

A man with curly hair and a beard is speaking to a woman with short blonde hair and glasses. They are both smiling and appear to be in a coaching session. The background is a blurred office setting.

# START THE CONVERSATION.

**Learn what to expect  
during a coaching session.**

Coaching is a thought-provoking and creative process that will inspire you to maximize your personal and professional potential. Your ICF coach will be your partner on the journey toward identifying, clarifying and achieving your goals.

## What is coaching?

Professional coaching focuses on setting goals, creating outcomes and managing personal change. Other service professions, like consulting and psychotherapy, are based on the wisdom and expertise of the professional. In coaching you—the client—are the expert. Your coach's role is to ask powerful questions, act as a sounding board, provide objective assessment and observations, listen fully and actively, challenge your blind spots, and foster shifts in thinking that reveal fresh perspectives.

## What are examples of goals I'd address with a coach?

Is there an upcoming opportunity or challenge that you want to leverage? Do you feel “stuck” on the path to achieving your goals? These are two excellent examples of topics to bring to a coaching conversation.

Other common reasons for partnering with a coach include:

- Optimizing work performance
- Expanding career opportunities
- Increasing self-esteem/self-confidence
- Maximizing potential
- Defining strengths and weaknesses
- Improving business management strategies
- Managing work/life balance

## What's my role?

The most successful coaching partnerships begin with a client who has a clear idea of what they want to accomplish and is open to collaboration and new perspectives.

As a coaching client, your role is to:

- Create the coaching agenda based on personally meaningful goals
- Assume full responsibility for your own decisions and actions
- Use the coaching process to promote possibility thinking and fresh perspectives
- Engage big-picture thinking and problem-solving skills
- Take the tools, concepts, models and principles provided by your coach and engage in effective forward actions

*The International Coaching Federation (ICF) is the world's largest organization leading the global advancement of the coaching profession and fostering coaching's role as an integral part of a thriving society. Founded in 1995, its 35,000-plus members located in more than 140 countries and territories work toward common goals of enhancing awareness of coaching and upholding the integrity of the profession through lifelong learning and upholding the highest ethical standards. Through the work of its six unique family organizations, ICF empowers professional coaches, coaching clients, organizations, communities and the world through coaching. Visit [coachingfederation.org](https://coachingfederation.org) for more information.*



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