

# Coach's Insight

## Why Executives Hire Coaches

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(Ed. Robert Cornish and Karen Harlan)



Most successful people are self-directing and self-managing. They take initiative, they know what they want to achieve, and they have discipline. They have self-knowledge and know their strengths and weaknesses. They have action plans to follow in order to avoid procrastination and to keep on track with goals.

Then why would successful people seek out the services of a coach? Why do so many executives - who are already in top positions - demand an executive coach as part of their benefits package? Because they know from experience that even their highly refined ability to see what is needed is limited by their own assumptions and beliefs.

It is like the blind leading the blind when you only have yourself to turn to. The problem is that we all use our inner assumptions and beliefs to make decisions. We are driven by motivations and values that are outside our own awareness.

What are we talking about here? Surely, age and experience provides self-knowledge and certain wisdom. Most people know themselves pretty well and are able to set goals and make decisions that are in line with who they are. Well, most successful people have this ability, at least part of the time - and therein lies the problem. Sometimes our beliefs and assumptions are faulty or out of date. Yet we rarely take time to look at our assumptions and beliefs - they are too ingrained.

Many of the situations that block us in our daily lives do so based on a framework of assumptions we make. Draw a different frame about the same set of circumstances and new pathways come into view.

Have you ever tried to draw or paint a self-portrait? Even if you are artistically talented, this is a difficult task. To take a look at your assumptions and beliefs by yourself, and to explore them - examine them for their usefulness and value, is even harder to do - if not impossible.

A coach can help you see what you can't see yourself. A good coach will ask the right kinds of questions - the kinds you can't answer right away, the ones that make you think.

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### [Editor's Addition]

Executives who use coaches have a clear advantage over those who don't. The cleanest way to have this advantage for yourself is to hire a coach of your own. When that isn't an affordable option for you, there are other ways to get the same benefit for little or no cost.

All you have to do is think of the people that you know who you trust and who make you feel that you've been listened to when you speak to them and who also tend to be curious about things. They possess the skill called [Active Listening](#). Then spend time with these people in person or on the phone

where you have them ask you open-ended questions (questions that begin with the words 'what' or 'how') about your life. For example: What intrigued you this week? Do this on a regular basis, and you WILL gain new insights, clarity, focus, and action in your life.

Another way to do this is look for lists of questions directed towards self-improvement (you can find these easily online) and physically write your answers to them. Our author who wrote this article has a list of 10 Career Evaluation questions she will send you for the asking.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Maureen Cullen is a Certified Professional Coach whose specialty is to help over-40 women to transform their current career into their ideal career or to design a completely new career. With a background as a Human Resources Director, she has insider knowledge of working with people who are unhappy with their jobs. She has completed training from both the Coaches Training Institute and The Career Coach Institute, and she is an Authorized PowerUp Call™ Coach. For more information about Maureen and the services she provides, please visit her website: [www.cullencoaching.com](http://www.cullencoaching.com)