

Henley Business School and Community Impact Bucks working in partnership to provide a coaching programme for charities and community groups

Coaching Service

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who are Henley Business School?

Henley Business School (www.henley.ac.uk) is a highly rated international business school, ranked number 3 in the world for Executive Education. It provides a host of programmes, including executive coaching. Its participants are usually senior and middle managers from public and private sector companies across Europe. Henley Business School is part of the University of Reading.

2. What is coaching?

Coaching is a 1-on-1 conversation that is facilitated by a coach and focused on the needs of the client (coachee), with the objective of supporting the coachee to become more self-aware, to take more personal responsibility and, through this, to become more effective. The role of the coach in the process is not to provide the answers but, through asking questions and providing a process, to enable the coachee to identify their own solutions and to consider the best course of action for them, their team or their organisation.

3. How can coaching help me?

Coaching is helpful in supporting managers to resolve a wide range of challenges at work. It's helpful in leadership development, helping managers apply new skills.

It's also helpful for managers delivering change and for those experiencing workplace stress.

While it does not offer a 'magic solution', the feedback is that coaching provides a useful space to talk about an issue, and that having someone who is independent to listen, support and challenge you as you work out a solution, can lead to a more constructive discussion.

4. Who will provide the coaching?

In this programme the coaches are participants undertaking a postgraduate programme at Henley Business School. They are part way through a programme, and are required to undertake a specified number of coaching hours and receive feedback on their practice from their coachees. Most of the participants are individuals with up to twenty or thirty years of management experience and have already undertaken coaching with other clients.

5. How do I get matched with a coach?

After you have completed your form, Community Impact Bucks will supply your name and contact details to us at Henley and we will hold this information with the sole purpose of connecting you to your coach and for any follow up for evaluation or research during the following two-year period. We will use the contact details you have supplied to connect you with a coach. It is then up to you, and the coach, to arrange a time and place to meet.

6. Do I need to go to Henley?

You can choose to meet your coach at Henley Business School, but you can also agree to meet them at a mutually convenient location, on the phone or via Skype (conference) call. We will, however, ask you to connect for the first time before a deadline, as the participants will use their reflections (although none of the content) in a coaching supervision session.

7. What can I expect?

You can expect the coach to be focused on your needs, and to help you explore the issue you bring along to talk about. The session generally lasts 90–120 minutes. After the first meeting you can mutually agree to continue to meet. Most coaches meet every 2–5 weeks, and meet between 4 and 6 times, but this will be down to you to agree.

8. What will Henley expect of me?

We ask three things in this process.

Firstly, that you attend the coaching sessions you have agreed upon. If you are going to be late or need to change the date, let your coach know. They are working professionals too and may face the same challenges, so occasionally they too may need to change a date or time for a coaching session.

Secondly, you will be asked to send your coach a feedback form within 12 hours of completing the coaching session. Receiving detailed feedback from their coachee is one of the benefits for the coach (and is instead of payment). They want to hear your experience of what they did well and what they can do differently to continue to learn and improve.

Thirdly, you may on occasion be asked to participate in a research study. Henley Business School is a leading centre for coaching research and such research helps us to better understand the coaching process. Participation is voluntary and, as with all of our research, all data will be anonymised, so your name, organisation and specific details about your work will never be used.

9. What happens if I want to change my coach?

We suggest what is called a 'no-fault-divorce' clause in all our coaching. If you or your coach think someone else would be better placed to help you, discuss it together and then email Helen Cracknell on helen@communityimpactbucks.org.uk so we can try and match each of you with new partners.

10. How long will I need to wait before I am paired with a coach?

We run around nine cohorts per year. As a result, waiting times may vary where there is a surge of demand or where we are waiting for a course to start. As a rough guide you can expect to wait 4–10 weeks for your first coaching session.

11. Is it confidential?

The simple answer is yes. There are no arrangements to report back to your manager or your organisation on the session or what you said. Furthermore, the coach is under an obligation not to share what you talk about with anyone.

However, in extreme circumstances, such as where there is risk of serious harm to you or to someone else, or in cases of serious illegality (such as terrorism), we may have a legal obligation to share information.

12. What happens at the end?

We would generally expect the coaching sessions to continue as long as you need and as long as the coach feels able to support you. From experience, this is generally between 4 and 6 meetings. However, sometimes one meeting is sufficient and in other cases people may meet 8 or 10 times. At the end, just let your coach know that this will be the last session. If you would like more coaching at a later date, just contact Helen Cracknell on helen@communityimpactbucks.org.uk, who will re-nominate you.

13. If I have other questions, who can I ask?

We hope this guide provides the answers to the most frequently asked questions. However, if you have a question please do ask Helen Cracknell on helen@communityimpactbucks.org.uk. If they don't know, they can email us and we will do our best to help. If you are unhappy with anything that happens during the coaching process, again please contact Helen, who will discuss it with us.