sales maven™

Choosing a Sales Coach for a Consulting Business

SEVEN QUESTIONS TO ASK ON A FIT CALL
AND THE RED FLAGS WORTH NOTICING

Nikki Rausch

First, Work Out Which Kind of Coach You Need

MOST PEOPLE DISCOVER THESE CATEGORIES AFTER HIRING THE WRONG ONE

When you sell $10,000 to $50,000 engagements, your constraint is rarely the number of leads. It is what happens between a qualified conversation and a signed agreement. Hiring the wrong kind of coach is expensive in a way that is easy to miss, because you spend months getting better at something that was never the bottleneck.

Lead generation and prospecting	Fills the pipeline. Right when your calendar is genuinely empty.
Mindset and confidence	Works on the inner game. Right when you know what to do and cannot bring yourself to do it.
High-ticket closing	Usually phone-sales methodology built for one-call closes. Transfers poorly to a consulting sale.
Sales conversation	The mechanics of the conversation itself. Right when good prospects reach you and too few become clients.
Sales team training	Builds capability across a team. Right when other people sell on your behalf.

> Is the gap in front of the conversation, inside the conversation, or inside your own head?
>
> ***Each one points at a different kind of coach***

Then, what to look for

Assuming the gap is inside the conversation, these are the things that actually separate one coach from another.

1. **Have they sold to organizations like yours?**
   They do not need to sell what you sell. They need to know how to close business with the kind of organizations you sell to, at your deal size.
2. **Do they work on your real conversations?**
   Most coaching works from what you remember. The deciding moments are the ones you did not notice.
3. **Is there a system, or only encouragement?**
   A named framework you can still use after the engagement ends.
4. **Do they teach volume or conversion?**
   More leads is the answer to a pipeline problem, not a conversion problem.
5. **Will you still sound like yourself?**
   Language you would plausibly say, and why it works, rather than a script.
6. **Do they coach you, or sell for you?**
   For most consultants you are the person in the room. The capability needs to be in you.
7. **Is their proof from people like you?**
   Named clients with real businesses and, ideally, specific outcomes.
8. **Do they say who they are not for?**
   A coach who works for everybody has not thought about who they work for.

Seven Questions to Ask on a Fit Call

THE NOTES UNDERNEATH SAY WHAT YOU ARE LISTENING FOR

- [ ] QUESTION 1

What have you personally sold, and at what deal size?

Listen for deal sizes and buyer types like yours. A background in $97 offers or one-call closes is a different playbook.

- [ ] QUESTION 2

Will you review recordings of my actual sales calls?

Very few coaches do this. Most work from what you remember, and the moments that decide a sale are the ones you did not notice.

- [ ] QUESTION 3

What is your framework, and can you describe it in two sentences?

You want something named and repeatable you can still use after the engagement ends.

- [ ] QUESTION 4

My close rate is lower than I want. What would you look at first?

A coach who reaches for more leads is solving a pipeline problem. When your pipeline is fine, this is the wrong answer.

- [ ] QUESTION 5

Who is this not right for?

A coach who works for everybody has not thought hard about who they work for.

- [ ] QUESTION 6

What does the engagement actually include, week to week?

Ask what happens between sessions. Much of the value is in the moments you need input before a real conversation.

- [ ] QUESTION 7

What happens when it is not working?

Listen for a real answer about adjusting the approach, rather than reassurance.

NOTES

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Red Flags

AND WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE INSTEAD

Walk away when you notice any of these. Each one tells you something about how the coach works, before you have paid anything.

THINGS TO AVOID

- **Guaranteed revenue numbers.** Nobody can guarantee what your prospects will do.
- **Pressure tactics used on you.** How someone sells to you is a preview of what they will teach you.
- **A method that only works at volume**, when your business does not run at volume.
- **No clarity on what happens between sessions.**
- **Everyone is a fit.**

> How a coach sells to you is a preview of what they will teach you. Notice how you feel during that conversation, because your prospects will feel the same way when you use it.
>
> ***The pressure test***

What good looks like

- A coach who has sold similar size deals to you, or has sold to organizations similar to the ones you sell to
- A named framework you can repeat
- Work on your real conversations rather than your recollection of them
- Language that still sounds like you
- A straight answer about who they are not right for

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Nikki coaches consultants, agency owners, and service-based founders selling $10,000 to $50,000 engagements. Before founding Sales Maven she spent 17 years selling technology to organizations including Hewlett-Packard, NASA, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. She is the author of three books on selling, including *The Selling Staircase*.

Read the full guide at yoursalesmaven.com/how-to-choose-a-sales-coach-for-a-consulting-business

Not sure whether this is a fit?

A short conversation about what you are working on and whether this is the right fit. When it is not, I will say so.

Book a Conversation About Your Sales