

# Evolution of business coaching

By Pieter Scholtz

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Back in the early 90's, the concept of business coaching was born and because many people struggled to grasp what it actually was, it was pitched as 'something like consulting'. Today, business coaching is widely understood, well established, and a highly competitive industry that is growing globally.



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Over the past 25 years, the rapidly changing business environment has advanced tremendously and this progression has naturally compelled the business coaching industry to be redefined in order to remain relevant and firmly placed in an authentically influential role.

Here are some of the major trends I believe will shape the sector in 2019 and beyond.

## Experience is essential

Coaching is not a side-hustle, it's a full-time profession that requires continued education. It's a service that delivers on distinct and measurable objectives, with the research and learning to back it. Increasingly, clients are demanding proof of success from their business coach. And so in the year ahead, we'll see a greater demand for experienced business coaches, who have a proven track record, and are equipped to dedicate time, skill, knowledge and insight to solving modern day business challenges.

## Quantifiable outcomes

Historical, low barriers to entry in this industry meant that anyone could become a coach with just a basic course completed and a business card in hand. This led to many inexperienced and unqualified coaches who failed to deliver real results for their clients. Well, no more. 'Performance guarantees' are becoming increasingly important as clients demand measurable results. And the shift to professionalise the industry to validate better quality coaches who deliver quantifiable outcomes will be propelled through greater industry standardisation and accreditation imposed by governing and regulatory bodies.

## Digital transformation

The digitalisation of the business world means that coaching need not take the form of a traditional face-to-face session: technology makes it possible for clients to learn through webinars, online workshops and other e-learning platforms. Access to business education online will continue to open up through new platforms and tools, making it possible for clients to engage with coaches in the way best suited to the client. Remote coaching helps clients and coaches alike in terms of time efficiency, and enables clients to select a price point and intensity that fits their needs.



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## “Coaching timeshare”

More and more clients complain about being time-starved and, as such, there's been a growing trend in the use of group coaching processes. Oftentimes potential clients who have the right mindset for growth and are ready for coaching, don't always have the financial means at that stage to afford the full-time, one-on-one services of a coach. In this case, we put a group of clients (four people) into one combined session, enabling them affordable access to learn from the discussions around the business challenges of multiple clients. I like to call this approach “coaching timeshare” and there's evidence to suggest that this format will continue to grow in popularity, especially in a weak economy.

## Traditional consulting vs. business coaching

Following the recent spate of corruption charges within the consulting sector, the negative reputation of traditional consulting businesses will drive further encroachment within the business coaching industry. As consulting businesses recognise the growing need for coaching, and look for additional revenue streams, they will build coaching services into their business to exploit the category. This move will require the coaching industry to ensure heightened quality to maintain market share.

## ABOUT PIETER SCHOLTZ

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