

# *Want to change Your life? You need a coach.*

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Want to change jobs? Careers? Go out on your own? Just divorced? Just out of college? Need help getting to the next level? Who are you going to call? Your mother? Your best friend? Your boss? Not anymore.

Coaching is a new profession. The International Coaching Federation estimates there are more than 10,000 coaches nationwide, with 400 to 500 in Atlanta, and the number is growing as business and personal coaching has become one of the hottest trends in management. Ten schools throughout the United States now offer training and certification in coaching. Most coaches are women; in fact, 80 percent of the members in the Georgia Chapter of the International Coaching Federation are women. At a recent Atlanta conference on coaching, nearly all the attendees were women. "A woman's ancient skills include intuition, listening, and conversation," says Augusta Nash, vice president of membership for the Georgia chapter of the International Coaching Federation. She believes women, more than men, have a knack for asking the right question at the right time - a key skill for an effective coach. Additionally, "Women are more likely to trust their intuition and use it as a tool," she says.

Coaching also offers women who choose this field lifestyle flexibility. Most coaches work out of their homes, and after an initial session, most coaching can be done over the phone. Sessions vary from weekly to monthly and typically last 30 to 60 minutes, at \$50 to \$200 a session.

"The job of the coach is to ask deeper and deeper questions as a way to get the client to solve their own problems," says professional coach Jane Howe. When Howe first started coaching a regional manager for a food company, the manager was constantly under fire from his boss for not reaching his production goals. "Instead of scolding, I listened," says Howe. "He was dealing with personal issues and not using his time well. He was spread too thin and on the road too much." Together, they created a calendar and worked on time management. "We laid out new goals, set a new schedule, he started meeting his goals and then exceeding them. Within a year, he was named a vice president," says Howe.

Howe says she finds women more likely to seek out coaching - like her client who was recently widowed and overwhelmed at having to raise her teenage son by herself. "This woman came to me feeling hopeless and unable to deal with her situation," says Howe. "We took it one step at a time, from finding a mechanic to fix the car to planning a vacation. So I told her when she was doing great and encouraged her. Within two months, she began to believe in herself again."

Coaches are their own most enthusiastic promoters - they see the rewards and the potential. As Howe puts it, "What area of your life would you not want to be coached on?"