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## **Getting Unstuck & Removing Your Barriers to Success**

### **Why You Need Professional Executive Coaching**

Hello, I am Kathleen Schulweis, professional certified co-active coach and owner of <http://www.confidenceconnections.com>, a coaching and training organization. I am an executive coach with over 25 years of experience helping professionals achieve their personal and career goals working in such august institutions as UCLA, University of Southern California, and California Institute of Technology. *My mission is to help professionals uncover what keeps them from excellence and then work with them as they transform their barriers into opportunities.*

The best way for me to achieve this is to use my wisdom and experience earned by coaching hundreds of professionals from top-level scientists uncovering critical theories about the making of our universe -- to high school students discovering how they create their own universe of opportunity.

I apply my sociological training, my research, and my professional coaches training to challenging situations both big and small. This enables my clients close the gap between their limiting behaviors and their biggest dreams and between their values and their behavior. I connect them back to their confidence using coaching insights, tools and substantive training.

#### **The Problem: When Dreams Come True – Or Not**

When professionals are developing their identity, they focus on their training and their performance so that they move up the professional ladder... then something happens. For some that something is a 2 or 3-year arc -- for others it can be 10 years or "more". What we know is, a crisis happens.

That crisis is usually one of the following:

##### **1. Dissatisfaction:**

You recognize that you are not satisfied with where you are, or what you're doing, or with aspects of your life you expected to be fulfilling. Steven Covey calls this '*leaning my ladder against the wrong wall*'.



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## **2. Insecurity:**

You are being promoted and feel unsure of your skills and abilities. For coaching this is the arena of learning new best practices and being held accountable for their implementation.

## **3. Bad Behavior:**

It has become apparent to you or members of your team that whatever behaviors brought you to your career success, they're not working for you anymore and you're feeling stuck or, worse, failing. Mitchell Goldsmith says this is the '*What Got You Here Won't Get You There*' problem.

## **4. Re-tooling:**

Productivity demands have increased and you're having trouble keeping up or want smarter, better, and more efficient ways to achieve your benchmarks. These are productivity measures with an emphasis on leadership, team-building, and interpersonal communication.

These are the most common coaching challenges I work with in my coaching practice. True, every professional is unique, but nonetheless these are the most common presenting issues.

## **Other Reasons to Hire a Professional Executive Coach:**

1. Many professionals hire an executive coach because his or her team of trusted colleagues has dwindled and they need someone to give them some perspective and to *tell them the truth*.
2. Some professionals hire an executive coach to guide them through the choppy waters of change.
3. Still others hire an executive coach to help them handle a difficult employee or a floundering team.

Professionals have brought each of these issues to my coaching practice and I have provided myriad models, guidance, and insights to the coaching.

The tipping point for professionals is the moment they realize *they are not getting what they need from their work, their team, or their self and they're*



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*fed up with it.* This is the moment you will pick up the phone – when you want improvement more than you fear what you will uncover.

### **Taking Action: Coaching the Client, Not the Issue**

Recent research published by Harvard Business Review (2009) noted that most “C” level professionals have coaches, and, of those with coaches, the most successful outcomes are the result of working with coaches who are worldly and experienced and who coach all the challenges facing the executive-business, communication, and life.

This is my experience as well. With my own coach and in my coaching practice -- an insightful and creative coach with life experience and life/work awareness -- is paramount to successful coaching outcomes.

### **Measuring Outcomes:**

Each client has his or her own interpretations of benchmarks. For some it is simply showing up and reporting on assignments and improvements – subjective results. For others it is a matter of objective *measurable* results. And yet others require a combination of subjective *and* objective results. In the end, I have found that measurable indexes are in the eyes of the beholder.

I look for three measures of improvement:

1. Deepening all learning, using traditional coaching models, instruments and best practices
2. Forwarding the action with accountability, consistent appointments, and active involvement with the client, and
3. Improving communication among all those in the client’s life.

It is possible to posit measurable ROI for any particular coaching relationship. The ROI is designed in concert with my client’s needs.



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## **What Happens When You Don't Hire an Executive Coach?**

Sometimes nothing happens if you don't hire a coach -- nothing good, nothing bad, simply nothing. Things stay the same. What I notice is those who hire a good professional coach improve their lives. Is it true that if you don't hire a coach your life won't improve? I don't know. But what I do know to be true is millions and millions of self-help, self-improvement, and self-coaching books are purchased every year and most are barely cracked open (never mind read) and applied to make change. **Change is hard and change is scary and change is easier to accomplish with someone on your side who has wisdom and insight and perspective.** That someone should be able to help you set your direction, and be willing to challenge you to meet your highest dreams and goals. That someone should be able to say – *"You're ready, it's time to do what you really want,"* and stay with you as you learn to do it.