



HOW TO ENSURE THE RIGHT FIT
FOR STRATEGIC GROWTH IN
YOUR COACHING BUSINESS

TOP 5 QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN HIRING YOUR NEXT OBM

by Katrina Cobb



welcome



Hi, I'm Katrina, an operations specialist and the right-hand woman behind a select group of high-impact online coaches.

I'm an ex-architect who has been in the entrepreneurial space for 14 years, grown multiple of my own multi-six figure businesses, and supported 100s of others as a coach, consultant, and OBM over the last decade. I also helped launch and run a nonprofit dedicated to providing business strategy and advice to small business owners during covid, overseeing more than \$1 million in free business consulting delivered through events and partnerships with MBAs across the USA over 2 years.

I have a masters degree in sustainable architecture, which means I'm very creative when it comes to problem-solving, but I balance that with an engineering lens on business systems, team, and project management.

And when I chose to focus fully on the online space 5 years ago by becoming a digital nomad and building a new business as an OBM while traveling the world full-time, I learned even more about growing and managing remote teams.

I currently manage my own team of highly skilled VAs in my Cornerstone Operations agency, in addition to managing existing teams for my small roster of operations clients. And I've learned in the process of both interviewing and being interviewed that having a clear hiring system and a good set of interview questions can really make a difference when looking for that next right-fit team member.

That's why I created this guide! To arm you with the best chance to land that next star team member to continue to grow your online business.

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TOP 5 QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN HIRING YOUR NEXT OBM

HOW TO ENSURE THE RIGHT FIT FOR STRATEGIC GROWTH

Hiring a more advanced online business manager is a crucial decision for any online coach, as this individual will play a key role in the growth and success of the business. You've heard the saying 'what got you here won't get you THERE' and this applies to team skills and capacity as well.

If you had VA support or perhaps an entry-level OBM before, but are reaching the limits of how they can support you (or they are moving in another direction!) **you are probably ready for more of a part-time COO than an OBM** so you can fully benefit from strategic support as well as the management of all-the-things.

Bringing someone on the team with more experience and more knowledge of running a business in this ever-evolving online space will dramatically impact your **ability to get results**, to **make smarter business decisions strategically**, and to **free up your mental load** to focus on the big picture by having a trusted team to execute and inform strategy. The return on that investment is monetarily significant but also priceless!

For this part-time COO (or advanced OBM) position in a growing online coaching business to be able to bring that sort of return, it's important to have a clear understanding of the candidate's capabilities, vision, and adaptability to potential changes in the organization.

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Here are the top 5 questions to consider asking during the interview:

1 Can you describe your experience in strategic planning and business development?

This question assesses the candidate's ability to think strategically and contribute to the long-term growth of the online coaching business.

Look for examples of their past involvement in setting goals, making strategic decisions, and executing plans.

Katrina's Tip:

If they have yet to be involved at a strategic level, and **have only ever done what they've been assigned**, you might want to reconsider as someone new to strategy and long-term growth will have a harder time giving you brain space back or contributing at that level. You may find you'll inherently doubt their input or second guess them due to inexperience which is also counter-productive for a long-term partnership.

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2 What's your approach to project management and process improvement?

A strong COO or advanced OBM should have a structured approach to project management and continuous process improvement.

Ask for specific methodologies or tools they have used, and inquire about any notable successes in streamlining operations or enhancing productivity.

Katrina's Tip:

For example, on my team, we use **my ORB method** (*objectives, resources, boundaries*) for task creation to have crystal clear directives and less back and-forth time lost to execute tasks. I also run a **full business audit** covering 7 essential areas of business and 49 checkpoints when I come onboard to identify any process breakdowns and identify immediate areas for improvement.

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3 How would you approach hiring, onboarding, and managing additional team members as the business continues to grow?

Understand their approach to scaling the team and their experience in the recruitment and onboarding process.

This question will help gauge their ability to handle future hiring needs.

Katrina's Tip:

An experienced OBM or COO will have an answer regarding how they gauge capacity or hire, as well as how they onboard and manage. Do they meet regularly? How hands-on are they? ***How hands-off can you be with this potential team member in place?*** Those are the sort of insights you're looking for, to match up with your growth desires.

As an example, I have a ready team of VAs for increased customer service or administrative tasks, and for specialty skills like design or copywriting, I manage the hiring and onboarding process for the coach. I also use one platform to coordinate all my team members and tasks and projects for centralized communication so things don't get lost.

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4 How would you assess and measure the success of the online coaching business under your leadership?

Gain insights into their key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics for assessing business success.

This question helps ensure they are results-oriented and have a thorough understanding of how an online coaching business should perform.

Katrina's Tip:

For example, on my team ***we're a big believer in data and reporting to make informed decisions***, and I have a team member dedicated to helping me build and update reporting for key indicators like website traffic and lead source, conversion rates across a funnel, and client retention. We look at some data weekly (lead source), some monthly (conversions and sales), and some quarterly (retention) in our strategy calls.

***Your data points should be tailored to your specific business but that's an illustration to start from.*

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5 Can you provide examples of situations where you've implemented systems or processes to improve efficiency and productivity within an organization?

Look for evidence of their ability to streamline operations and improve productivity, which is crucial for a growing business.

Be sure to ask how they measured improvements or determined success after implementing the new process.

Katrina's Tip:

I've **completed business audits** on businesses that had a previous team member believe one loom recording was an SOP (it is not...) and I've also investigated a strange report that led me to **uncover a process change** made by a previous team member to 'be more efficient' that led to over \$60k in lost payments, so a clear understanding of processes and how to define efficiency is critical. (We were able to make a small change to the process and recover most of that amount in a couple of weeks btw)

If your candidate can't state an example that makes sense, or describe an improvement and the impact it made on a client, consider moving on to a candidate with more depth of experience

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A quick recap:

- 1** Can you describe your experience in strategic planning and business development?
- 2** What's your approach to project management and process improvement?
- 3** How would you approach hiring, onboarding, and managing additional team members as the business continues to grow?
- 4** How would you assess and measure the success of the online coaching business under your leadership?
- 5** Can you provide examples of situations where you've implemented systems or processes to improve efficiency and productivity within an organization?

These questions should provide critical insight into the candidate's qualifications and suitability for the part-time COO position in your growing online coaching business, as well as their ability to adapt to future changes and capacity increases as the organization continues to expand.



what's next?

Feeling good about your next OBM hire after reading those interview questions?

Or are you reading my examples and insights and wondering if my team and I have capacity to work with a client like you?

I can't promise we do, but I CAN make time to chat with you and assess your needs to see if we're a fit, and if not to help you clarify your next hire.

Click here to
Book an OBM Discovery Call.



You can also learn more about my approach and my Cornerstone Operations team [here](#).

Best of luck in your hiring process!

Katrina Cobb

