THE EXECUTIVE COACHING PROCESS

The executive coaching process outlined below explains coaching—including the definition of coaching, a macroscopic level of a coaching engagement, and the structure of an individual client meeting.

Definition of Coaching

Coaching as defined by the International Coaching Federation (ICF) is "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process in order to inspire them to maximize their personal and professional potential." Coaching differs from many of the other "helping" professions in its purpose and relationship.

	Purpose	Relationship
Managing	Controlling and directing people/process Planning and monitoring action and risks	Supervisor-subordinate
Consulting	Advising individuals, groups, organizations Supporting large-scale change initiatives	Expert-novice
Mentoring	Developing individual potential Transferring domain knowledge	Mentor-mentee
Therapy	Treating pain, discomfort, or conflict within or between individuals	Doctor-patient
Facilitating	Empowering individuals and groups Creating frameworks for social interaction	Instructor-student

Macroscopic View of Coaching

The executive-coaching process is typically a six-month cycle which revolves around regular bi-weekly meetings between client and coach and periodic progress checks with client, coach and sponsor.

1. <u>Pre-Coaching</u>—Discussion with the client and, if relevant, the sponsor of the coaching engagement (CEO, HR, etc.). Align realistic expectations for the engagement.
2. <u>Self-Discovery and Self-Awareness</u>—Using interviews, instruments and input from the client, sponsor, and others, the client and coach set out on a journey of self-discovery and self-awareness critical to coaching success.
3. <u>Goal Setting and Accountability</u>—With help from the coach, client articulates his or her future leadership statement, current opportunity, and reasonable, motivating, and measurable goals and objectives for the engagement. He or she agrees to be accountable for results. Sharing these goals with their leaders, peers, and staff is recommended to track actual process in the workplace.
4. <u>Action Learning and Execution</u>—To accomplish goals and objectives, the client and coach dig deeply into the issues, often requiring specific client actions such as reading articles, learning new skills, and even having difficult conversations.
5. <u>Evaluation and Revision</u>—Based on feedback from stakeholders (including peers, direct reports, and sponsors), the client and coach (and, in some cases, the sponsor) will assess progress and set new goals and objectives.

The Individual Coaching Meeting

To maximize results, rigor and intentionality drive each coaching session. Typically, coaching meetings take place twice a month for 90 minutes. Each meeting takes on many of the following agenda topics:

- Client Check-in: The client discusses what's going on in his/her job and life. Often clients send an email in advance of the meeting that answers a handful of standard questions posed by the coach to prime the meeting.
- The Coaching Session: At the start of each meeting, the coach checks with the client on the status of issues discussed at the previous meeting. Also, the coach and client will review progress toward major goals. As issues or problems emerge, the coach guides the client through a proven coaching method.
- New Issues: Often, by applying the coaching method, big issues emerge and become fodder for action learning and accountability in a future session.
- Leadership Fieldwork: Based on client-coach discussions, the need for fieldwork often arises—specific things for the client to accomplish before the next meeting.
- Follow-up: Following the session, the coach summarizes his/her notes on the discussion, lists agreed-upon fieldwork assignments, and sends an email summary of the session.

Coach's Biography

Dr. Connie Whittaker Dunlop is a globally recognized executive educator, writer, and coach who guides leaders and their teams to make positive lasting change for themselves and their organizations.

Connie has coached over 1,500 executives over the past 20 years. In her coaching relationships, she serves as an expert guide and accountability partner who brings a proven approach for making and sustaining meaningful change. Connie's clients appreciate her unique ability to ask powerful questions, listen intently to their answers, and structure their seemingly random thoughts into compelling insights that forward action and deepen learning.

Participants in Connie's speeches and courses describe her as an engaging and thought-provoking educator who teaches at the intersection of theory, research, and practice. She prides herself on meeting adult learners where they are and challenging them to immediately apply their learnings. Connie was recognized as a Favorite Professor for her tireless dedication to teaching executive and global executive MBAs at the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. She currently serves on the faculties of the University of Virginia and Fielding Graduate University.

Connie holds a doctorate in human and organizational learning from George Washington University, an MBA from the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business, and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Richmond. She also earned a Leadership Coaching for Organizational Performance certificate from George Mason University. She is certified in the Center for Creative Leadership's Benchmarks 360 leadership assessment and the Six Team Conditions Team Diagnostic Survey™. The International Coaching Federation recognizes her as a Professional Certified Coach (PCC).