

Eight Questions to ask your potential “Paid Advisor”

Hello my name is Mark A. Dulaney and I am one of the millions of so called trainers, coaches, consultants, authors, and speakers. I created this document because technology allows literally anyone to print a business card and call him or herself whatever title she or he chooses.

I strongly believe in the benefits of using what I will call a “Paid Advisor” from this point forward. The problem is, I have spoken to enough consumers who paid great amounts of money only to receive what turned out to be largely useless bits of information, lots of hype, and motivation that quickly wore off.

The problem is, we all tell you that we can help you increase and / or improve your confidence, business, income, finances, health & fitness, relationships & family and your life or that we can decrease / reduce / eliminate your struggles, problems, obstacles, and all the other reasons that you don’t have everything you want.

To prevent this from ever happening to you, I created 8 questions to ask your perspective “Paid Advisor” before hiring or renewing with him or her.

Here are the eight questions followed by why this question is important and what to look for in the answers you get:

1. How did you become a “Paid Advisor?”

This is important because there are three primary paths into “Paid Advising” as follows:

- A. Someone gets laid off or retires from another career and decides to become a “Paid Advisor” because it seems like the easiest way to make money in their spare time.
- B. They did something legitimately famous and uses that event or fame to get customers
- C. Someone has always had a burning desire to help others improve and succeed or they always wanted to understand success and / or successful people

Which one do you think is better prepared and more passionate about helping you?

2. How did you learn what you are going to teach me?

- A. They learned it from the seminars, books, and DVDs of truly successful and famous “Paid Advisors”

It is doubtful someone will admit this because everyone knows no one wants a “Paid Advisor” who is just repeating what they learned from others. But, if the person you are talking to doesn't have a real answer with a compelling story behind it, you can feel fairly confident they want to basically charge you for the plagiarized material of others.

- B. They paid someone to teach them how to become a “Paid Advisor”.

It is often referred to as being a “Certified Life Coach.” This is a good choice if you believe that your potential “Paid Advisor” learned all of the nuances of what they were taught. This is disastrous if you believe that just because LeBron James holds a basketball camp that everyone who attends is going to be half as good as LeBron is at basketball.

- C. They did something legitimately famous, successful, or otherwise noteworthy.

This is tremendous if you can duplicate the exact circumstances of her/his success, the contacts and skills he/she had, her/his powerful personality, and the uniqueness of the timing of her/his accomplishment. This is disastrous if:

1. The unique circumstances no longer exist
2. You don't have the contacts and personality of the famous person
3. The economy, rules, or laws have changed
4. The famous person taught thousands to do what he/she did and now there are hundreds of people doing and saying exactly what the “Paid Advisor” is teaching you to do.

- D. Research

They personally conducted a study of their field of expertise and they now teach what they learned from their study to others

- E. Experience

They have done and/or are doing what you want to do and they will teach you how to avoid the pitfalls so you get to success faster and less expensively

Which ones do you think better prepares someone to help you in 2016 and beyond?

3. What is your “non-advising” marketing / business / sales experience?

If you want to grow a business, improve as a marketer, improve at sales, overcome your fear of marketing, or get better at asking for what you want, it seems someone who has or is successfully running a business, effectively marketing, and actually making sales would offer you some of the most important and up to date information on how to do those things.

If you want to grow your business or improve at marketing and sales, you want someone with business, marketing, and sales experience, not just knowledge of the subjects!

4. Have you written a book? (why not?)

A book represents the documented and verifiable depth and level of knowledge of the expertise of your “Paid Advisor”. Writing and publishing a book, especially a good one, requires a depth of knowledge to fill the book and a lot of money to publish it.

How likely is it that someone without the content, resources, and / or organization to publish a book, can help you as well as someone who does?

5. Tell me about your client’s biggest accomplishment?

When you ask this question, it is more important to notice her or his eyes and body language than the words that come out of his or her mouth. Primarily, you want to see if they are searching really hard for an answer or making it up as they go along.

*How your “Paid Advisor” makes you feel is worthless once your session ends, what your “Paid Advisor” teaches you is useful if it works, the Accomplishments your “Paid Advisor” helps you create are **“PRICELESS!”***

6. What percentage of your clients renew with you?

This speaks to how many of her or his clients benefited so much from the “Paid Advisor’s” service that they continued to use them as opposed to run like heck!

Heck is not the word I really wanted to use, but it is a professional representation of the word I wanted to use!

7. What is your experience with my specific struggle / industry?

Just because a “Paid Advisor” is good at and knows how to teach marketing, doesn’t mean she or he can help you overcome your reluctance or out and out fear of marketing. The same is true of your specific struggle. If your “Paid Advisor” doesn’t have any experience or expertise with your specific area of struggle, how can he or she help you as well as someone who does?

Don’t hire a generic “one-size-fits-all” “Paid Advisor” because you are a unique individual with a unique struggle!

8. What is your unique and proven approach / technique / strategy / skill / innovations to helping your clients succeed?

Again, with this question it is more important to notice her or his eyes and body language than the words that come out of his or her mouth.

This is a question that separates true innovators from those who simply repeat what they learned from others. It is my belief that a quality “Paid Advisor” should have a unique and proven approach / technique / strategy / skill / innovation to help the people she / he works with.

When he or she explains the approach / technique / strategy / skill / innovation, she or he should be able to explain it with enough detail and clarity that you understand it and how it will help you.

Keep in mind, if you want your “Paid Advisor” to help you become more successful, then you DON’T WANT a “Paid Advisor” who just makes you feel good while in his or her presence, but unchanged once you walk out of the door.

It is far better to pay a premium for a unique and proven approach than to get a bargain on feeling good, hype, motivation, and clichés!

I hope this helps you in your search for a “Paid Advisor” of any kind. These questions apply whether you are hiring a personal coach to help you, a trainer to train your team, or a consultant to help your business.

If you hire a “Paid Advisor,” your decision will be very expensive or very profitable. I believe you will increase your chances of making it profitable if you are willing to ask these tough and uncomfortable questions and scrutinize the answers you get.

Finally, I want to give you this final bit of advice. Don’t confuse likability, the appearance of success, long ago accomplishments, fame, or a great personality with the ability to help you “Get Better” so your performance and results “Get Better!”