

The Science Behind Our Coaching Model

Why Evidence-Based Coaching Works: Research Supporting the Career-Bond Approach

Why This Matters

You're not just buying coaching sessions—you're investing in a framework built on decades of research into what actually helps adults complete their education, earn credentials, and land better jobs.

The Career-Bond coaching model didn't emerge from guesswork. It's designed around **predictable moments where adults stall**—and uses coaching interventions proven in independent research to prevent drop-off, build momentum, and improve employment outcomes.

This document explains the science behind our five-session coaching framework, with direct citations to peer-reviewed studies and program evaluations that demonstrate why strategic coaching works.

The Core Problem: Adults Don't Fail Randomly

Adult learners face a consistent pattern of obstacles that cause them to abandon training programs, delay certification exams, or struggle to translate credentials into career advancement. These barriers appear at predictable points in the learning-to-employment journey:

- **Week 1-2:** Overwhelm from balancing study with work and family responsibilities
- **Midpoint:** Motivation decline as initial excitement fades and workload increases
- **Pre-certification:** Anxiety about readiness and fear of exam failure
- **Post-certification:** Uncertainty about how to leverage new credentials in job search
- **Early employment:** Lack of confidence navigating workplace dynamics and career conversations

Research on adult learner persistence confirms that these are **critical decision points** where support interventions have the greatest impact on completion and success[1][2][3].

Our coaching model places structured touchpoints at exactly these moments—not randomly, but strategically aligned with the science of adult learning and career development.

The Evidence: What Research Shows About Coaching

1. Coaching Dramatically Improves Persistence & Completion

Multiple randomized controlled trials and program evaluations demonstrate that students who receive coaching support are significantly more likely to persist in their programs and complete their credentials compared to similar students without coaching.

Key Findings:

A large-scale randomized evaluation of student coaching conducted across multiple institutions found that students assigned to coaches were **more likely to remain enrolled during the coaching period and one year after coaching ended** compared to control-group students who did not receive coaching[4][5]. The study tracked thousands of students and found consistent positive effects on persistence across diverse populations.

An academic coaching program evaluation at a major university showed that coached students achieved:

- **+0.12 to +0.50 GPA improvement** depending on initial academic standing
- **5-12% higher retention rates** at 6-month and 12-month follow-ups compared to non-coached peers
- **Significant improvement in time management and study skills** that predicted long-term success[6]

A 2025 systematic review of academic coaching interventions concluded that programs featuring **regular one-on-one coaching sessions combined with goal-setting and progress monitoring** consistently improved student outcomes including engagement, academic performance, and sense of belonging[7].

How This Maps to Career-Bond Sessions:

- **Session 1 (Course Kickoff):** Research shows that helping learners set clear, realistic goals and understand effort requirements at the outset significantly improves persistence[8][9]. Our kickoff session establishes this foundation before overwhelm sets in.
- **Session 2 (Mid-Course Momentum Check):** Studies identify the midpoint as a critical dropout window. Coaching interventions that re-engage learners at this stage restore motivation and address barriers before students disengage[2][6][10].
- **Session 3 (Certification Readiness):** Coaching that builds self-efficacy—the belief in one’s ability to succeed—directly predicts exam preparation, effort, and performance[11]. Our readiness session addresses anxiety and builds confidence at the finish line.

2. Employment & Career Coaching Improves Job Outcomes

Career coaching doesn’t just help people complete training—it demonstrably improves their employment rates, earnings, and career satisfaction.

Key Findings:

A synthesis of **14 employment coaching interventions** conducted by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services found that coaching programs produced:

- **Average annual earnings increases of \$639-\$696** compared to control groups
- **Positive employment rate improvements** in both short-term (6-month) and long-term (18-month) follow-ups
- **13 percentage point increase in education and training credential attainment** in programs that included coaching support[12]

The Institute for Employment Studies conducted a detailed evaluation of workplace career coaching and found:

- **Rapid and sustained improvement** in participants' career planning and self-management skills
- **Higher clarity about career opportunities** and concrete actions to pursue them
- **Improved career satisfaction and reduced burnout** at one-year follow-up[13]

The Aspen Institute's analysis of workforce development programs reported that participants who used **staff-supported career services** (including coaching and counseling) achieved **higher wages and employment rates** compared to those who used only self-service tools like online job boards[14].

International Coaching Federation pilot data showed employees receiving career coaching experienced:

- **28% increase in confidence and clarity** about career growth
- **10% increase in organizational commitment** and engagement[15]

How This Maps to Career-Bond Sessions:

- **Session 4 (Post-Certification Job Strategy):** Evidence shows that coaching improves job search effectiveness, networking behavior, and positioning strategies[12][13][14]. Our job strategy session translates credentials into competitive career narratives.
- **Session 5 (Early Career Check-In):** Research confirms that ongoing support during the first 90 days reduces burnout, increases confidence, and helps new employees navigate workplace challenges successfully[13]. Our check-in provides exactly this safety net during the most vulnerable transition period.
- **Bonus: LinkedIn Accountability & Mock Interview Sessions:** Studies show that accountability mechanisms and practice with real feedback significantly improve job search outcomes and interview performance[12][14].

3. The Science of Motivation, Goals & Self-Efficacy

Beyond coaching itself, our model incorporates fundamental principles from motivational psychology that predict persistence, learning, and career success.

Goal-Setting Theory:

The National Academies of Sciences reviewed extensive research on motivation and learning, concluding that **helping learners set clear, appropriately challenging goals with realistic effort estimates** significantly improves engagement and persistence[8].

Key mechanisms include:

- **Clarity about what success looks like** (addressed in Session 1)

- **Breaking large goals into manageable milestones** (Session 2 re-centers on priorities)
- **Adjusting strategies based on progress feedback** (Sessions 3, 4, and 5 provide course corrections)

Research consistently shows that people with specific, challenging goals outperform those with vague "do your best" goals or no goals at all[8].

Self-Efficacy Theory:

Self-efficacy—belief in one's capability to succeed at specific tasks—is one of the strongest predictors of effort, persistence, and achievement. Studies demonstrate that:

- **Higher self-efficacy predicts greater effort and persistence** when facing obstacles[11]
- **Coaching that helps learners reinterpret setbacks** (e.g., "this is normal and manageable") builds efficacy[11]
- **Seeing progress and receiving supportive feedback** strengthens belief in ability to succeed[11]

A 2024 study on self-efficacy and goal achievement found that students who set their own grade goals and received regular feedback showed significantly higher academic performance and persistence compared to students without structured goal-setting support[11].

Adult Learner Persistence Research:

Reviews of persistence in adult education emphasize that:

- **Building supportive relationships** through regular coaching check-ins counters the isolation and life demands that cause adults to stop out[2][10]
- **Addressing practical barriers** (time management, balancing responsibilities) through coaching significantly improves retention[2][10]
- **Strengthening intrinsic motivation** (why this matters to them personally) sustains commitment when external pressures increase[8][10]

How This Maps to Career-Bond Sessions:

Every session in our model is designed to:

1. **Strengthen self-efficacy** by reframing challenges, celebrating progress, and normalizing setbacks
2. **Maintain goal clarity** by re-centering on what matters and adjusting strategies as needed
3. **Build relationship continuity** that provides accountability and support across the entire journey

This isn't accidental—it's grounded in decades of motivational science showing these mechanisms drive persistence and success[8][10][11].

Why Timing Matters: Strategic Placement of Coaching Sessions

The Career-Bond model doesn't just provide coaching—it provides coaching **at the exact moments research shows learners need it most.**

The Five Critical Decision Points

Session	Critical Moment	Research-Backed Intervention
1. Kickoff (Week 1)	Overwhelm and unrealistic expectations cause early dropout	Goal clarity, time management, expectations calibration prevent early exit[6][8]
2. Mid-Course Check	Motivation decline at midpoint is #1 quit window	Re-engagement and barrier removal restore momentum before disengagement[2][6]
3. Certification Readiness	Exam anxiety and uncertainty delay or prevent completion	Self-efficacy building and preparation coaching reduce anxiety, improve readiness[11]
4. Job Strategy	Post-credential confusion about job search prevents ROI realization	Career coaching improves networking, positioning, and employment outcomes[12][13][14]
5. Early Career	First 90 days are most vulnerable for burnout and discouragement	Ongoing support during transition increases satisfaction and persistence[13]

Table 1: Strategic timing of coaching sessions aligned with research on critical decision points

Programs that provide **continuous, timed support** across the full journey show better outcomes than one-time interventions or unstructured "on-demand" coaching[7][10]. Our five-session framework ensures no critical moment is left unaddressed.

What Makes Coaching Work: The Active Ingredients

Not all coaching is equally effective. Research identifies specific elements that predict success:

1. Regular, Structured Sessions

Programs with **consistent, scheduled check-ins** outperform sporadic or reactive support[7][10]. The Career-Bond model provides five touchpoints plus three bonus sessions—ensuring regular contact without overwhelming learners.

2. Relationship Continuity

Having the **same coach across multiple sessions** builds trust, allows personalized support, and creates accountability[2][13]. Our model prioritizes coach continuity whenever possible.

3. Goal-Oriented, Action-Focused

Effective coaching doesn't just listen—it helps learners **set concrete goals, develop action plans, and monitor progress**[8][12]. Every Career-Bond session ends with clear next steps.

4. Problem-Solving Support

Coaching that helps learners **identify and overcome specific barriers** (time management, study strategies, networking approaches) produces better outcomes than general encouragement alone[6][10][12].

5. Efficacy-Building Feedback

Coaches who help learners **reinterpret challenges as normal and solvable** strengthen persistence more effectively than coaches who only provide sympathy[11].

The Career-Bond coaching model incorporates all five of these evidence-based design elements[4][6][7][8][12].

The Bottom Line: What You Can Expect

Based on the body of research supporting our coaching framework, Career-Bond participants can reasonably expect:

Compared to learners without coaching support:

- **Higher likelihood of completing your program and earning your certification**[4][5][6]
- **Better academic performance and skill development** during training[6][7]
- **More effective job search strategies and networking behaviors** post-certification[12][13][14]
- **Higher confidence navigating career transitions and workplace challenges**[13][15]
- **Increased earnings and employment rates** in the months following credential completion[12][14]

Specific mechanisms you'll experience:

- **Clearer goals and realistic expectations** that prevent overwhelm (Session 1)[8]
- **Restored momentum when motivation dips** (Session 2)[2][6]
- **Reduced anxiety and stronger exam readiness** (Session 3)[11]
- **Concrete job search strategies that move beyond applications to conversations** (Session 4)[12][13]
- **Support during the vulnerable first 90 days** that prevents early-career burnout (Session 5)[13]

Why "Evidence-Based" Matters

Anyone can claim their coaching "works." We're showing you the research that explains **why** and **how** our model works—and giving you the actual studies so you can verify the claims yourself.

The five-session Career-Bond framework isn't a random collection of coaching calls. It's a deliberately designed intervention that:

1. **Targets the exact moments** research shows adults need support most
2. **Uses coaching methods** proven to improve persistence, completion, and employment outcomes
3. **Incorporates motivational mechanisms** validated across decades of psychological research

You're not hoping this works. You're investing in a process where the evidence says it should.

References

[1] Comings, J., Parrella, A., & Soricone, L. (2000). *Persistence Among Adult Basic Education Students in Pre-GED Classes*. National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. https://www.academia.edu/22362529/Supporting_academic_persistence_in_low_skilled_adult_learners

[2] U.S. Department of Education, LINCS. (2024, December 19). Persistence: Helping Adult Education Students Reach Their Goals. <https://lincs.ed.gov/professional-development/resource-collections/profile-265>

[3] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2012). *Improving Adult Literacy Instruction: Options for Practice and Research*. Chapter 5: Motivation, Engagement, and Persistence. <https://www.nationalacademies.org/read/13242/chapter/7>

[4] Bettinger, E. P., & Baker, R. B. (2014). *The Effects of Student Coaching: An Evaluation of a Randomized Experiment in Student Advising*. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 36(1), 3-19. <https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/bettinger-effectsstudentcoaching-2014.pdf>

[5] Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab. (2015, January 17). The Effects of Student Coaching in the United States. <https://www.povertyactionlab.org/evaluation/effects-student-coaching-united-states>

- [6] Alzen, J. L., Langdon, L. S., & Otero, V. K. (2018). Evaluating the Effectiveness of Academic Coaching for College Students. *ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. EJ1413246*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1413246.pdf>
- [7] Martínez-Martínez, A., Cobos-Muñoz, D., & Olmos-López, P. (2025). Exploring the impact of academic coaching interventions on student engagement, performance, and well-being: A systematic review. *BMC Medical Education*, 25, Article 2. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12642885/>
- [8] National Research Council. (2012). *Improving Adult Literacy Instruction: Options for Practice and Research*. Chapter 5: Motivation, Engagement, and Persistence. The National Academies Press. <https://www.nationalacademies.org/read/13242/chapter/7>
- [9] Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2002). Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation: A 35-year odyssey. *American Psychologist*, 57(9), 705-717.
- [10] Soricone, L., & McDonnell, J. (2016). Supporting Academic Persistence in Low-Skilled Adult Learners. *World Education Research Brief*. https://www.academia.edu/22362529/Supporting_academic_persistence_in_low_skilled_adult_learners
- [11] *Frontiers in Psychology*. (2024, March 27). The effect of self-efficacy and self-set grade goals on academic performance. <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1324007/full>
- [12] U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. (2021). *Evidence Snapshot: Employment Coaching*. https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/opre/pathways-employment-coaching-evidence-snapshot_0.pdf
- [13] Hirsh, W., & Carter, A. (2002). *Career Coaching: A Case Study in Evaluating Impact*. Institute for Employment Studies. [https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/Career Coaching - A case study in evaluating impact.pdf](https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/Career_Coaching_-_A_case_study_in_evaluating_impact.pdf)
- [14] Aspen Institute. (2025, May 22). Career Coaching Can Help Workers Navigate an Increasingly Complex and Evolving Labor Market. <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/blog-posts/career-coaching-can-help-workers-navigate-a-complex-and-evolving-labor-market/>
- [15] International Coaching Federation. (2024, November 5). Career Coaching: Luxury or Necessity in Today's Workforce? <https://coachingfederation.org/blog/career-coaching-luxury-or-necessity-in-todays-workforce/>