



Magazine Coach Consultation Program

Orientation for Coaches

The Magazine Coach Program provides expert advice to publishers, so they are better equipped to problem solve and innovate on their own behalf.

This is particularly important for our many smaller BC magazines that often have little contact with the magazine publishing community at large.

Application

At least once per year, the Magazine Association of BC puts out a call for applications. Publishers or senior staff of member magazines then apply for a half-day consultation in an area they need assistance with, such as circulation, sales, or digital marketing, explaining specifically what they need.

Members may request a specific coach from our list or from their own network, but the final decision on who gets assigned to that magazine rests with the association.

The MagsBC executive director (or the program coordinator) then contacts one or more coaches to discuss the magazine's needs and their availability and hires the coach that can best assist the client.

Questionnaire

The association sends each member magazine a questionnaire in the area they need assistance in, cc'ing the coach. The publisher then sends the questionnaire to the coach for their review.

Pre-Consultation Interview

After reviewing the questionnaire, the coach contacts the client to arrange for a half-hour phone or online interview. This pre-consultation interview should help coaches deduce the state of the client's magazine and their strengths and weaknesses with regard to publishing, as well as prepare for the consultation.

During this call a coach will:

- Arrange the time for the consultation and pass this on to MagsBC. If a coach is based locally, member magazines may meet with them in person if pandemic restrictions allow and all participants feel it's safe to do so
- Discuss the nature and focus of the consultation itself
- Encourage participation of the magazine's core players at the consultation. A consultation can be much more productive if at least a small part of the coach's day is spent with the key

people who produce the magazine. The consultation is a great opportunity for a coach to improve the internal dynamics of an organization by encouraging discussion and innovation across the organizational boundaries that can often stifle a magazine's development. At the very least, a coach can help the client to implement changes and improvements by raising the profile of their specialty within the organization.

- Establish realistic goals on what can and cannot effectively accomplish in the time available. A one-time consultation cannot solve every problem. We encourage coaches to try to help the client clarify their own goals in direct relation to their circumstances both during the pre-interview and the consultation itself.

The Consultation

We recommend the coach:

- Double-check all the important details of the consultation when they start the online meeting as clients will sometimes rely on a coach to provide organizational leadership
- Encourage a workshop atmosphere by getting clients and core players to ask questions
- Expect to encounter a wide range of skills and knowledge within the MagsBC membership. For example, don't focus on comprehensive problem solving if what's needed is a review of the fundamentals of magazine publishing. A successful consultation will enhance the client's knowledge of magazine publishing, as well as provide some key principles and priorities to help guide the magazine's future development
- Provide support materials. Regardless of the experience and expertise of a client, a half day of intensive consultation can be overwhelming. We ask that coaches try to leave the client with their personal notes, trade articles or other relevant material

The Report

- A one- to two-page report should cover the magazine's main issues and the coach's recommendations
- Many magazines are published under extreme circumstances: no money, no time, and a volunteer or small staff working in relative isolation. Therefore, recommendations should be tailored to the capacity of each magazine
- Stress the positive whenever possible
- Coaches must send the report to both the magazine's contact and the executive director at MagsBC. The executive director will keep the report in confidence, simply noting the completion of the consultation in order to approve payment.
- An invoice may accompany the report sent to the executive director.

Follow-up Sessions

If a publisher at a member magazine decides they need to meet with the same coach again within a year of their first consultation, perhaps if staff members are having trouble implementing some of the recommendations or they're ready to do more, the publisher must contact the association if it wishes assistance with costs.

If there is still funding available, the association executive director or program coordinator will request a formal application, then ask the coach to contact the publisher about arranging a meeting if the application is approved.

The coach will again be required to submit a short report with further recommendations to the member magazine, and to the executive director along with an invoice.

Fees & Deliverables

\$450 + taxes for a 3- to 4-hour consultation

\$300 + taxes for a 2-hour follow-up online session within a year after the first consultation

Expense reimbursements: travel, accommodation, parking, meals and incidentals – MagsBC had planned to cover these expenses for coaches travelling for consultations starting in the summer of 2021. However, if the pandemic is still a problem at that time, or online consultations are working well, we will instead use this funding for additional consultations or other member support programs.

As mentioned before, the consultant is required to file a minimum one-page report for each consultation or follow-up. MagsBC will issue payment when the consultant has submitted their report, an invoice for professional fees, and an expense reimbursement form with all receipts attached (if applicable).

Funded by:

creativeBC

