

ChatGPT as A Project Coaching (Job Aid)

Learning objective

During a project, leverage ChatGPT as a project-management coach to ensure you communicate clearly to the client, project team, and stakeholders and assess your project decisions.

Starting a coaching session

ChatGPT can simulate a business coach and help you prepare for your next step in a project or resolve challenges that you encounter. To begin a ChatGPT session, create a prompt to set up the coaching experience:

*Act as a certified ICF coach who has expertise in managing projects. Provide guidance to help me with my professional development. For this coaching session, I want you to ask questions about the specific project and my challenge. I will explain the situation.
Do you understand the task?*

ChatGPT should acknowledge the role and ask you to explain the situation.

Situations with example prompts

Below are 14 situations with example prompts you can use to begin a coaching session. The situations should enable you to address a wide range of challenges you may encounter while managing talent-development projects. Use the examples to create your own prompts.

Team challenges

#	Situation	Potential prompts
1	I struggle to delegate tasks effectively among the project team.	"What methods can I employ to assess team members' strengths and assign tasks accordingly?" "How can I ensure clear communication and accountability in the delegation process?"
2	Two crucial team members quit the project, and you discover they quit because they had too many conflicts with the project team's decisions.	"How can I address the underlying conflicts within the team and prevent further attrition?" "What tactics can I implement to ensure a more collaborative and harmonious team dynamic?"
3	I want to overcome a poor communication with project team members.	"How can I address and rectify the breakdown in communication with the project team?" "What steps can I take to ensure effective and transparent communication going forward?"
4	I want to begin a conversation with a team member who is late completing a task .	"What approach should I take to address the team member's performance and offer support?" "How can I provide constructive feedback to the team member and create a plan for improvement?"

Client and stakeholder challenges

#	Situation	Potential prompts
5	I'm having difficulty working with a client to create clear project objectives .	"How can I facilitate a collaborative discussion with the client to define and align on project objectives?" "What tactics can I use to elicit specific, measurable, and achievable objectives from the client?"
6	The client made scope changes without considering the cost, additional time needed, and possible quality concerns.	"What approach should I take to communicate the impact of these scope changes to the client?" "How can I negotiate a reasonable adjustment to the project plan given these changes?"
7	A client is dissatisfied with your performance.	"What strategies can I employ to address the client's concerns and rebuild their confidence in my abilities?" "How should I initiate a conversation with the client to understand their concerns?"
8	(Disengaged client) A client has lost interest and is not as active in the project as they should be.	"What actions can I take to re-engage the client and reignite their interest in the project?" "How can I involve the client more effectively to ensure continued participation?"
9	You worry that you aren't meeting your client's expectations .	"What steps can I take to proactively communicate with the client and clarify their expectations?" "How can I ensure I'm aligning my efforts with what the client truly values?"
10	Stakeholders have conflicting priorities , and you need to navigate and prioritize their demands.	"How can I effectively engage stakeholders to understand their priorities and find common ground?" "What tactics can I use to communicate the rationale behind my prioritization decisions?"
11	A client is surprised by the quality of a developed course because the client had different expectations for the final product.	"How can I navigate this situation and manage the client's expectations for future deliverables?" "What steps can I take to align the client's vision with the final product and ensure satisfaction?"

Project execution challenges

#	Situation	Potential prompts
12	Your project is having excessive delays .	<p>"How can I identify the root causes of the delays and develop an effective mitigation plan?"</p> <p>"What strategies can I implement to get the project back on track and meet the timeline?"</p>
13	Your project has several unexpected expenses not accounted for in the charter.	<p>"What steps can I take to assess and manage these unforeseen expenses?"</p> <p>"How can I communicate the situation to stakeholders and propose a revised budget?"</p>
14	The project encountered unforeseen technical challenges that impacted the timeline and budget .	<p>"What steps should I take to assess and address technical challenges while minimizing time and cost disruptions?"</p> <p>"How can I communicate the situation to stakeholders and provide a realistic timeline for resolution?"</p>

Example coaching session with ChatGPT

Below is a fictional dialogue between a project manager and the ChatGPT coach. This example addresses a situation different from the 14 situations and models how to seek guidance. It also illustrates how ChatGPT can provide actionable advice in a practical and supportive manner.

Situation: *The project manager faces resistance from a key stakeholder reluctant to approve a critical project milestone, potentially jeopardizing the project timeline.*

Example Dialogue

Role	Prompts and responses
Project Manager	Hello ChatGPT, I'm dealing with a challenging situation. I need a stakeholder to approve a critical milestone, but she seems reluctant. I'm worried it might impact our project timeline. What should I do?
ChatGPT Coach	I understand the importance of this milestone. Let's break this down. First, ensure you have a clear rationale for why this milestone is crucial. Have you communicated the benefits and the potential risks if it's delayed?
Project Manager	Yes, I've highlighted the benefits, but I think she may have concerns about potential resource allocation. How should I address this?

ChatGPT Coach	Address her concerns directly. Try to schedule a meeting with the stakeholder to discuss her specific reservations. Listen actively and offer potential solutions. For example, you might explain that reallocating resources could resolve her concerns. You also might clarify the long-term benefits of meeting this milestone.
Project Manager	That makes sense. I'll schedule a meeting with her and approach it with these points in mind. What if she remains reluctant?
ChatGPT Coach	<p>If the stakeholder remains reluctant, consider creating a detailed impact analysis to share with her. Emphasize the potential consequences of a delay and provide alternative solutions. Keep the lines of communication open and ensure she feels heard and valued.</p> <p>As a last resort, you might involve the client. Start by asking the client how to handle the situation without the client interacting on your behalf. If that doesn't help, your client may need to meet with the stakeholder to resolve the issue.</p>
Project Manager	Thank you. I feel more prepared to tackle this now. I'll start by scheduling a meeting and preparing a thorough rationale.
ChatGPT Coach	You're welcome. Remember to be proactive and transparent. Good luck, and feel free to return if you need further guidance. Keep in mind any potential limitations or dependencies on technology in this process.

Word of Caution

As you navigate these coaching sessions with ChatGPT, consider the tool's capabilities and potential constraints. While ChatGPT can provide valuable insights and guidance, remember it's a technology-based model. It may not replace human expertise or intuition in every session.

When receiving AI coaching, use your best judgment and consider the unique context of each situation. Additionally, the AI's effectiveness may vary based on the project's complexity and the quality of your prompts.

With this in mind, you can effectively leverage ChatGPT as a valuable resource while making informed project decisions.¹

¹ I created the job aid and then had ChatGPT coach me on how to strengthen it. I recommend using ChatGPT to provide a different point of view and act as a collaborator rather than having ChatGPT create the product. Doing so produces a stronger deliverable and avoids overreliance on AI. I also use Grammarly Pro to edit the grammar.