, Admiral.

Annie listened, didn’t judge and asked the right questions that helped me to get the answers I needed. She kept asking questions, until she was happy, I had made the breakthrough in my thinking/understanding. Exceptionally clever and patient, Annie is also kind, a great quality that builds the trust you need to make coaching effective. I’m blown away with how much Annie has helped me. I’m generating financial benefits from my increased focus and clearer approach with much better use of my time, and my improved state of mind has increased my productivity. Annie opened my eyes to the fact I was not always being honest with myself. Since the sessions I’m choosing to spend more time reflecting and thinking about what I really feel and the outcomes I want. Before I was fearful and lacking confidence. I value Annie’s approach of not being judgmental but challenging at the same time. I stop my inner critic from taking over and instead rationalise. It has been an enlightening experience and one I would recommend. Thank you, Annie, you have made such a difference to my work and home life!

Sue Longthorne, Director Customer Services, Admiral Insurance

Annie has been excellent throughout the time I have been working with her and I have enjoyed every interaction we have had together. Her expertise in this area, combined with her intellect and enthusiasm, always made for a positive experience for me. I was always challenged appropriately, often with thought provoking questions, and there was never a time where I was judged or what I was saying was dismissed. This was liberating and helped me to gain greater insights about myself of which previously I was not aware of and develop confidence which is an area that I need to work on regularly. I was always able to leave our sessions feeling more empowered and able to improve myself and the way I work. I could do with someone like Annie in my life more often and wouldn’t hesitate to recommend Annie to others and give the Coaching a go! Overall, I have been very impressed by the effectiveness of coaching, and it has exceeded my expectations. **Victoria Luke HR Manager, Welsh Water Customer Services.**

Annie Thompsett coached me as part of the Construction Future Wales course run with Cardiff Met. Annie's approach was both professional and approachable and I felt comfortable to open up and be honest which enabled me to get the most out of the session. Annie fed back my Facet 5 profile and helped me in the way I deal with people in a more confident manner and in particular how I conduct my meetings to get the desired outcome. I will be continuing to utilise Annie as my executive and business coach in the future. I would highly recommend Compass to executives and senior managers. **Marc Jehu – MD Jehu Project Services**

Annie has been a great help to me over the past few months. She is trustworthy and genuinely wants to help. Annie was able to listen to me and ask questions which in turn, provided solutions. Annie was very conscious to make the most of our time together and actively looked for areas and ways in which she could help. I liked that Annie didn't provide the answers but used coaching techniques to guide me to the answers myself. I really enjoyed the time we spent together and appreciate the help she was able to offer me. Since spending time with Annie, I am far more self-aware and make a conscious effort to take onboard others' opinions and suggestions. I am more aware of how I can be perceived and what I need to do to combat misconceptions. Annie was so welcoming and friendly; the catch ups were relaxed but equally professional. I felt like I'd known Annie for years! Having an external body as a sound board and coach was extremely beneficial and has improved my self-awareness. Annie helped me massively during the initial stages of my project which I'm really grateful for. **Ellie Jones, Recruitment Team Manager, Admiral.**

I was very demotivated when our sessions started. This has been significantly turned around. I've appreciated the impartiality of the sessions where I can say what I think and receive back appropriate, non-judgmental, non-personal challenge. I think I was pretty self-aware, but this process has been useful to me in holding me to account. For me, it was about not being let off the hook. I generally know what I need to do but give myself an excuse to not do it. Annie held me to account for the things I had said I would do and so excuses weren't allowed. **Henry Mehta, Head of Key Customers and Collections, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water**

Having struggled with a fear of public speaking forever the thought of giving a presentation to a conference of 150+ and participating in a panel debate completely TERRIFIED me. Seriously - when I'm walking to the podium I might as well be walking to the guillotine! Over the years I've attended about a dozen presentation skills courses – presenting with confidence; presenting effectively; presenting for the terrified - none of which came remotely close to tackling my overwhelming nerves. After a couple of sessions with Annie – and having implemented the step- by-step structure we developed together and read up on the suggested resources - the result was pure revelation – this stuff actually works! In spite a few weeks of sleepless nights worrying about it – and the usual fortnight before meltdown - I felt positive and energised on the day – and actually quite enjoyed it! Bizarre but true! ☺

My ex-boss who was in attendance (just to add to my nerves) said I was 'brilliant' and lots of people sought me out during the breaks to say how great they thought my presentation was, how well I handed the Q&A 'grilling' and how they thought the rather maverick approach I'd taken to income generation was spot on. I've also had a few follow up emails from various delegates and speakers (including the Conference Chair) to ask if I'd be willing to collaborate with them on joint projects in the future! Am completely bowled over by the response really! These strangers actually liked me!

So, a HUGE thank you to the wonderful Annie Thompsett – for her invaluable support. I have FINALLY found that all elusive 'anchor' – a presentation I can be proud of and look at back at the next time I'm having a wobble!

I cannot recommend Annie highly enough – her professionalism, exceptional listening skills and challenging, reflective, thought-provoking observations have empowered me to finally believe in my ability and potential. She provides an essential space to think and focus, new tools to facilitate a different thought process and brings clarity to what can be a completely overwhelming process. As a result of the coaching sessions, I am happier and more confident in every aspect of my life, and I no longer shy away from opportunities outside my comfort zone. I look forward to working with Annie for a long time to come. **Kathryn Cook UK Director, UK Association of National Park Authorities.**

Annie strikes the balance between talking and listening perfectly. She's very perceptive and despite not knowing the finer details of my day-to-day work, is able to understand what I'm talking about and ask the right questions. In all my coaching sessions, I felt that I was in a private and safe space which allowed me to talk openly. Annie is also well organised and focused, which is really helpful as it meant our sessions didn't go off on a tangent. I've realised that while I can't change certain things about myself (e.g., being introverted), I have developed a "work persona" over the years and this allows me to play more of an extroverted character at times. It also made me realise I do more that is outside my comfort zone than I would've thought (and many of those things are now within my comfort zone). I've realised that I have the confidence now to do things I would never have been able to do at the age of, say, 18 (e.g., interviewing candidates, meeting with other departments, making decisions). **Ceri Morgan, Pricing Analyst, Admiral**

I realised that a lot of my issues were actually caused by me, and not external forces e.g. an ability to always think the worst when 'the worst' rarely ever happened. I learnt skills and techniques to deal with these feelings, and that has improved my confidence and my ability to 'think straight' and practically. I wouldn't say I have learnt many new skills but the ones I have, have in all honesty been life-changing in terms of my approach to my own life, and the business. It's still a work in progress for me, though! I used to spend hours and hours poring over the financial charts, worrying about scenarios we weren't facing! I rarely look at these now, as I focus on bigger picture issues, and working for clients and managing new business. I have a more positive outlook to the business and the future and rarely respond to knock-backs anymore. My outlook is much more positive and the atmosphere in the office is much better! I think the team feel they can approach me more, and more easily. When there have been tough issues, I have had the confidence to deal with them and act, and not stew on all the negatives that issue may have created. I have made efficiency savings of £60K per annum, which I am not sure I would have had the confidence to do before. In terms of the business, we have just enjoyed a record year in terms of turnover, and one of our best years in terms of profit and cashflow. Next year is looking even better on every front – though it is early days. This coaching has certainly given me the focus and drive to push on. **Alastair Milburn, MD Effective Communications.**

The whole experience was invaluable. I have a particularly stressful role and understanding the emotional triggers that may cause certain reactions / stress and how I can manage them is very beneficial both professionally and from a health perspective. Just to say thank you – The coaching is a very supportive tool and also a tool to help professional and personal improvement. Also, it is made much better by the professionalism and personality shown by Annie. **Brian Martin, Customer and Conduct Director at Admiral Insurance.**

Annie's manner immediately puts you at ease. She's highly engaging; allowing you to feel very comfortable in talking honestly about issues. The quality of her questioning and challenge is second to none. Her manner means that she can ask difficult questions without me feeling intimidated or put on the spot. Annie is by far the best coach I have ever had the pleasure of working with. I have no recommendations for how Annie might change her approach. I've learned that I tend to make too many assumptions about how others may perceive me. I've also learned that I need to more actively listen and pause before responding. Being more measured in my dealings at work is something I've been working hard on recently! I now spend far more time preparing and planning for one-to-one meetings with colleagues. I have had feedback from individuals who I line manage that my level of challenge within these meetings has helped them think differently about issues, consider the issues more fully or come to a solution they didn't necessarily consider previously. I'm more prepared, I question far more effectively, and I follow-up to ascertain level of progress made by others. Greater self-belief and confidence to challenge at the very highest levels. This is something I applied

inconsistently before. I've committed to making these skills new habits! The most significant strategy I've adopted is being disciplined in creating time to effectively reflect and plan. I see executive coaching as vital for my continual development. This view is a direct result of my interaction with Annie. The level of insight provided has been so valuable. I couldn't see through the 'clutter' at one point. After one session with Annie, I was able to pin-point and focus on the things that matter. I hugely value and respect Annie's level of thinking, her manner and approach to getting the best out of people. **Sian Thomas, Senior Leader, Sports Wales**

Coaching has helped me work better with my team by realising my own strengths and development needs. One significant aspect has been the (so far) smooth transition with me going on a secondment. We are yet to find out the result, but I am confident that the session Annie and I had mapping everything out, helped significantly. **Senior Leader, Sony**

I'm consciously trying to find the balance between thinking super positively and therefore putting too much pressure on myself and thinking too negatively and expecting the worst to happen. It's tricky but the first step is through the coaching I have learnt that this is a process that often takes place in my mind. I managed a difficult situation with my manager and head of department in a very different way to how I might have done before coaching. I'm a very passionate person so this often results in 'word vomit' when I'm trying to explain, support or defend something I care about. Coaching taught me to take the time to reflect, remove the Fred's and think about the response/action beforehand. I've applied for a new role in work which before the coaching sessions, I would have not considered as I didn't believe I had the skills or experience to do it. Annie is an excellent coach. She listens, understands and provides information/tools which are bespoke to the situation you've described to her. She asks the right questions to make you think about your true feelings, but the questions never feel invasive or uncomfortable. More sessions/time would be helpful especially if spread across a longer period of time. Annie is absolutely fantastic, and I feel I have really benefitted from her sessions. The Facet5 provided great insight into my behaviour, personality and comfort zone. I would like the rest of my team to complete the Facet5 and for Annie to run a group coaching session as I think the team would really benefit from this. **Kate Fish, Product Manager, Household, Admiral**

Dear Annie, I want to say huge thank you for all the encouragement you give me. Your support gives the strength to see and understand how I control my own thinking. Today I scored a merit for the course! When I was in school, I was always told that I would not achieve anything so getting these results has exceeded my expectations. If you had not encouraged me, I would never know that I could achieve this. I know our paths will cross with support of 2Wish, so I look forward to seeing you soon. Thank you again! **Jenine Gill, MD Little Inspirations**

Annie was good at questioning the things I was telling her and assumptions I was making which helped me look at things a little differently than I have been previously. She also held me accountable to act on the things we had discussed which meant I made tangible progress. Working with Annie on the Facet profile helped me learn a lot about my preferred ways of doing things. I've found this more insightful than things like Myers Briggs. Particularly it has been insightful as regards my leadership style. I have always felt that my nature means I'd struggle to lead but Annie helped me translate my strengths and weaknesses and frame them in the role of a 'servant leader' which is a style I have naturally gravitated to without understanding what it meant.

Annie has very good listening skills. She made sure that she interpreted my thoughts correctly and often repeated what I said in a different way. She asked the right questions, allowing me to reflect and find solutions to issues I've encountered in the past, by myself. I have learnt that if I ask myself the right questions, I have the answers in me. I also learnt a few tips to slow down and improve perception. I have actually practiced this in the last 24h and it has already helped. I am definitely more aware of the impact I have on others and I talk a lot more about leadership, accountability and purpose with my team. I apply some of my learnings to support others.

I value the tangible tools we worked through together. I think sometimes we are all aware of our weaknesses/issues we have in a department but don't always know how to address them. Exploring ideas and options with Annie was beneficial as it offered real solutions but it also highlighted that there is a technique to get to these solutions and with practice, I can work these out myself in the future. Just thank you Annie for all the support you provided me with. It's been a pleasure sharing some of my personal issues/weaknesses with you. **Sabine Williams, Admiral Insurance**

The coaching was extremely beneficial. Annie has an excellent style which helped me to ask and answer questions about myself and why I approach things the way I do. Through the coaching I have allowed time to reflect and set actions as well as increasing confidence in my own actions. I would highly recommend Annie as a coach. **Admiral Leadership Programme Delegate**

Annie's coaching has genuinely helped me to get through this year. She helped me understand my strengths and areas for development, helpful insights and gave me confidence building activities. **Admiral Leadership Programme Delegate**

I was at a point of low confidence when I started working with Annie, with an inability to trust my own decisions and afraid that I wasn't able to communicate effectively with others. Annie listened to what was happening for me and how I got there, she asked questions but in a non-judgemental way and I instantly felt I could trust her and her ability to support me. Often Annie would ask a challenging question and sit back and wait for an answer, which were often the cringing times for me but absolutely necessary in challenging why I was continuing a thought or behaviour I had got used to thinking or feeling. Annie is open, utilising her own

experiences to the conversation which, for me was a great way of making theory real – by linking real life examples to illustrate a point. It also shows Annie's wealth of experience which in itself garners trust. The notes and follow up materials helped a lot to remind me what we had covered during the session and what we could discuss the next time. These notes are also an inspiration when I look back to see how far I have come since the first meeting, with Annie's help and support. I am not afraid to talk to people anymore and when I do, I'm not just trying to please them or make them like me. I am much more likely to actively listen, without trying to jump in and solve everything, pause and reflect before making a decision. I have more time to plan and prioritise effectively which enables me to do what I've promised to do. I also delegate more effectively by not being afraid to set my expectations from the start, checking back in if necessary and giving constructive feedback. This has changed the way I work with my team and has had an immediate and positive effect on me and the people around me.

My LM has said that she's noticed a marked change in my confidence and focus. My team and I are working well together and we have achieved a great deal together over the last few months. I am having better and more constructive conversations with many people and I have noticed a change in the way people are relating to me.

In my present role I am getting more from my team, enabling them to be more focused and motivated to deliver their objectives. I am also more effective in planning my time which has enabled me to focus on and fully complete major pieces of development work, key to the success of the project.

I have also applied for and been successful in gaining a new post which enables me to take a further step in my career to a more senior post with a substantial salary increase. I would not have considered that I had the right skills, abilities or confidence to take on this new challenge without the support and motivation your coaching has provided me with.

I have valued and enjoyed the whole experience of working with you. It has been a fantastic and inspirational journey – thank you. **Emma Richards, Manager, Chwarae Teg.**

Annie is an excellent coach to work with an expert and has high integrity. I have learnt a tremendous amount during my time working with her. She is challenging and supportive and has helped me to make a shift in the way I approach my work, which has led to improved performance. I have also hired Annie to undertake some work with my management team, which is ongoing. I have no hesitation in recommending Annie - she's fab." **Hayley Dunne, Senior Manager, Chwarae Teg**