

Key Elements of Successful Career Coaching

Spotlight for Career Services Professionals

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Effective career coaching is built upon the working partnership that develops between a student and a coach. As such, career coaching is a great way to get a student to focus on the goal at hand and work together toward meeting the end goal, say Jennifer Lasater and Gina Diamond.

“While coaching a student, career services can illustrate this partnership and empower our students toward gaining the skills they need in order to become successful candidates for employment,” says Lasater, executive director of national career services at Kaplan University.

But the roles in the relationship should be defined and understood or problems may arise, note Lasater and Diamond, Kaplan University’s director of career services. For example, they caution coaches against simply doing the work for the student.

“It’s imperative that you hold your students accountable for their searches,” Lasater notes. “[The students] need to understand that you’re there to provide help and support, but the majority of the work needs to come from them.”

Adds Diamond: “You shouldn’t fix their resumes or social media profiles. Instead, [the students] should take the feedback you offer and make those changes themselves so they are learning from the experience. They need to embrace your feedback, build their skills, and make good decisions that benefit them as a job seeker.”

Lasater and Diamond offer several other suggestions:

- **Build a strong relationship with your students**—Get to know them, their likes and dislikes, and their motivation for their searches. Create a connection with your students, and that will help build trust and keep them motivated.
- **Empower them to be successful**—Give honest and direct feedback that will help them in their searches. Sometimes it might be tough, but it will help them more in the long run. Teach them how to career research, write a resume, network, and more. Work with them on the skills they need to effectively search for jobs on their own in the future.
- **Celebrate successes and stay in touch**—It’s important to recognize milestones along the way and celebrate them. Try to stay in touch with your graduates as well to keep track of their career trajectories. You never know, they might need to hire new graduates in the future!