

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - Coaching

What is coaching?

Coaching is a relationship in which the primary focus is on helping the Person Being Coached realize their goals, develop strategies for leading change in their congregation and support their congregation in shifting from maintenance to mission.

The benefits of coaching include the opportunity to have a focused, one-on-one conversation with someone whose sole objective is to listen to your goals, dreams and visions and then come alongside you to question, explore, wonder, dream and develop plans of action. The basic assumption of coaching is that we all possess within ourselves everything we need to make change, solve problems or approach new initiatives.

How is coaching different from consulting?

Coaching is a process that brings out the wisdom and expertise of the person being coached. The coach is the process expert. The person being coached is the content expert.

Coaches listen, ask questions and offer support to help the person being coached discover and take action on the strategies, goals and ideas they identify within themselves. Coaches assume that the people being coached are the experts in figuring out how to get where they want to go. The coach's role is to support them along the way.

Consulting is a process through which the consultant shares the wisdom and expertise he or she has that they believe will help an individual or an organization move in a particular direction. Consultants are experts in process *and* content. The person or organization working with a consultant is encouraged to follow the consultant's wisdom and guidance to achieve a hoped-for outcome. Consulting is more directive than coaching.

What will I gain from working with a coach?

Pastors who partner with a coach will benefit from regular, goal-oriented conversations with their coach. Coaching pairs will generally meet twice a month for 30 to 45 minutes online, over the phone or in person. Some coaching pairs meet just once per month. It's up to you and your coach to determine the meeting schedule and frequency that works best for you. You will bring your questions, challenges, projects and goals in ministry to these coaching conversations. The coach will listen, explore possibilities, ask questions, assist in developing action steps and support you as you try out new ideas and guide your congregation in shifting from maintenance to mission. Each conversation will end with a clear plan of action for you to carry out and then reflect upon in your next session.

How does Coaching in the Wisconsin Conference work?

Coaching is available to those pastors whose congregations are actively engaged in adaptive and transformative change. Coaches meet with the person they are coaching one-on-one for at least six months and possibly longer.

When a pastor expresses interest in coaching, an attempt will be made to match her/him with one of the available coaches. Both the coach and the person requesting coaching will have input into this matching process to ensure an effective match. If a coach is not available, we will work with the pastor to see if there are other options to support him/her until the time a coach is available.

Coaches and those they are coaching will determine their own meeting schedule. The focus for each meeting will be determined by the authorized minister and not by the coach.

Who would benefit from Coach?

Any pastor who is leading his/her congregation through a time of change.

How do I get matched with a Coach?

Complete the **Coaching Interest Form** (ideally this is an active link) and submit it to Tisha Brown (tbrown@wcucc.org).

How long will the coaching relationship last?

This will vary depending on the coach, the person being coached and the goals being pursued.

Will my conversations with my coach be confidential?

The coaching relationship is a confidential relationship, unless noted in writing by the person being coached. However, confidentiality is limited in accordance with the laws of this state. Exceptions to confidentiality are child abuse, elder abuse, certain illegal activities, and intent to harm self or others. Coaches and the people being coached will be asked to check in periodically about their work together. The coach and the person being coached will work together on these check-ins.

Who are the coaches?

Our coaches are leaders within the Wisconsin Conference who have been trained and certified by Pinnacle Leadership Associates (www.pinnlead.com) to have basic skills in coaching. They are not professionally certified as coaches but have demonstrated the capacity to accompany others through a supportive coaching relationship.

What training do WCUCC Coaches have?

WCUCC coaches have been trained and certified by Pinnacle Leadership Associates. They received three days of intensive training in Pinnacle's Disciple Development Coaching process

and engaged in a 6 month on-line practicum with Pinnacle staff during which they coached 2 people and received guidance and feedback from Pinnacle and from their practicum cohort. Pinnacle Leadership Associates has provided each coach who successfully completed this process with a certificate of completion.

Could a coach work with my leadership board or another team in my congregation?

Because this is a new initiative in our conference we are only offering one-on-one coaching for pastors at this time. Our hope is to see this initiative expand in the future to enable us to offer coaching to small groups within congregations. If you are interested in a team or group process, consider signing up for the next round of the **Five Practices Program**. For more information go to www.wcucc.org/fivepractices.

What does coaching through the Wisconsin Conference cost?

The Wisconsin Conference provides a modest stipend to the coaches and covers the majority of their training and support.

Congregations are responsible for a minimal fee of \$100 for the first six months of coaching. This fee increases to \$200 for the next six months. After the first year of coaching, the fee increases to \$300 for six months of coaching.

Congregations are also asked to cover all of the other costs incurred by the coach. This includes but is not limited to mileage (reimbursed at the federal reimbursement rate) lodging and meals if needed and any supplies or resources that may be required. These costs are expected to be minimal since most coaching sessions will take place by phone or video conference.

Do you have a question that is not answered here? Contact Tisha Brown – tbrown@wcucc.org or 608-846-7880.