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3 professionals who worked with a career coach share how it helped them get promoted, land better jobs, and increase their pay

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Career coaches help you identify professional weakness you may not have been aware of. [Westend61/Getty Images](#)

- **Professionals who hire coaches often see a boost in productivity, performance, and salary.**
- **It requires vulnerability, but seeking out a coach and being honest can push your career forward.**
- **Matt Loeb, Adam Fry-Pierce, and David Nelson shared how coaching changed their lives.**
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Athletes are surrounded by coaches who support their personal and professional development — but coaches don't have to be limited to the sports arena.

In 2013, Bill Gates touted in a TED Talk that [everybody needs a coach no matter their profession or interest](#) — someone who can give them feedback and help them improve.

And as more people have accepted that they may need assistance in growing their careers, coaching has become a booming industry. In 2019, there were [71,000 coach practitioners](#) — a 33% increase from 2015, according to an International Coaching Federation report.

In the workplace, employees are 46% more satisfied with their position and 32% more committed to their work when they experience [intrinsic motivation](#), McKinsey reported in 2016. In 2018, the City & Guilds Group surveyed more than [1,000 UK professionals about their coaching](#) experiences as it related to the workplace. Based on the respondents feedback, the study found coaching boosted productivity in a current role and empowered them to be better positioned for promotions.

The investment in coaching can also literally pay off — professionals who hire coaches often experience significant salary increases.

Insider spoke to three senior-level professionals who hired coaches to help them advance in their fields and up their income. Here's why they said it was worth it.

Matt Loeb, 61, quadrupled his salary and landed a CEO role



Matt Loeb. Matt Loeb

Eight years ago, Matt Loeb met his first coach. His employer at the time, a tech nonprofit, had hired a coach for the entire leadership team. Loeb had been with the organization for 20 years and was generously compensated and content in his role, and figured he would stay through retirement.

But, when he met with the coach to talk through the [360-feedback](#) he'd received from his team, "he started asking me questions that brought me to the realization that I needed to talk about my future," he told Insider.

Loeb was living in New Jersey at the time and signed a contract to arrange for formal coaching with a Dallas, Texas-based coach. The agreement included details as to how often they'd meet (for an hour every two weeks, although Loeb said his sessions sometimes extended to 75 minutes) and the format for their sessions.

When the coach asked him, "What makes you happy?" Loeb said he was caught off guard.

"It was an 'aha' moment for me," he added. "I knew I was a happy person, but I didn't know why and how that connected to my career."

He eventually realized he wanted a position where he could affect more impact. However, he was uncomfortable with and lacked the confidence to change. Regular coaching helped him break through the discomfort with uncertainty and commit to taking action.

The result: He landed a [CEO position at another organization](#) in 2014, where he quadrupled his salary and increased the business' annual top-line revenues from \$43 million to \$76 million.

In 2019, he decided it was time for another change and launched his own coaching practice, [Optimal Performance Seekers, LLC](#), to help others experience the same transformational benefits of coaching he had.

"The fact that my salary went up was a derivative benefit," he said. "The real 'aha' was recognizing that I could move from number two to one and that I could have more influence over leading a group to achieve something impactful and beneficial to the whole of society."

Loeb said finding the right coach for you comes down to chemistry. "Look for somebody with whom you feel comfortable," he said. "Make sure the person makes you feel secure sharing what is inside you and the emotion you're feeling."

Adam Fry-Pierce received a strong performance review and a new, higher-paying job



Adam Fry-Pierce. Adam Fry-Pierce

Adam Fry-Pierce, who's in his 30s, felt constrained by the dissonance between his corporate life and who he was as a person.

At the office, where he was the senior director of customer experience for InVision, a SaaS platform company, he was all business. At home, he described himself as goofy and fun-loving.

In 2019, he began following Michael Lewis's podcast "[Against the Rules](#)," and after hearing episodes that talked about the power of coaching convinced himself that he too could benefit from investing in a coach.

"So many of us feel like we have to wear masks in our corporate life," he said. "I realized there was nothing wrong with who I was, which allowed me to be more authentic in the workplace."

In 2020, he decided to hire a coach to help him work through the dissonance.

One of his biggest breakthroughs through their weekly phone calls, he said, was becoming comfortable with silence. Instead of talking to talk, his coach helped him see how asking questions, being curious, and getting used to pauses could improve his interactions with colleagues.

"There was a clear difference in my reviews around communication skills," he said. "They were always ranked good but never excellent. After coaching, they went to excellent. I felt a lot more confident

about how I was showing up and it changed every aspect of how I interacted with others. I also learned how to be okay with people's expectations of me being different than who I am."

Before hiring a coach, Fry-Pierce was uncertain about his career path. Through the sessions, he discovered his strategic "North Star." As a result, in March 2021, he landed a new job as head of design operations at DocuSign, which also brought a 30% pay increase.

"Coaching is so vulnerable," Fry-Pierce said. "You have to trust the person 100%."

David Nelson, 42, was promoted and doubled his salary



David Nelson. David Nelson

David Nelson works with three coaches — a personal career coach, a work-sponsored corporate coach, and a colleague who specializes in executive coaching.

Each session lasts 50 to 60 minutes, he said, and takes place over [Zoom](#) — he meets with his corporate coach monthly and the other two on an ad-hoc basis, which tends to be every 60 days.

Nelson decided to get his first coach in 2019, he said, after having his job eliminated because of an internal political battle over two competing products.

It became clear as he met with his coach there was one trait holding him back: He lacked the personal discipline to keep emotion from influencing logic. Coaching helped him see things in a more objective way.

"The process of breaking down my strengths, where my energy is derived from, and leadership behaviors into discrete pieces gave me a manageable kit of parts to understand and describe what I want to improve and how," he said.

He spent several months refining his values and how they could be applied to his work, and how to focus his energy on areas that strengthen his impact with less exertion. It also led to his promotion from a senior director at two different software companies to his current position as the vice president of design at Northwestern Mutual, a move that doubled his total compensation.

"To really get anything out of coaching, you have to own the relationship, the work, and effort," he said. "Your coach is there to develop and encourage you. Ultimately, you are the one who has to make the changes."

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