# Coaching Readiness: What Helps You Get the Most From Coaching

A short, evidence-based reflection to complete before your first session or before you sign on

Prologue

COACHING RESOURCE
One-page client handout
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Coaching works best when both partners come ready. Research on coaching outcomes points less to the coach's résumé and more to conditions within the client — readiness, motivation, openness, and follow-through — and to the quality of the working relationship you build together. This brief outlines eight such conditions and a short self-assessment to work through before you commit to an engagement.

## Eight Conditions That Predict a Successful Engagement

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Readiness for Change<br>Willing to move beyond discussing an issue into genuinely examining and testing it, not just describing it.[1,2] | 2. Autonomous Motivation & Ownership<br>The work is personally chosen and valued — not only something a manager or sponsor wants for you.[3,4] |
| 3. Growth Mindset<br>A belief that important capacities and patterns can develop through attention, practice, and support.[5,6] | 4. Self-Efficacy & Credible Hope<br>Enough belief in your capacity to take a first step — and to learn from it if it doesn't go well.[7,8] |
| 5. Learning-Goal Orientation<br>Entering coaching to learn and grow, rather than mainly to prove competence or protect image.[9,10] | 6. Feedback Openness<br>Able to hear difficult feedback, manage the first reaction, and examine what may be useful.[11,12] |
| 7. Readiness for a Working Alliance<br>Willing to be candid, help set the agenda, and name directly what isn't working.[13,14] | 8. Commitment & Follow-Through<br>Willing to protect time between sessions to practise, gather evidence, and report back honestly.[15,16] |

## Ten-Question First-Level Self-Assessment

Rate each item 0 (not yet / rarely true), 1 (partly true), or 2 (mostly / clearly true). There is no validated cut score — the pattern matters more than the total. This is a conversation starter for contracting, not a test of your worth or potential.

| | NOT YET | PARTLY | CLEARLY | | NOT YET | PARTLY | CLEARLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Meaningful target: Can I name something I genuinely want to be different? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 6. Learning stance: Can I prioritize learning over looking competent or right? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. Action readiness: Am I ready to test new behaviour, not only discuss the issue? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 7. Feedback openness: Can I hear difficult feedback and examine what's useful in it? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. Ownership: Would I choose this work even without outside pressure to? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 8. Candour & fit: Can I be honest with my coach about what isn't working? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. Development belief: Do I believe this pattern or capability can actually change? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 9. Shared work: Am I willing to agree on goals and engage with coaching methods? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5. Credible hope: Do I believe I can take a first step and learn from setbacks? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 10. Follow-through: Will I protect time between sessions to practise and report back? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Reading your pattern: Mostly 2s — the foundations are in place; use contracting to sharpen priorities and ways of working. A mix of 1s and 2s — a normal, workable starting point; name one or two conditions to build into the contract. Several 0s — worth a readiness conversation before committing to a full engagement.

You do not need to arrive fully confident, perfectly clear, or free of ambivalence — just enough ownership to be honest, enough hope to experiment, and enough commitment to carry learning into real work.

Sources: see page 2.

# Sources

Full references for the research cited in “Coaching Readiness: What Helps You Get the Most From Coaching.”


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