



Career Coaching Toolkit

USER GUIDE

Welcome to your Career Coaching Toolkit User Guide!

We want you to LOVE your coaching tools, so this guide is part of a series to help you use our Toolkits more effectively. We describe each tool in the toolkit, its purpose, how and when to use it, give additional tips AND identify which tools work in coaching sessions, as homework, in workshops or Webinars and group coaching!

For a great overview of all the tools in this toolkit, skip straight to the **Appendix for a one-page summary table.**



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Introduction

Whether you're a career coach or helping someone with career goals, these tools will help.

These exercises provide great input for performance reviews, and clients can use their newfound knowledge about themselves in their coaching with you to bring focus, clarity and depth to their career planning. Use these tools to:

- **Identify their strengths & weaknesses** including a **simple 360 Feedback** exercise
- Review how to **boost their strengths** and **minimise their weaknesses**
- **Discover what's truly important to them in their work**
- **Empower themselves** in their current work situation
- See patterns and threads that lead them to a **new or happier career**.
- And understand what drives them at work with the **Career Values Workbook**



You can start your client on these tools right away. And while these Career Coaching tools can be used in any order - the order they are listed works well if you'd like to use the tools as a ready-to-go coaching program/sequence. Here's a quick overview:

Get Started

1. **Reclaim Your Power at Work Exercise.** Empowering clients who are unhappy at work, this tool makes a good initial "diagnostic" tool for coaches. Importantly, this tool helps clients take actions to reclaim their power and move forward from a place of strength.
2. **Personal SWOT Exercise.** This essential tool to identify your clients' personal Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. It can also help set goals, review careers, boost self-esteem & more. Also use with a view to a promotion or career or role switch.
3. **Career Values Identification Workbook:** A great start point to get clients thinking about what matters most to them, and what motivates them at work! Particularly helpful for clients unhappy in their role or changing careers to help them understand why/themselves better.

Go Deeper

4. **Boost Your Strengths Exercise.** You've done the Personal SWOT and identified your strengths. Now help your clients capitalise on their strengths and really shine with this empowering exercise!
5. **Weakness Zapper! Coaching Exercise.** People are often so focused on "fixing" their weaknesses - but what if they *zapped* their weaknesses instead with one of these 5 nifty strategies!
6. **Career Discovery Pondering Questions Sheet.** Use this tool to connect clients to meaningful or exciting work or help clients come up with ideas and rediscover buried career hopes and dreams.

Get Input!

7. **Simple 360 Feedback Exercise.** Have a client who needs help identifying strengths or blind spots? This exercise helps clients get a fuller picture and feedback from people around them.

SECTION 1: Get Started with Your Client!

In this section, your client has the option of 3 exercises to boost their self-knowledge. What makes them both happy and unhappy at work? What can they do about it? What are their strengths and weaknesses? And what are their values at work?

TOOL 1) Reclaim Your Power at Work Exercise

Especially Good For: Everyone who has a job or career! In particular this tool is useful for clients who feel unhappy, powerless or disillusioned at work, and people looking for work because they're dissatisfied with their current role.

Description and Purpose of Tool: *This tool helps the client develop their awareness about the causes of their "unhappiness" at work, so that they can take action and empower themselves in their existing situation. Use this tool to help clients take their next career steps from a place of strength - instead of from helplessness or desperation.*



Steps and How to Use:

1. Begin by reviewing the instructions for this tool with your client.
2. **Question 1:** Ask your client to assess how they feel at work, rating what percentage of time they spend in the 3 states of Enjoyment, Misery or In between (*ensure total percentage adds up to 100*).
3. **Questions 2 and 3:** Ask your client to describe and list the factors that contribute to their different emotional states at work starting with what leads them to enjoy their work. Then ask them to describe and list what leads them to feel unhappy at work.
4. **Question 4:** Now, review your client's answers with them and ask questions to help your client identify the critical variables - or key factors - that affect their enjoyment at work. Some coaching questions you could ask include:
 - As you look at what leads to your "Enjoyment" at work, what themes or patterns do you notice?
 - As you consider what leads to your "Misery" at work, what patterns or themes do you notice?
 - What else can you notice about what impacts how you feel at work?
 - Are there any overall themes? What might you not have mentioned yet?
5. **Question 5:** Now for some truth and ownership. Help the client brainstorm ways they can help the situation. Some example coaching questions to identify possible actions include:
 - What do you believe - about your boss, colleagues, work, company, life etc - that impacts how you feel at work?
 - In what way does your behaviour contribute to how you feel at work? What could you do differently?

TOOL 1) Reclaim Your Power at Work Exercise *continued...*

- Where could you move to a state of acceptance instead of "fighting reality"?
 - What could you "let go" of? (eg. in areas where they have little or no power to make change)
 - Where could you "step up" more? (eg. in areas where they have power to make some change)
 - Where might you have more power to affect things than you realise?
 - What do you secretly want to do at work? And what parts of that idea are doable?
6. **Question 6:** Once your client has new perspectives and a list of possible actions to feel better at work, ask your client to identify the *biggest* difference that impacts their workplace enjoyment.
 7. **Question 7:** In order for things to change, your client will need to make some changes! Next, so that your client moves forward from a place of STRENGTH, ask your client to identify 3 Actions that will transform their current work situation - and importantly a date by when they will do them.
 8. Finally, it's always good to wrap-up by coaching your clients on how they could create additional commitment and accountability for their actions.

When: This tool can be used any time a client is unhappy at work, or when complaints about work come up a lot during a session. It's also helpful at the beginning of a career coaching engagement as a diagnostic tool and to help empower the client in their current work situation.

Use This Tool:

- In Session ✓
- Homework ✓
- Webinars ✓

Note: Use this tool in in-person groups with caution. If people work at the same workplace, and especially if using in team coaching, this could unnecessarily highlight or make an ongoing situation worse eg. if it became public that a co-worker was an issue for them.

Tips:

1. Remember: it's very important when clients are making major life changes to move from a position of STRENGTH - and not from a position of weakness, disempowerment or unhappiness.
2. A great area to explore more deeply with the client is their beliefs. What does the client believe "should" or "should not" be - that impacts how they feel at work? Where do they limit possibilities and/or themselves? Are there other more helpful beliefs they could carry while at work?

TOOL 2) Personal SWOT Exercise

Especially Good For: Everyone.

Description and Purpose of Tool: This powerful process helps your client understand what makes them unique and what distinguishes them in the workforce, as well as what to watch out for. Identify a client's strengths and weaknesses - as well as taking a bigger picture look at the opportunities and threats present in their larger world of work. Use the results to highlight their unique skills, strengths and talents and plan strategies to manage their weaknesses and threats.



Steps and How to Use:

1. Review the purpose and description of this tool with your client.

Note: The top row focuses on the client's internal qualities: their strengths and weaknesses.

2. Start with your Client's **Strengths**. Ask them to write their answers in the box while you ask the strengths questions provided. Add your own coaching questions to go deeper, for example:
 - What do you think are three of your greatest strengths in life?
 - What do these strengths look like in the work context?
 - Ask the client to imagine how they might be experienced by their co-workers. Then ask, "What are you most valued for at work?" and, "What about you do they most appreciate or enjoy?"
 - Finally, you could ask your client to share some of the biggest challenges at work - and how they overcame them. Then look for strengths in their answers, and reflect these back to the client.
3. Next, take a look at your Client's **Weaknesses**. Again, ask your client the questions provided while they write their answers in the box. Some example questions to go deeper could include:
 - What do you procrastinate over doing, and why?
 - What do you avoid looking at?
 - Ask your client to Imagine they are a career expert. In this role, where might they suggest you could improve?

Note: The bottom row shifts the focus to an external - or outside looking in - view. Here you will brainstorm opportunities for the client to reach for and threats to minimise or avoid.

4. Identify **Opportunities** available to your client. Ask your client the questions provided while they write their answers in the box. Coach your client to find new ways they can perform better, enrich their career or shine in the workplace. Some question ideas to go deeper include:
 - What ideas do you have to change things where you are right now?
 - Let's imagine a year or so into the future. What would your ideal work situation be?
 - What opportunities might an experienced mentor suggest are available to you?
 - Given the list of strengths above, which strengths would help you take advantage of the opportunities you've identified?

TOOL 2) Personal SWOT Exercise *continued...*

5. Finally, take a look at the **Threats** to your client. Again, ask them the questions provided while they write their answers in the box. Other questions you could ask include:
 - What could get in the way of you achieving the success or career direction you want?
 - What else could threaten you in your career, that you perhaps haven't mentioned yet?
6. Time to wrap-up. This coaching exercise helps your clients gain awareness of how their uniqueness is an asset in the workplace. It also helps them see what could get in the way and be a problem. And while it's important that so-called "weaknesses" are acknowledged, don't let your client focus on these as this exercise wraps up. Instead, ask questions to summarise the learnings and take a helicopter view so they can choose some actions to move forwards with:
 - What was the biggest surprise for you from this exercise?
 - What learnings will you embrace?
 - What opportunities do you see for further learning and/or training?
 - Given this clearer understanding of your strengths and opportunities, what actions will you bring back into the workplace with you?
 - What will you commit to doing - and by when?

When: You can use this tool at any time in the coaching process. It's a powerful way to get an overview of your client and highlight areas where further coaching and growth would be beneficial. Use to boost a client's career or to get a better idea of a client's strengths and opportunities when looking for a new career.

Use This Tool:

- In Session ✓
- Homework ✓ (When given as homework, it's great to follow-up with a coaching session to go deeper and identify actions.)
- Workshops ✓
- Webinars ✓
- Group Coaching ✓

This exercise is a great all-rounder.

Tip: Let your clients know this exercise is not about being modest - or overly self-critical; for best results, remind them to be honest, not modest!

TOOL 3) Identify Your Career Values

Especially Good For: Everyone. Once your client has finished, they'll have a list of 10 powerful Work or Career Values to go back to again and again during the coaching.

Description and Purpose of Tool: *This Career Values Identification Workbook uses a 5 Step process to get to a prioritised set of Top 10 Work or Career Values. When your client is clear on their values, they understand what drives and motivates them AND what demotivates them. Use your clients' values to make more informed work and career decisions, choosing goals, roles, activities and people that support and enhance their values - and avoid those that go against them.*



This workbook derives a client's values from their experience and interests, instead of picking values from a list. It also discourages them from overly prioritising 'SHOULD Value' words - like honesty and respect - values expected of them rather than their true selves.

My favourite part of this values process is the prioritisation, which really gets clients challenging assumptions about the way they think they SHOULD be, as opposed to what REALLY matters to THEM...

Steps and How to Use:

This tool works best when the client takes time over it - each step a week or two apart given as homework to bring to their next session. Whilst taking a few weeks may seem a long way round to get to a list of work or career values, what's really valuable about doing it this way is that they get to use THEIR own insights and gradually focus in on what matters most to them - in their own words.

- **As Homework:** You can give the client the whole workbook for them to do on their own timetable, or give them one step/page at a time (see below) to work through their values in stages.
- **In a Workshop/Teleseminar:** This workbook is a lot to get through in one session - plus your clients won't get the benefit of pondering and adding to their initial brainstorm list. However, it can be a great workshop activity if you have 3 hours or a half-day. Just follow the steps in the workbook and be sure to build in breaks and some group sharing or discussion in between the steps.
- **Group Coaching:** Give your clients the same homework and have them discuss and compare their results at the next session over a series of weeks.

Begin by reviewing the workbook instructions with the client. Now turn over for an overview of the 5 Steps in the Workbook.

Your Career Coaching Toolkit

USER GUIDE: How & When to Use Your Tools!

Step 1 - Work Experience Review:

Ask your clients to think about what they loved, liked, tolerated and disliked during their current and past work experiences. It's a great way to kick-start their thought processes looking for important themes, positive values, and also where values might NOT be being met!



Step 2 - Brainstorming:

Ask your clients to brainstorm the question, **"What's most important to me in my work-life?"** writing down *anything and everything* (including non-value words like Travel, Teamwork, Writing). They should write down whatever pops into their mind - anything at all that relates to their work life.



Step 2b - Brainstorming (wrap-up):

Anything your client can DO or HAVE is probably not a value. So to wrap-up Step 2, have your client review each item. If it's something they can DO or HAVE they ask themselves, **"What does that give me?"** until they get to the value underneath. For example, Travel could be Adventure and/or Learning, Teamwork could be Fun or Community, and Writing could be Creativity.

Step 3 - Review and Condense:

Ask your client to narrow down their brainstormed list to a top 10, grouping and combining words together in a line using slashes eg.

Integrity/honesty/trust/truth - making sure to put the *most important words at the front*.



Step 4 - Prioritisation:

In my experience, this is the most powerful and challenging part of the **values** process. This workbook uses a particular method to prioritise asking them to compare pairs of values. Clients are asked to choose between having - value (A), and NOT value (B) OR having value (B), and not value (A) for the rest of *their lives*. This is very different to asking which value they prefer as it forces them to think about which values could not be lived without.



Try it yourself: Would you rather have Happiness for the rest of your life but NO Integrity, OR Integrity but NO Happiness? It really makes you think...

Step 5 - Review and Wrap-up:

Finally, this workbook asks questions to see what your client has learned and how they could align their lives more with their values going forwards.

Now your client has a list of **Top 10 Prioritised Work Values**. This provides fabulous context and richness for your coaching.



TOOL 3) Identify Your Career Values *continued...*

When: This Work or Career Values coaching exercise can be done at any time in the coaching relationship. Because it has multiple stages and requires a little more commitment than the other coaching exercises, it's good to do it a little way into the coaching relationship once you've developed rapport and trust in the coaching process.

Use This Tool:

- In Session ✓ (review & explain process in session, complete as homework)
- Homework ✓ (makes great multi-stage homework)
- Workshops ✓ (allow at least 3 hours to complete, or choose a couple of steps to focus on)
- Webinars ✓ (allow at least 3 hours to complete, or choose a couple of steps to focus on)
- Group Coaching ✓ (give as multi-stage homework, review and discuss results in small groups)

Tip: Whilst it's great for your clients to have a prioritised Top 10 list of Work Values, **your client will benefit hugely simply from the process** of figuring out their values and prioritising them.

Importantly, remember that our values change over time, and may well be different (or prioritised differently) in different contexts and situations. So, a client's **values are a guide - extremely useful - but not fixed!**

SECTION 2: Go Deeper

In Section 1, your client completed 3 powerful exercises that boost self-confidence and self-awareness. And they may have begun to take action as a result. In Section 2, your client will explore their strengths and weaknesses more deeply and reconnect with "what they wanted to be when they grew up" for inspiration and self-connection!

TOOL 4) Boost Your Strengths Exercise

Especially Good For: Everyone. In particular, this tool is ideal for clients who fixate on their weaknesses and would benefit from a more positive focus.

Description and Purpose of Tool: *Boosting strengths is a great way to boost confidence. A perfect follow-on tool after the Personal SWOT Analysis (see Section 1), this exercise takes a client's favourite 3 strengths and helps them identify ways to create more impact - whether in their career or everyday life!*



Steps and How to Use:

1. Review the exercise background briefly with your client.
2. Next ask your client to choose their top 3 favourite strengths and write them in the first column. Note: If your client has completed the Personal SWOT Exercise, it's helpful for them to review the S - Strengths section before choosing the 3 strengths to work with here.
3. Once your client has selected 3 strengths to work with, it's time to explore each individual strength. Using the questions provided - and any of your own favourite questions - help your client brainstorm 3-5 possible action steps for each strength and write these in column 2.
Tip: Remind the client that the goal of this exercise is to develop action steps that will increase the *impact* of their strengths.
4. Finally, to wrap up, ask your client to circle ONE action for each of their favourite 3 strengths that they will move forwards on within the next week.
5. Wrap-up. After completion, ask the client to bring to awareness how it *feels* to focus on their strengths? What do they notice after completing this exercise, and how could they bring more of that into everyday life?

When: This tool can be used at any time in the coaching process to focus clients on the positive - their strengths. It works particularly well just after the Personal SWOT exercise.

TOOL 4) Boost Your Strengths Exercise *continued...*

Use This Tool:

- In Session ✓
- Homework ✓ (Review homework with client to tease out more ideas)
- Workshops ✓
- Webinars ✓
- Group Coaching ✓

Tip: Remind the client NOT to think too much about their answers, but instead to write down whatever 'pops' into their mind for the best results.

TOOL 5) Weakness Zapper Exercise

Especially Good For: Everyone.

Description and Purpose of Tool: We're brought up to believe we should 'fix' weaknesses, so use this tool to give clients a fresh perspective. Instead use the 5 nifty strategies provided to 'zap' their weaknesses. Inspired by the book, "Now Discover Your Strengths" by Marcus Buckingham.



Steps and How to Use:

1. Briefly review the background and instructions with your client.
2. Next ask your client to choose their 'Top 3' weaknesses and write them in the space provided in the first column. Help clients choose the weaknesses to work with by gently asking, "What do you most dislike or find most frustrating about yourself?"
Note: If your client has completed the Personal SWOT Exercise, it's helpful to review the Weaknesses section before choosing the 3 weaknesses to work with here.
3. Next, for each weakness ask your client, "How *specifically* does this weakness get in the way of you achieving your goals or doing your job?" If the client can't offer a specific reason, it's not a true weakness, so challenge them to choose another 'weakness' to work with instead.
4. Now for the fun part! Explore each weakness in turn and help your clients identify a strategy/ies for each.
 - i. **Lower your standards:** help your clients create a kinder scale to measure success by lowering their standards - and/or celebrate micro-improvements!
 - ii. **Design a support system:** clients can create a personal process or system that helps them manage *around* their weakness. This could include asking for help, automating, using templates, creating a step-by-step checklist or something else.
 - iii. **Overwhelm the weakness:** is there a strength your client could focus on that could outweigh their weakness? Or perhaps there's a strength that could be focused on instead when they're in situations where this weakness comes into play?
 - iv. **Find a partner:** help your client identify someone who is good at - or loves doing - what they don't. Your client can then offer a trade of skills or services - or pay someone to help.
 - v. **Stop doing it:** when we choose not to do something we're 'bad' at, that permission can be transformative. Explore your client's beliefs around the 'weakness'. Does it really need doing? Do they need to be the one doing it? If they could wave a magic wand and never have to engage with that weakness again, what would that mean for them?
5. Which of the 5 strategies offered will your client choose to 'zap' their 3 chosen weaknesses? To wrap-up, ensure your client writes down at least 1 strategy and 1 action for *each* weakness in the second column.

TOOL 5) Weakness Zapper Exercise *continued...*

When: This exercise works particularly well just after the Personal SWOT exercise. It's also great for helping clients prepare for a performance review at work - especially if they know a so-called 'weakness' is going to be brought up. And this tool can also be used at any time in the coaching process when a client is worrying about their weaknesses and overly-focusing on where they need to improve!

Use This Tool:

- In Session ✓
- Homework ✓
- Webinars ✓

Note: Use this tool in in-person groups with caution. If people in the group work at the same workplace, individuals may not feel comfortable sharing their 'weaknesses' or how they plan on managing them.

However, if you're an experienced team coach with a high-functioning team - this could be a great tool to build co-operation and understanding.

TOOL 6) Career Discovery Pondering Questions!

Especially Good For: Intended for clients searching for potential career ideas, this tool can be used with anyone looking for qualities and values to bring into and inspire their work-life.

Description and Purpose of Tool: *This tool is designed to stimulate your client's thinking and look for career-related threads and patterns that run throughout their life. Come up with ideas to help clients connect to meaningful or exciting work, or rediscover buried career hopes and dreams.*



Steps and How to Use:

1. Start by reviewing the instructions with the client.
 - Let them know the 21 thoughtful questions in this tool are divided into 5 sections.
 - Importantly, let the client know that while a few words or sentences can be enough, 'gems' are often found in the detail. It's often just as we think we've written everything down, that a great new idea pops up - so ask your client to be as thorough as they can.
 - Tell your client that if they repeat answers in different questions – this is what we're looking for. These are the common and repeating threads that keep coming up and won't be ignored.
 - Finally, ask your client to notice their feelings and responses to the questions, as this can also provide essential clues.
2. **Section 1:** This explores what we wanted to be when we grew up, why, and what still attracts us to these career ideas. Ask the client to consider these questions from as far back as they can remember, and write down as much detail as they can - however boring, silly or outrageous the answers may be. For any especially unrealistic career ideas, you could ask your client, "What was important about _____ to you? What drew you to that career idea?"
3. **Section 2:** This is a 'Work Review' exploring what, if any, of our original career ideas are reflected in current or past roles. In addition, this section explores how we currently enjoy ourselves at work, and what we might do - and why - if we won the lottery. This helps explore what their ideal life might look like if full financial freedom were granted.
4. **Section 3:** This reviews 'Hobbies and Interests' in the client's past, present and future - if time, money, and freedom were abundant. It's important to notice what qualities and features of these hobbies are attractive so the client begins to become aware of what matters most to them: this will help them ponder how to bring these elements into their career.
5. **Section 4:** In this 'People and Qualities' section, your client looks at who they really love working with, the qualities those people have and where might they find them. Then we bring awareness back to the client by exploring which of their own qualities they enjoy using the most. **Tip:** It can help to ask the client to step outside their work life to identify other places and spaces in their life where they're engaged in community to look for additional answers.

TOOL 6) Career Discovery Pondering Questions *continued...*

6. **Section 5:** In this last section, the client begins by recapping their answers so far. Then they pull together all the threads from this career pondering exercise. **Tip:** Remind your client their answers may be repetitive - and that this is a good thing! We're looking for recurring themes, patterns and to uncover different layers in the client's dreams and values. So give your client full permission to play.
7. Note that Question 21, **the final question, is important** as it asks the client to name and write down those common themes, adding them to the building blocks on the worksheet.
8. Once the client has completed the worksheet, whether as homework or in session, review the results with them. Some questions you could ask include:
 - How did you feel as you completed this worksheet?
 - What surprises were there? And what was *not* a surprise to you?
 - What learnings will you embrace?
 - What opportunities do you see for further learning and/or training?
 - Given this clearer understanding of your career dreams and desires, what new career ideas do you now have? What actions will you bring back into your current workplace?
 - What are your specific next steps?

When: For clients looking for a new career, it's good to offer this exercise as homework at the start of a career coaching engagement. For more general career coaching clients, this tool can be given at any time to help the client understand what drives them more deeply.

Note: It's important to allow plenty of time to explore and answer the questions. If you use this tool during a coaching session, allow *at least* one full coaching session. This tool also makes wonderful homework, followed by a session to coach the client around their answers and go deeper.

Use This Tool:

- | | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| • In Session | ✓ | (Use AS a session to explore ideas with a client. Or review homework and coach the client more deeply in session for possible new career themes, patterns and ideas) |
| • Homework | ✓ | |
| • Workshops | } | (you could use some of the questions in a |
| • Webinars | } | workshop, seminar or group, but this tool is best given |
| • Group Coaching | } | as homework or used one-one-one in a coaching session) |

SECTION 3: Outside Input

In Section 1 your client completed 3 powerful exercises that boost self-confidence and self-awareness. They may have begun to integrate some of those learnings. In Section 2, your client explored more deeply what really matters to them, and how to leverage their uniqueness. In this last section, your client will step into their wider world and ask for feedback!

TOOL 7) Simple 360 Feedback Exercise

Especially Good For: Clients who are unclear on, or disbelieving of, their talents and strengths. Also for clients who want - or would benefit from - some outside feedback on their areas for improvement.

Description and Purpose of Tool: *Even if we think we know our strengths and weaknesses, this may not be how other people see us. This exercise asks others to help uncover the blind spots of both our talents - and shortcomings.*

This gives us the chance to showcase our strengths, as well as the chance (if we decide it's necessary) to improve ourselves OR how other people perceive us.

Steps and How to Use:

Let your client know that it's important to consider *carefully* who is likely to take the time to do this for us - as well as who will do a good job and who will feel comfortable doing this. They may want to have some back-up names at the ready.

1. Review the exercise with your client, especially the sample email wording on page 2, which captures the overall theme of the tool.
2. Help your client brainstorm 3 people at work (ideally someone 'below, equal and above' them in the work hierarchy) as well as 3 people from their personal life.
3. Ask your client to also consider choosing 3 people they are 'afraid of' - perhaps someone who intimidates them, or someone they're not that keen on. These last 3 people can yield surprisingly positive results - and strengthen relationships. But, your client should only do this if they feel confident enough! It's good to leave our comfort zones, but *don't push* your client.
4. Next your client will contact these 6-9 people, using and adapting the sample email template on page 2 as they see fit.
5. Then once the feedback has been returned, review this information with your client. Help your client compare and contrast the responses, paying special attention to similarities as well as any strong differences.



TOOL 7) Simple 360 Feedback Exercise *continued...*

Some questions you could ask include:

- What similarities or common themes do you notice amongst the feedback?
 - What differences (if any) are there between what people value about you in your personal life and at work?
 - Are there any conflicting areas of feedback - whether it's 'strengths' or 'weaknesses'? if so, why do you think that is?
 - What is most valuable for you in this feedback? And what's *least* valuable for you?
 - What (if anything) will you choose to let go of in this feedback?
6. Next ask the client how the feedback aligns with how they see themselves? Some questions you could ask include:
- What surprised you about the feedback you received? What most surprised you?
 - Where could you step more boldly into a strength that others see in you?
7. Now ask the client to summarise what they've noticed from the feedback in the space on page 2 of the worksheet.
- IMPORTANT: Remind your client to ONLY include 'weakness' feedback they have concrete evidence for. So if there's something in the feedback your client thinks is inaccurate – they're probably right! However, if your client is getting similar feedback from many people, it may be worth exploring ...
8. Wrap up this exercise on a positive note and leave the client feeling empowered. Try asking:
- So, given the feedback you received, what hidden strengths have you been taking for granted?
 - What will you do differently at work with this information? How might you showcase your strengths?
 - How might you play down/make your weaknesses less visible or manage them better?
 - What actions will you commit to?

When: This tool can be used at any time. If you have a client who is particularly un-self-aware, complete this tool *before* the Personal SWOT analysis. This way they'll have starting input for the strengths and weaknesses sections of the Personal SWOT tool.

Use This Tool:

- In Session ✓ (Discuss how tool works & review results, complete as homework)
- Homework ✓

Note: This tool is not suited to in-person or large groups. However, it could form part of a group coaching program. Discuss how the tool works, ask the group individuals to complete it as homework over a few weeks, then review the results in individual coaching sessions with you. If you have a highly bonded group, the results could be reviewed in pairs or threes with clear instructions from you as coach.

In Summary:

This **Career Coaching Toolkit User Guide** helps you use this toolkit **more effectively**. However, the tools, tips and sequence above are *suggestions only* - it all depends on you and your client - so dance in the moment, have fun and play with your tools!



BONUS Career Coaching Tips & Articles:

You may also find these **ARTICLES** helpful:

1. [7 Career Coaching Tools & Ideas for clients who have no idea what they want!](#)
2. [Career Coaching: 9 Key Things I Tell Clients Looking for a New Career](#)
3. [7 More Career Coaching Tools & Ideas for clients who have no idea what they want!](#)

You may also find these **TOOLS** helpful:

1. [Are You Sitting TOO Comfortably? Exercise](#) Are your clients **stuck in their comfort zones**? This fun coaching exercise helps your clients assess where they are on the "comfort continuum".
2. [Boost Your Strengths Exercise](#) **Help your clients really shine** with this simple coaching exercise. Use in a personal or career context - and help your clients **be more themselves!**
3. ***FREE*** [Cognitive Distortions List](#) Where is your **client's self-talk getting in the way?** This can be a real eye-opener for our clients as they discover how they limit themselves through their words.

What Next?

We hope this Coaching Toolkit helps you grow your business and your clients! **Here are some things to do if you liked this guide:**

- [Sign-up for our newsletter](#) and get helpful **coaching articles**, hear about exclusive **offers**, **free stuff** PLUS get one free tool a month starting with our **FREE 549 Coaching Questions eBook!**
- **Join our** [Facebook Group](#), follow us on [Instagram](#) and/or [Linked In!](#)

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About the author: Emma-Louise Elsey is the CEO of Simplicity Life Coaching Ltd. (The Coaching Tools Company.com is a division of Simplicity Life Coaching Ltd.) She is a certified Life Coach, NLP practitioner and recovering perfectionist who loves questions, quotes, creating coaching tools and writing. Since qualifying as a coach in 2004 she has worked with many successful professionals and business owners.



Free Coaching Tools: For inspiration and to help you with your businesses, there are many more [Free Coaching Tools & Templates](#) at [The Coaching Tools Company.com](#) including more coaching questions, coaching exercises, business admin templates for new coaches and forms to help with your seminars.

Emma-Louise

Cover image of successful career coaching client [Sam Wordley](#) via [Shutterstock](#)
Interior image of casual client standing up by [Djomas](#) via [Shutterstock](#)
Interior image of client wearing suit standing up by [Raw Pixel](#) via [Shutterstock](#)



APPENDIX: Career Coaching Toolkit Summary

These tools are suitable for most clients. Each tool can be used individually at any time, or as part of a larger sequence.

Sequence	Tools	In Session	Homework	Workshop / Webinar	Group Coaching	Purpose of tool	Other Ideas/Options
SECTION 1: Get Started – Use these 3 Tools to help your clients boost their self-confidence and self-awareness - and feel more empowered.							
1	Reclaim Your Power at Work Exercise	Y*	Y	Y	N (or use with care)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Great as an initial "diagnostic" tool and/or to empower clients who feel unhappy, powerless or disillusioned at work.Use to help clients take action to reclaim their power and move forward from a place of strength.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Journaling homework: Who would you be at work if there were no obstacles? If you could change one thing at work, what would it be? Underneath it all, who would you be at work if you could?"For questions to help identify strengths try 10 Essential Questions to Help Your Client Identify Their Strengths!Adapt the What Makes My Heart Sing Tool to What Makes My Heart Sing at Work?For example value words, try our *FREE* Sample Values Handout!Use the Personal Mission Statement Generator - to help your clients connect to a deeper meaning and purpose at work.
2	Personal SWOT Exercise	Y	Y	Y	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify your clients' personal Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.Use to help set goals, review careers, boost self-esteem & more. And when preparing for a promotion, new career or role switch.	
3	Career Values Identification Workbook	Y	Y	Y	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none">What matters most/ motivates your clients at work?Particularly helpful for clients unhappy in their role or changing careers so they understand themselves better.Use a clients' values to make more informed work & career decisions and choose goals, roles, activities and people that support their values & avoid those that contradict them.	
SECTION 2: Go Deeper – Explore their strengths and weaknesses more deeply and reconnect with "what they wanted to be when they grew up" for inspiration.							
4	Boost Your Strengths Exercise	Y*	Y	Y*	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Personal SWOT identified their strengths. Now help your clients capitalise on their strengths and truly shine.Use to help clients identify ways to create more impact in their career - or everyday life!	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Read 27 Focused Questions to Boost Your Clients' Confidence!The Mentor Magic tool is useful to get insight into where the client needs support - and the client will get some great high level self-advice too.For a client fixated on their weaknesses, try another angle with the article What Are Your Clients' Stressor Values?Use the Rocking Chair and 2 Other Life Vision Exercises ("The Retirement Party" will get clients "big picture" thinking).
5	Weakness Zapper! Coaching Exercise	Y	Y	Y	N (or use with care)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Zap weaknesses instead of fixating on them with one of these 5 nifty strategies!Use this tool to give clients a fresh and more positive approach to 'weaknesses' - and possibly a confidence boost.	
6	Career Discovery Pondering Questions Sheet	Y	Y	N (or use parts of tool)	N (or use parts of tool)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stimulate your client's thinking and look for career-related threads and patterns that run throughout their life.Connect clients to meaningful/exciting work by identifying new ideas and rediscovering buried career dreams.	
SECTION 3: Get Outside Input – Help your client step into their wider world and ask for feedback.							
7	Simple 360 Feedback Exercise	Y (review & prepare)	Y*	N	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Even if we think we know our strengths and weaknesses, this may not be how other people see us. Ask others to help uncover the blind spots of both our talents and shortcomings.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Learn more about the Johari Window (another tool to identify blind spots)