

# AI coaching provider vetting checklist.



## Purpose

In a rapidly evolving AI coaching market where many providers sound increasingly similar, this vetting checklist brings clarity, rigor, and differentiation to evaluation decisions. Grounded in coaching science, ethical AI design principles, and enterprise scalability requirements, this tool helps assess whether an AI coaching solution truly enables meaningful behavior change, not just engagement or surface-level interaction.

AI must be embedded within a proven system of leadership development, aligned with mindset and behavior transformation, and capable of delivering measurable impact at scale. Use this checklist to critically evaluate vendors, sharpen your point of view, and ensure alignment with a human + AI coaching ecosystem that drives real development outcomes.



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## Human + AI integration model

- Does the AI explicitly align with a defined coaching methodology (e.g., MBIR, vertical development, mindset shifts)?
- Is the system grounded in evidence-based coaching frameworks, not just conversational AI?
- Does the AI reinforce reflection, insight, and behavior change?
- Does it demonstrate understanding of leader development vs. task execution?

## Experience design & coaching quality

- Does the AI facilitate coaching-style dialogue (inquiry, reflection, re-framing)?
- Can it maintain context across sessions (memory, continuity, dev. journey)?
- Does it adapt to user goals, role, and organizational context?

## Data, insights, & value creation

- Does the platform generate meaningful development insights (no vanity metrics)?
- Can it identify patterns across leaders, teams, or cohorts?
- Are insights tied to mindset and behavior change, not just usage?
- Can sponsors access aggregated dashboards without violating confidentiality?

## Coaching philosophy & science alignment

- How does the AI integrate with human coaching experiences?
- Does it complement or compete with human coaches?
- Can it operate within blended journeys (AI + human + group)?

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## Enterprise readiness & scalability

- Can the solution scale across global enterprise environments?
- Does it integrate with enterprise systems (LMS, Slack, Teams, etc.)?
- Does it support SSO, security, and compliance requirements?

## Ethical AI design

### Transparency & consent

- Is it clear the user is interacting with AI?
- Is data usage explained in plain language?
- Are limitations and risks (e.g., hallucinations) disclosed?

### Autonomy

- Does the AI encourage independent thinking?
- Does it avoid over-directing or dependency creation?

### Privacy & data protection

- Is user data protected, encrypted, and compliant?
- Can users access, edit, or delete their data?
- Is coaching data separated from performance management systems?

### Fairness

- Is bias actively monitored and mitigated?
- Is the system inclusive across cultures, roles, and identities?

### Do no harm/ beneficence

- Does the AI stay within coaching and AI ethics boundaries?
- Can it detect and redirect harmful or non-coaching conversations?

### Accountability

- Is there a clear escalation path?
- Can users report issues and receive responses?

### Alignment & oversight

- Does it align with coaching ethics (ICF, EMCC)?
- Is there human oversight built into the system?

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## Red flags

If you observe any of the following, treat the provider as high-risk for enterprise coaching deployment.

- AI primarily gives advice rather than facilitating coaching
- No clear coaching methodology or scientific foundation
- Limited transparency around data usage or model behavior
- No human oversight or escalation pathways
- Generic outputs with no personalization or context
- Over-reliance on engagement metrics vs. development outcomes

This checklist is intentionally designed to elevate the bar for AI coaching evaluation. It reflects the expectation that AI coaching is not a tool, but part of a coaching ecosystem grounded in science, ethics, and measurable impact.

