



Table of Contents

Introduction - 1

Section One: Introduction to Coaching - 3

The Life Coaching Comparison Tool - 5
Seven Introductory Coaching Resources - 8

Section Two: Christian Coach Training 101 - 9

Section Three: Making the Decision That's Right for You - 12

Section Four: Christian Coach Training Programs - 26

Quick Reference - 28
Center for the Advancement of Christian Coaching - 30
Christian Coach Academy, Career Program - 32
Christian Coach Academy, Leadership Program - 34
Christian Coaching Institute - 36
Coach Approach Ministries - 38
Coachnet - 40
Creative Results Management - 42
Erickson College - 44
The Institute for Life Coach Training - 46
Lifeforming Leadership Coaching - 48
Life Purpose Coaching Centers International - 50
Professional Christian Coaching and Counseling Academy - 52
Western Seminary - 54

Section Five: Tools and Resources - 56

Prayers of a Christ-Centered Coach - 57
Bible Verses for Coaches and Clients - 58
Ways to Discern Opportunities - 59
Definitions and Standards 2008 - 61



The Life Coaching Comparison Tool

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	Life Coaching	Counseling or Therapy	Consulting	Spiritual Direction	Mentoring and Discipleship
Typical Relationship	One-on-One or group in a professional context	One-on-One or group in a professional context	One-on-One or organizational in a professional context	One-on-One or group in a professional or ministry context	One-on-One in a business context (mentoring) or ministry or personal context (mentoring or discipleship)
Focus	Future, vision	Past, pain	Project or problem	God	Teaching by example
Desired Outcome	Action toward meaningful goals	Healing and restoration	Expert opinion and recommendation	God's direction	Personal or spiritual growth and maturity
Training	Professional training and certification available and commonly expected.	Professional training and licensing typically required	Training specific to consultant's area of expertise is commonly expected	Professional training and certification available	Not typically expected
Meetings	Often by phone, sometimes in person	In person	Usually in person	In person	Usually in person
Role	Coach is a collaborator who provides structure and process to an agenda set by the client	Counselor provides clinical expertise and facilitates a healing process	Consultant is an expert who analyzes a problem or project and provides reports and recommendations	Spiritual director is a collaborator who prays and listens with client	Mentor or discipler is a companion who has "gone before" and can lead and advise by example

Though there is certainly overlap in the descriptions of all of the above relationships, it is helpful to identify basic distinctions.