



The Ultimate Guide to Becoming a Career Coach

Selecting the Right Certification Program for You



Is Career Coaching Right for You?



Do you **dream about being your own boss** while helping others?

Are you excited to get in on an **industry that is growing at a high rate**?

Do you want to do **work that you are truly passionate about**?

Do you want to **sharpen your career coaching skills**?

If you answered Yes to these questions and have considered becoming a certified career coach, then you are in the right place.

There is more to actually becoming a professional career coach that is highly sought after by job seekers, than just saying you are ready to be one.

Like any profession, proper training is required to be successful. There are many facets of the profession and business to learn. One of the best ways to enter this field is to start off with a career coach certification program.

This Ultimate Guide was created to answer some of your questions about what exactly a career coach does and how to begin the process of selecting a certification program that is right for you.

What Does a Career Coach Do?

Career Coaches help clients, primarily job seekers, with all things related to their professional career. Each client's situation is unique, so there is no "one size fits all" checklist, but a career coach may do any of the following while working with a client:

- Meet clients one-on-one on a regular basis - this can be done in person or online virtually.
- Conduct assessments that identify strengths, weaknesses, desires, dislikes, etc. Then curate that information to make recommendations of what an ideal job could be for that client.
- Conduct research to learn more about your client's job and/or industry.
- Write résumés, cover letters, and LinkedIn profiles that tell your client's career story.
- Diagnose where a client may be getting stuck in their job search.
- Provide guidance on the application process.
- Help clients increase their visibility with networking strategies.
- Conduct mock interviews to help clients improve their interviewing skills.
- Determine salary and benefits requirements based on their needs and target role.
- Develop negotiation strategies for any incoming employment offers.
- Create an onboarding plan after a client has landed a new position to ensure success in their first 90 days.
- Help clients negotiate a raise or a promotion at their current job.
- Help clients navigate sticky employment situations to move from survive to thrive, instead of changing jobs.
- Help a client manage their negative nelly throughout the entire process.

Many of these steps are not difficult. **But as a coach, a major task is to help clients manage the naysayer in their heads.** Giving them tools to teach them how to manage their mindset is often a challenging, but critical aspect as a career coach.

While you may be thinking that gaining the skills to best help your clients is the most important aspect of becoming an effective career coach, **learning how to build a sustainable business is just as important.** As a business owner, you'll need to develop strategies for the following areas:

- Attract potential clients
- Close clients
- Designing coaching programs
- Process payments
- Resolve customer service issues
- Manage company finances

These lists are not meant to overwhelm or deter you from becoming a career coach. Even experienced coaches that have owned businesses for many years may not necessarily know everything on these lists, but they are important considerations if you plan to start your own company. In the following sections, we'll cover some of the questions that we get asked most often.

How Do Career Coaches Find Clients?



Career coaching is a fast-growing industry. As job markets get tighter and automated recruiting practices become more complex, people are turning more and more to coaches to help them get to the next level in their career.

If the need for career coaching is growing, you may be wondering how you can grow your business.

Finding clients is usually a two-step process:

1. Generating awareness of your services, and
2. Talking with potential clients to determine if you're a good fit to work together and closing sales.

Generating awareness so you can connect with your target audience has become easier with the prevalence of social media. Many of our graduates achieve up to \$100,000 USD a year on social organic awareness alone.

In the quest to find clients, you might find yourself doing these things:

- Creating content, marketing collateral and/or ads for social media.
- Spending time on social media connecting with individuals and establishing a professional presence.
- Putting together and running paid ads on your preferred platform.
- Exploring other platforms to test ads.
- Creating contact automations to engage with potential clients and maintain relationships with former clients.
- Conducting sales calls.
- Following up with potential clients that didn't move forward.
- Building your public speaking skills to create awareness and credibility through speaking engagements.

Unless you have a sales background, knowing you need to close sales is usually not a welcomed thought. That's why finding the right certification program is so critical. While learning the career coaching essentials is crucial, it's important not to overlook the business building skills you'll need to create a profitable company.

If attracting and landing your own clients is something you'd prefer to avoid entirely, you also have the option of pursuing a coaching position within the corporate structure. This could come in the form of a consulting role or regular employment situation.

How to Make Money as a Career Coach?

The short answer is, charging for services. As an independent career coach, you design your own service packages and determine pricing. Unless you're a coach in a corporate structure, you'll be able to set your own hours, create a marketing niche, and be your own boss.



Here's a few ways that many career coaches make money:

- Charge for one-on-one coaching sessions with clients.
- Charge for group coaching sessions with two or more clients at a time.
- Charge for résumés, cover letters, and LinkedIn profile updates.
- Offer a coaching package with any or all of the above.
- Charge for speaking at events.
- Charge for workshops.
- Charge for on-demand webinars and teaching modules.
- Write a book about career coaching and receive royalties.

There are many ways in which a career coach can make money. The better your program is and the higher the demand for your services, the more you can expect your coaching business to grow. How do you generate demand for your business if you're new to career coaching? One way is by increasing your credibility, which you can do by obtaining a certification.

Is Certification Necessary?

It depends. **If you are planning to sell your coaching services to companies (B2B), or plan to work at a company as a career coach**, many organizations require career coaches to have a certification. Because coaching is not a regulated industry, corporations lean on external validation to verify a career coach's credentials.

If you're striking out on your own (B2C), know that more and more job seekers have voiced complaints about the coaching industry. Some job seekers feel as if they've been duped by a coach who claimed to be an expert; but ended up not helping at all. Having a certification by a reputable organization will distinguish you from others.

Plus, there is so much to learn about career coaching, even for coaches with HR and recruitment backgrounds.

Find a proper certification program taught by experienced master career coaches and proof of graduates with real coaching businesses. Look for programs taught by successful career coaches with thriving coaching businesses. Review their LinkedIn profiles. Do they have recommendations from past clients?

Review their curriculum if you'll learn about all areas of being a career coach. See if they'll provide ready-made kits for you so you don't have to build things from scratch. And if they have a community that you can continue to be part of to keep you up to date. The job market changes very quickly, and you don't want to be seen as not in the know.

The peace of mind that comes with learning from a legitimate organization plus your savings in money and time required to "figure things out as you go" is well worth the investment of a credible certification. **This can be the difference between success and failure.**

What Do Certifications Cover?

There are very basic programs that might involve an hour or two of your time to take a test and obtain a certification. And there are comprehensive programs that can last up to two years. Some programs are in-person. Some are online. And some you do completely on your own. **As you consider a program, here are aspects of different programs to help you find the best fit** (and make sure you are getting your money's worth).

Does the Program Teach You How To...?

- Help clients answer the question, "What should I do when I grow up?"
- Define client careers and narrate a clear story?
- Write stellar résumés and cover letters that help clients stand out from the crowd?
- Navigate off and online job-hunting?
- Become an expert at using LinkedIn so your client's profiles can be found by recruiters?
- Learn the ins and outs of next gen hiring technology such as remote video interviews, artificial intelligent bot recruiters, and ways companies use tech to detect candidate fraud?
- Create a strategy and execute a business and marketing plan?
- How best to help you client negotiate the best job offer?



Is It Taught in a Way That Aligns with How You Learn?

- How is the material presented? Videos? Books? Onsite (in person?) only?
- What is the measurement of mastery? Is there a test? Or, other forms of demonstration?
- When are your new skills assessed? Only once at the very end, like a final exam? Or, assessed throughout the program?
- Do you need more to have an existing credential now? What is the minimum requirement I must have before I can enroll in a program?
- Am I required to obtain a client as I learn through the program? If not, how else can I obtain hands-on practical experience?
- Am I studying alone, or am I part of a group learning together?
- How much time do you need to commit to the program? Are you currently working full-time?
- Is there support after I've graduated?

And Finally, Consider Who is Teaching the Material...

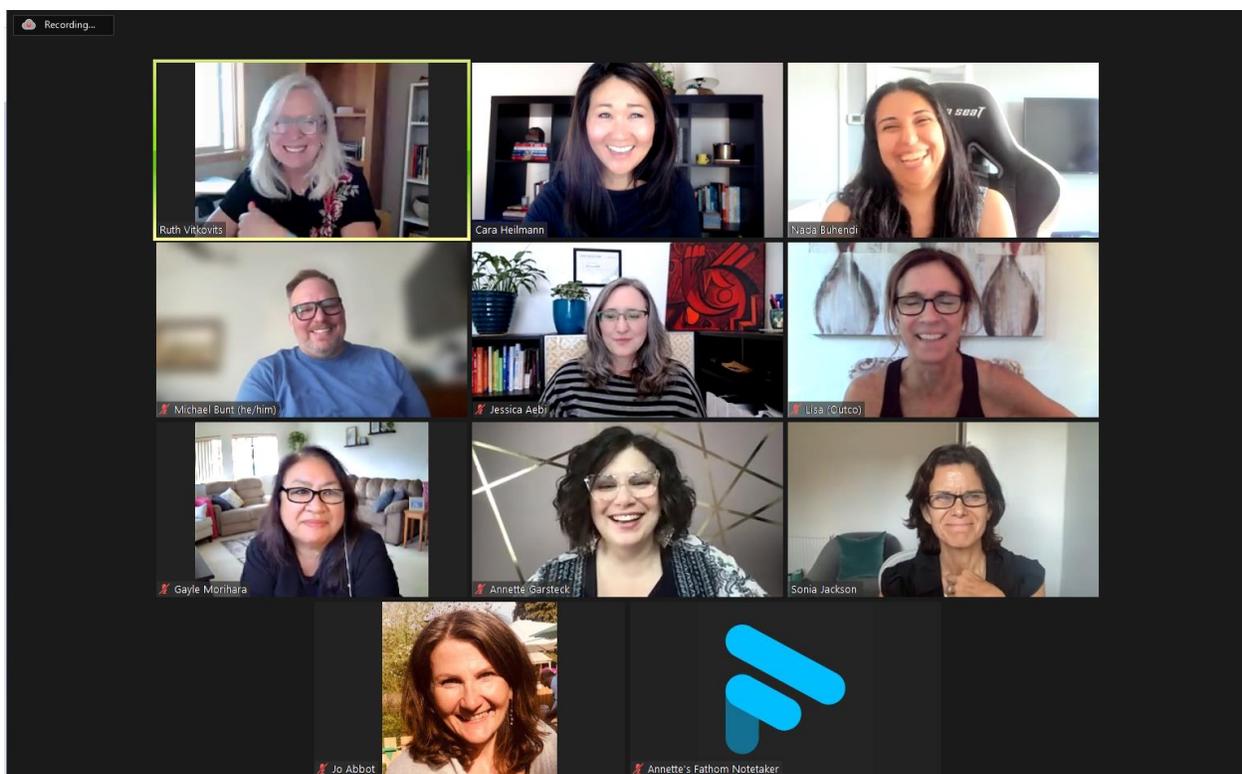
- What are the credentials of the instructor?
- Do they have success at running businesses?
- How many years of experience do they have in the field of employment and job search?
- Do they have experience being a career coach to a wide variety of people and at different employment levels?
- Is that person a strong trainer with expertise in adult learning theory? Will they be boring? Will they be engaging?
- Will the person offer the chance to stay connected with you in the future if you have questions later on in your practice?
- Are they open and willing to share what they've done so you don't have to recreate the wheel?
- Is the teacher coaching people now?

What is the Upfront Investment to Become a Career Coach?

There are dozens of certification programs ranging from free online certification programs to others that cost tens of thousands of dollars.

At IACC, you can get started for as little as \$850/month for three months for the foundation Senior Professional Career Coach (SPCC)® certification. In this course, a master coach teaches you essentials of getting started as a career coach, strategies to effectively help your clients navigate a job search, and a business starter kit so you know exactly how you'll make money.

For a limited time, the IACC is offering the Senior Professional Career Coach (SPCC)® certification PLUS the Master Professional Career Coach (MPCC) certification together for a reduced rate. Contact us for details.



Becoming a career coach is a solid path if you dream about being your own boss and help people while earning a great living. Find out more about the International Association of Career Coaches (IACC)® at iacareercoaches.org!

Created By Career Coaches. Led By Career Coaches.



OUR VISION

To help people discover jobs they love.

OUR MISSION

To create standards, educate our members, and advocate for the profession of career coaches worldwide.

OUR GOALS

- Create, implement, and follow standards based on the professional career coaching code of ethics
- Educate emerging career coaches through training and certification in practicing the art and science of career coaching
- Educate practicing career coaches through programs to stay relevant in the business world
- Advocate as a champion the practice of career coaching
- Create a community of career coaches to support one another with member communication, targeted marketing, and coaching opportunities so that we create an open exchange of experiences and viewpoints

Website: www.iacareercoaches.org

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/iacareercoaches/

