Sue founded Aeona to inspire people and organisations to turn their dreams and aspirations into reality in sustainable ways, which bring fulfilment and wellbeing. Sue’s clients come from private, public and third sector and include university academic staff and support staff, managers and leaders from organisations of many sizes, business owners and private clients. Sue’s coaching approach focuses on working with mindset to help you gain clarity, focus and direction, recognise your full potential and achieve your goals. Sue specialises in mental toughness, resilience, confidence, leadership and emotional intelligence.

As an independent coach, Sue brings a fresh perspective and objectivity combined with an understanding of working within academia, both as an ex-academic herself working within UK and Scottish Universities and international research institutes and as an external coach to clients in various academic institutions. She also brings perspective from having worked with managers, leaders and executives in a wide range of organisations.

Sue’s diverse career includes current roles as coach, trainer, consultant and holiday accommodation business owner. Previous roles include research scientist in evolutionary ecology (effectively the study of successful strategies over short and long time periods!) including post-doc fellowships at a Max-Planck Institute in Germany and the University of Edinburgh; National Instructor and Instructor Trainer for the British Sub Aqua Club; and leading adventurous expeditions overseas including six months in the South Pacific.

Sue’s voluntary roles include mentoring for the Scottish Chambers of Commerce and Women in Banking and Finance (WIBF), Board member for WIBF and Chair of Moorfoot Community Council. Sue holds a range of professional coaching qualifications and her professional memberships include Association for Coaching (AC), Public Speakers Association (PSA), Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM), and Institute of Directors (IOD).

Sue now lives in Midlothian with her partner, Pete. Her current adventure is learning to play Polo.

**My coaching Approach**

My coaching approach starts with raising awareness, meaning, purpose, values, strengths, motivation and passions, to create the foundations for you to be more effective, analyse your current situation and clarify where you want to be and how you will get there, both personally and professionally. This values-based approach creates a core compass to facilitate positive decision-making, sustainable change and wellbeing for both individuals and the organisation.
Working in this style raises self-awareness, and your unconscious knowledge about “who I am and what is important to me” into your conscious thoughts. Things becomes clearer and it becomes a lot easier to make choices and decisions about what you really want to do and to deal with whatever issues brought you to coaching in the first place. Occasions where this approach is particularly useful are for coaching around broader purposes such as career, leadership, a crossroads in life, better life/work balance and integration, confidence and a wide range of issues in work. This approach helps clients to tap into deeper motivation by helping them find clarity about their own personal purpose, focus on what is important to them, be confident they are doing the right things and to value time they invest in re-energising themselves and doing things they enjoy.

Coaching areas that I specialise in include confidence, mental toughness and resilience, leadership and emotional intelligence. Coaching works best through conversations with a purpose. My approach involves active listening, challenging, being a sounding board and bringing in relevant tools as requirements arise. I encourage clients to work on tools between sessions, as it stimulates awareness and more effective coaching sessions. I use a range of tools that help you develop awareness, clarity, confidence and the motivation and commitment to turn your plans into reality. These include a range of frameworks that support you as a leader, manager or executive to focus on priorities, engage your people, create high performing teams, raise your leadership presence, communicate with influence, maintain balance in all realms of your life, and many other topics as required. For career coaching, I have a number of additional frameworks that help you clarify what you love in your work, your purpose and aspirations for your career and life, and how to banish stress and find fulfilment. I use profiling tools to help you gain objective insights and self-awareness, including self-reporting style questionnaires for emotional intelligence (EQ-i 2), Mental Toughness (MTQ48), Leadership Styles (ILM72) and 360 degree feedback.

Some clients prefer a more structured session, others prefer it less so, and I aim to match my style to your needs, preferred learning style and so on.

An important part of what makes the coaching partnership work well is a good relationship between you and me as your coach, where we can communicate well, be open and trusting, and generally feel happy to work together. This is vital as we may talk about things which you would not normally talk about with other people. As part of my commitment to creating a good space to talk and reflect, I maintain full confidentiality about our work together.

Why have a coach?

Some of the challenges my clients have brought to coaching include:

- Launching a new project or growing your organisation / team / department.
- Improving your business relationship with your boss.
- Improve your influence and ability to get a message across in meetings.
- Implementing difficult changes.
- Improving your leadership skills as you venture into new, unfamiliar areas.
- Raise your leadership presence. Stepping up to a higher level of leadership. Raise your profile at the higher level within the organisation.
- Making a transition to a new role or organisation.
- Avoiding stress and burn out and how to balance work, family, hobbies, and health.
- Making decisions with incomplete information.
• Getting clarity about your aspirations, strategy and direction (for yourself, your team, department, or organisation).

• Feeling overwhelmed or stressed – e.g.: by too big a job, conflicting demands, a lot of change in the organisation, lack of time, fire-fighting problems, dysfunctional teams and/or work relationships, poor collaboration, lack of delegation, or “nothing obvious, just feel stuck and unhappy”.

• Lack of confidence and/or self-belief – in general or with a specific challenge – e.g. giving presentations.

• Responding to negative feedback from colleagues.

Olympic athletes have coach because they want to be their best, not because they are not good at what they do. They are already good and they want to be great, to have support to maintain the clarity, focus, commitment, determination and courage to dream big and achieve it. You can have that too. Did you know that even Olympic athletes claim that over 90% of their success is not down to their athletic skills and abilities, but down to their mindset? Successful people in all walks of life say the same thing. They have coaching to be in charge of their own mindset, which determines, among other things, how confident they feel, how they can stay on track in the face of distractions, how they maintain their focus and belief they can achieve ultimate success even when they don’t win one event. Aeona’s proven tools and frameworks help Sue’s clients to do this.

What are your ambitions, dreams and aspirations - for yourself, for your team and for your organisation? Are you already achieving them? If not, do you know why not?

Some examples of my coaching clients

1. Promotion to more senior role
A professor was feeling pressured and wanted to clarify plans for a new director role and his own research, be able to switch off from work, and remain positive about uncertain funding. The first session established strategy, desired outcomes and session topics, leaving some flexible sessions to address issues arising from earlier sessions. Throughout the programme, we identified aspirations for 1, 3, 5, 10 to 20 years, required skills and potential development. Work related topics included future research direction; building his team; stimulating multi-disciplinary interaction between research groups; funding; leadership styles and managing his team and the institute.

2. Team Engagement and productivity.
A replacement manager faced hostility from her new team on a project that was behind schedule and had a two week deadline to complete delivery. Our coaching sessions helped her to change the way she managed meetings to include specifically scheduled time to listen and invite input, change the way she communicated with the team, and change her visibility and availability for informal access. Within a week she turned hostility into collective and positive action as a team.

3. Recently promoted Director
An Engineer had been relatively rapidly promoted within the company to project manager and now Director. He was stressed by deadlines and the sheer volume of work to support his team and deliver results. Our coaching sessions focused on
1) Completing the leadership transition in mindset to manage time and better support his team, in ways that inspired them and freed him to focus on strategic development for his department.
2) How he could raise his profile within the company and also in the wider field. He wanted, and succeeded, to change his own and other’s perspective to see him as a peer and Director (rather than the technical expert they went to for specific answers to technical problems) and to be more active in shaping future direction and strategy for the company.

4. Preparing for Promotion
A manager was told by her line manager he thought she wasn’t ready for promotion and would be recommending her colleague instead, even though he acknowledged her work was superior quality. Our coaching sessions focused on communicating more strategically, raising her profile, and clarifying what she wanted from work and what would be most fulfilling. She shaped how to manage her future career direction.

5. Confidence and self-belief
A manager was not enjoying her life, felt miserable and felt work was taking over her life. She felt she was putting on a good front and everyone thought she was very competent and confident at work, but inside she didn’t feel that way, and she felt frustrated by her manager’s behaviour which she found domineering. During our sessions we explored how to shift her mindset, with the result she transformed her self-confidence and self-belief, with grounded evidence to ensure she was rational. She changed how she communicated with her boss, her direct report and peers, and her friends, with the result she was much more confident, happier, enjoyed a more active social life and achieved a promotion.

Relevant information to consider when choosing a coach (from CIPD)

Sue Mitchell, PhD
- Has experience coaching business owners and clients at senior management and executive level (e.g.: Managing Director, Chief Executive, Senior Manager), middle management and first entry to management in small, medium and large organisations in the private, public and third sectors.
- Delivers coaching skills and leadership training on ILM recognised Development Programmes.
- Uses a broad range of coaching tools, techniques and models which enables her to be flexible and tailor her coaching approach to suit each client’s individual needs. These tools include models, techniques and frameworks from a wide range of theoretical backgrounds, including coaching theory, organisational theory, psychology, psychometrics, learning and NLP.
- Coaches in accordance with the Association for Coaching Code of Ethics.
- Has coaching relevant qualifications (see below) and her first degree included Psychology and behaviour.
- Takes part in on-going continuing professional development (CPD) by attending training courses and seminars, reading publications and contributing to coaching training events.
- Has coaching supervision to maintain best practise. Supervision is a formal, independent process of reflection and review to enable the coach to increase their self-awareness, develop their competence and critique their work.
- Is a member of coaching relevant professional bodies: Association for Coaching (AC) and Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM). She is also a member of the Institute of Directors and the Professional Speakers Association.
Dr Sue Mitchell  Coaching Bio

- Maintains Professional Indemnity Insurance through a Professional Civil Liability Insurance with Oxygen, with an indemnity limit £3,000,000.
- Aeona Limited is registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) for data protection (registration number Z1331417)

**Relevant Career Credentials**

Director – Aeona Limited, including Spot-on Data since 2004
Trainer – British Sub-Aqua Club since 1988, Instructor Trainer 2004, National Instructor 2006
NERC CASE PhD research award. 1994 – 1997
EIA Assistant, Port Erin Marin Lab. 1992

**Professional Training, Qualifications, Licences and Memberships**

Coach Master Training. The Centre for Executive Coaching. 2013 to 2015
Master Practitioner NLP, Sue Knight Associates. 2012
The Non-Executive Director, Institute of Directors (IOD) Scotland. 2012
Just Leadership, at ILM Level 7, Ros Taylor Group, Edinburgh 2010
Diploma Excel endorsed by ILM: Corporate & Executive Coaching (Distinction). The Coaching Academy, 2009
Psychometric Profiling licensed training: EQ-i2 Emotional intelligence 2009
Psychometric Profiling licensed training: ILM72 Leadership styles, MTQ48 Mental Toughness 2008
Facilitation skills, Glasgow 2006
NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) Business Practitioner, Edinburgh 2006
National Instructor, British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC) 2006
Instructor Trainer, BSAC 2004
Introduction to Management, University of Edinburgh 2002
Communication, University of Hull 1997
Innovation, University of Swansea 1995
Tutorial & supervisor training, University of Swansea 1994

**Academic Qualifications**

MSc. Marine Environmental Protection. University of N. Wales, Bangor 1993
BA. Hons. Natural Sciences Tripos: Zoology Cambridge University 1988

**Current Professional Memberships**

Association for Coaching (Member) AC
Institute for Leadership and Management (Associate Member) ILM
Institute of Directors (Associate Member) IOD
Professional Speakers Association (Full member) PSA