



DRIVING CHANGE WITH INTERNAL COACHING PROGRAMS



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper outlines a new way of utilizing coaching to drive wide scale organizational change. It illustrates how training leaders to be internal coaches is a more scalable, sustainable and robust approach to driving change and improving performance than hiring external coaches.

The authors illustrate the various benefits to using internal coaches, flesh out the cost benefits, and highlight a range of creative ways that organizations can integrate coaching into their Learning and Development (L & D) or Organizational Development (OD) frameworks. It covers training, design and implementation issues as well as looking at aligning coaching models with the organization's strategic approach.

Data is critical to understanding coaching impacts within organizational contexts. Thanks to those organizations using measurement, we are able to determine impacts to the business. Early indicators are showing significant increases in retention, engagement, productivity and performance, across organizations that have developed internal coaching. Also measurements, such as ROI are returning significant figures, e.g. ROI X 17 in a recent study.

The paper draws on extensive case studies and posits some best practice principles, then addresses some of the key questions around this topic. This paper draws on interviews with over 50 internal coaches over 2 years, and several other research papers on this topic.

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1. BACKGROUND

a. Change, Change Everywhere

Most large organizations are undergoing anywhere from a handful to dozens of major change initiatives at any one time. These can include restructuring the way teams work together, reorganizing distribution channels, finding new markets, undertaking six sigma audits, moving to lean manufacturing – right through to outsourcing whole functions such as manufacturing, HR or IT. The pace of these changes is not slowing down and there are no indications that it will any time soon.

As Jeffrey Schwartz and David Rock illustrated in their article 'The Neuroscience of Leadership' (Strategy & Business Magazine, June 2006), change is pain: any kind of major change initiative requires people to apply focus and effort, to pay attention to bring about change. The resistance that we sense in any change process turns out to be real. Homeostasis, fear, and push-back make change on any scale a real challenge.

One of the key competencies organizations need to develop now is a capacity to execute change effectively, across complex, chaotic, diverse and widely spread systems. Most organizations have a poor record in this area, and the need to improve this capacity is getting more urgent every year.

The Human Resources (HR) team – a.k.a. People and Performance, People and Culture, etc. – is charged with driving the human side of change. Whether it is trying to prepare people for change, executing new processes, or dealing with the fallout if change doesn't go well, HR departments provide both the backbone and the arms and legs of any organizational change initiative. However the challenge is that HR is being downsized like never before. The people left in HR are strategic, not necessarily having the time to focus on driving change. To make this more difficult, HR is focused on not just one or two but five, ten, even twenty different change initiatives at once. These people need help; specifically they need help from people who know how to help them facilitate change. There is greater pressure on people to perform, faster pace of change, more uncertainty requiring thinking resources, creative workers requiring new resources and other development options becoming less viable. So, it's natural that they should turn to coaches.

b. Coaches as Expert Change Agents

Coaching has a proven impact: add coaching to an initiative and people will focus on that initiative more. Add coaching to training and people learn more, up to 6 times as much in some cases. Coaches are like midwives for change: they know when change is coming, when it's here, when it needs a nudge, and when it's happening too fast. As change catalysts, coaches assist with managing the speed of change and smooth transition through change. With our understanding of how the brain works - there is an inbuilt resistance to change, and minimising the stress response, and error detection of the amygdala through actions like naming and normalising – we can make this process less painful. Change can be deeply challenging and emotional change required in organizational transition requires hardwiring of new learning through insight and action. Coaches are the perfect people to have around to facilitate this process.

Changes can be on the organizational culture and structure level but can also be at individual levels, team levels and conversational levels, e.g.

- Driving the leadership pipeline through integrated coaching solutions – personal and organizational performance change
- Shifting culture by transforming the quality of every conversation – conversational leading to culture change
- Lifting performance by improving retention & engagement – development leading to culture change.

2. INTERNAL VERSUS EXTERNAL COACHING

The most common approach to utilizing coaches to drive change is to hire external coaches. This seems logical – firstly, confidentiality and trust are of key importance and, secondly, internal people may be too busy to contemplate incorporating another skill and activity. Plus isn't coaching a specific skill set that takes years to study and master?

The difficulty here is that hiring external coaches in any volume has a number of serious limitations (outlined below). Most companies now use external coaches: one survey of 55 large organizations found 100% of these organizations were utilizing them. However if you stand back and analyse their usage, you'll see that less than 1% of an organization has access to a formal coach. This is interesting, bearing in mind the "Coaching at Work Survey 2002" of 280 leading UK companies shows that 93% of managers believe that coaching should be available to all employees regardless of seniority.

In the CIPD Annual Learning and Development Survey, 79% of UK companies were using coaching, 26% is being actively managed, and 14% state that coaching is the predominant management style.

In the USA, 100% of organizations surveyed (Alec Levinson UCLA, November 2005) were using external coaching, 50% were using internal coaching, only 49% of internal coaches were trained at all and only 12% had any form of certification.

What usually happens when a company decides to adopt coaching is that HR gets the coaching bug, cultural audits show the need, some executives get on board and pilots show great promise. The other side of this is that senior leaders may need convincing due to the busy-ness of everyone and the seemingly high roll out cost.

There are several key questions that need to be answered when selecting a coach approach. These questions include:

- How complicated is the set up and management of this new initiative going to be?
- How much time is going to be taken away from core activities?
- How is the coaching going to impact those being coached?
- How is coaching going to impact the coach?
- How much of my organization do I want to benefit from such an initiative?
- Is this a one-off initiative or do I want to see sustainable shifts in how we work?
- What is this going to cost me?

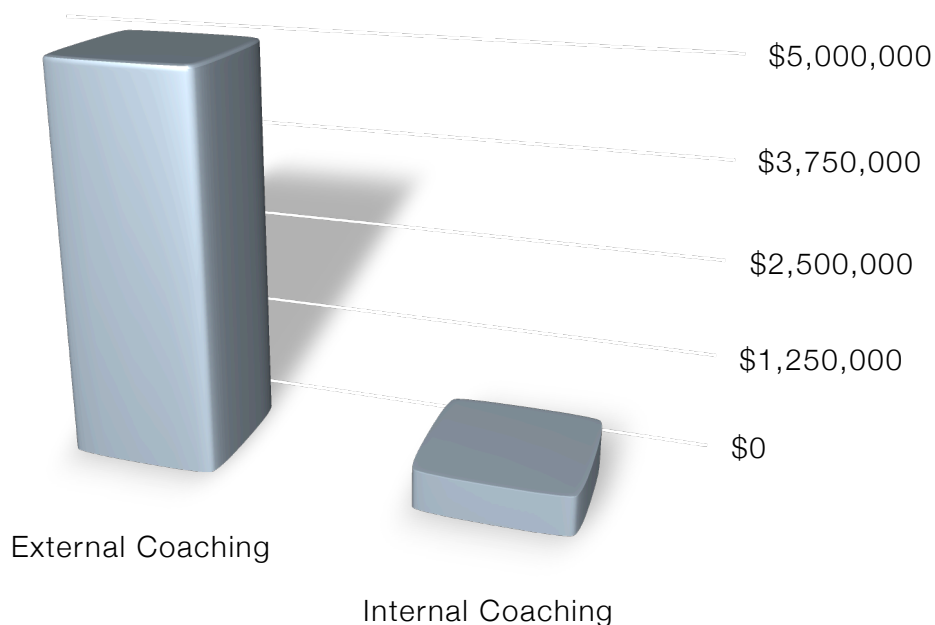
Let's look at each of the factors mentioned:

a. Cost

External executive coaches can cost anywhere from \$10,000 to \$100,000 per person. While this might sound like a lot, research is showing that the return on investment is generally positive. Another study showed that external coaching was having a strong impact on the leadership skills and effectiveness of the people coached, and a significantly smaller though noticeable impact on the people the next level down. While this is great news, the cost of an executive coach may be equal to three years worth of training budget for a mid-level employee. An organization is willing to invest this kind of capital into only a limited number of executives. As a result, external coaches are being made available largely at the rarefied air of senior executives.

Consider having 200 executives for whom you would like to provide coaching. To train an internal coach would generally cost under \$10,000 per coach. This coach would then go on to coach say 6 people over a couple of years. Whereas providing coaching externally is going to cost between \$10,000 up to \$100,000 per individual. So the cost of using external coaches may be prohibitive, somewhere around \$2.5 million up to \$5 million, in this scenario. Providing coaching to this same group using internal coaches may cost just 10% as much, \$250,000 up to \$500,000. This can bring the cost into the realm of existing training and development budgets, especially when spread over a few years.

Cost Comparison of an Internal vs External Coaching Initiative



b. Complexity of Management

Another reason for the minimal usage of external coaches is the logistics – the complexity involved in managing a wide-scale initiative. The process to bring on board coaches can be similar to hiring new staff. They need to understand the culture, and know how to navigate their way through complex organizational systems. There are many details that take time, especially scheduling, reporting, managing contracts and payment. All this means that getting external coaches working with 200 leaders will require the full time focus of an additional team to coordinate efforts between the organization and each of these individual external coaches.

There is a lot of work involved in finding and organising coaches for 200 executives. You would need to source around 50 coaches, who each have the right cultural fit and attitude for your organization, the credibility and business nous and strong emotional intelligence. Then, of course, they have to be competent coaches. This can be quite a challenge with a young and largely still fragmented industry. It could take 12 months to find, screen and orientate the coaches. One multinational food company runs a two-week full time offsite intensive training with a group of selected coaches, all paid for by the organization. Consider the energy, work and cost involved there.

One financial institution recently commented that increased use of external coaches creates some issues, which include:

- a lack of consistency in coaching models,
- ad hoc identification and engagement of coaches,
- a lack of clarity as to when coaches are appropriate and how long the relationship should last, and
- how various parties are involved (e.g. line manager, People Capital etc) in the coaching relationship.

This adhoc approach to external coaching has also meant that the organization has been unable to measure the effectiveness of the external coaching relationship and its impact on business performance.

With internal coaches, the logistics required is far more manageable with less recruitment requirements, and additional benefits of systemisation, measurement ability, consistency of process, language, ready-made structures and prior knowledge and experience. Efficiency in a nutshell.

c. Derailment Risk vs. Retention

The third reason involves the risks of externalising the coaching process. If people are an organization's main assets, allowing these people to spend significant time and be heavily influenced by external players who may not always understand the organization's landscape, or not consider the company's interests, can be quite a risky proposition. The study by Alec Levinson et al in his research paper on 55 large organizations, found that using external coaches increased the risk of losing someone who was a derailment risk. In other words, if you have someone that you had a chance of losing, external coaching was increasing the likelihood of losing that person.

The study found the opposite with internal coaches. That's a fairly significant finding. You only have to have one or two key people not leave an organization and the savings and costs can dramatically outweigh the costs involved in a wide scale coaching initiative.

In a recent project, after 12 months of the coaches delivering coaching we found that the retention in that group had significantly improved. Turnover in the coach group was down to 11% compared to over 30% in the general community. This is an issue we are seeing fairly consistently, though it is hard to track because so many organizations are downsizing and reorganising their teams.

A DB Breweries coaching impact study conducted in 2006, found a significant increase in retention not only in those who were coach trained, but also in the retention of direct reports, where the study showed a 30% decrease in likelihood of leaving by direct reports.

d. Application of Coaching Skills

Many of the internal coaches we interviewed say that as a result of learning to coaching formally, they are using their coaching skills across the board. Doing the formal coaching has helped them embed change in how they run their meetings, how they organize their time, how they interact in many conversations everyday.

In other words, not only does using internal coaches cost around 10% as much to execute, and take less effort all round, but the investment has broader returns. There are also benefits that the coaches themselves receive when provided with coaching skills training.

It is one thing to try a new technique once, for example, 'asking permission' before giving any feedback. However old habits easily rise to the surface. It's much harder to go back to old habits if one is doing an hour of formal coaching each week, where there is a clear process to follow. It's like trying to make someone a better overall cook - an effective way for a busy person to do this might be to do an hour of cooking every week, where you have to cook challenging dishes.

"Would have left without the coaching, and now feel very happy & productive at work.

This in itself has generated a lifetime value to the organization of millions."

While you might not become a chef, it's fairly certain that over time your cooking will improve. It's a function of the amount of attention given to this skill.

Requiring leaders to coach ensures their new skills are embedded. It's too easy to go back to old habits, and without the required coaching sessions, any training they undergo could easily disappear. Instead, with regular usage of coaching muscles, the opposite happens - leaders find themselves suddenly applying their coaching skills in new and unexpected ways.

“Definitely gave me a bit of empathy - less judgemental and looking behind what they're telling, secondly letting others work out answers for themselves - carried over professionally too.”

“Different way to approach people to get the best out of them. Not giving people answers, getting others to work through things themselves. Personally & at work, has freed up some of my time. A bit less stress as result.”

This whole factor is absent with external coaching.

e. Scale of Coaching Impact

Systems theory says that the power of a network is proportional to the quality and quantity of connections between the nodes. Consider a senior executive team of 20 that gets very little time together. Now get those 20 together as a group to learn to coach, and then get them to coach 200 others over 2 years. Now you are going to develop very deep connections across and throughout that whole system. The business impact studies we are doing on internal coaching programs are showing up a number of instances where an individual says they were thinking of leaving an organization but they decided not to because of the support they had from a coach: they had someone to help them work through issues, and they felt more valued by the organizations.

Internal coaching provides the framework for deepening connections across an organization, strengthening internal networks and spreading the impact of coaching.

Deepening many personal networks across an organization means more workers have trusted personal relationships to call on; they have the ability to find out information, to understand the landscape and obtain resources. There is a lot of research showing that people's performance at work is very connected to the quality of the relationship with the boss but also the quality of relationships with co-workers.

By utilizing internal coaches you are potentially increasing people's overall performance through deepening the connections across this system.

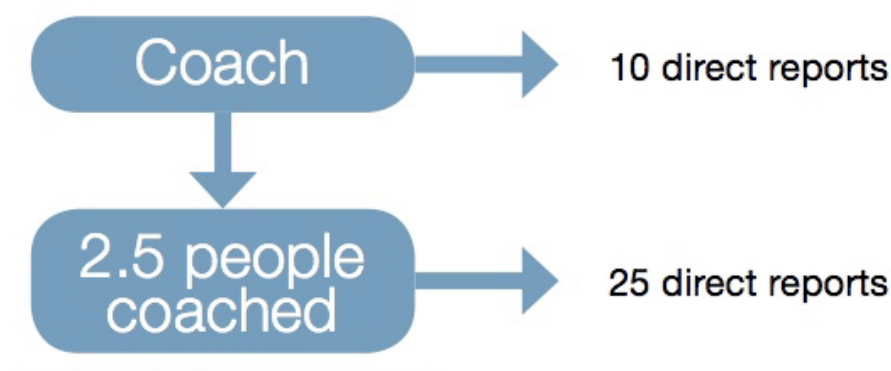
"We're more open. I trust him implicitly which I didn't before, I have much more respect, we are achieving a lot more together and meeting the needs of the business."

"Greatly, the environment is more enjoyable. Problems can be really tackled more confidently. Open, enjoyable place to work. Has made me more organized"

"Interaction with direct reports & co-workers is one of the biggest impacts. Approach to conflict situations has improved. Improved ability around empowerment/delegation - asking relevant questions."

Once again, this benefit is absent in the case of external coaching.

The following diagram shows the impact of one internal coach in one year. It is 38:1 ratio – far greater than could be achieved through external coaching.



f. Impact on the Coaches

Imagine telling busy senior executives that they need to find two hours a week to coach people who are not directly working for them. While there may be some push-back to begin with, getting leaders to formally coach others is having a positive impact on their efficiency and effectiveness. When senior leaders become coaches, it makes them more effective leaders themselves. There are several reasons for this:

ATTENTION CHANGES THE BRAIN

The saying goes - if you want to really learn something, the best way is to teach it. In this case, getting leaders to build leadership skills in their people deeply transforms their own leadership skills.

Coaching is the art of improving performance. Focusing leaders on their coaching skills and making them deliver formal coaching, even if it is only an hour a week, is having a broad systemic impact across the board. Attention changes the brain, and just as playing an instrument one hour a week will build your musical skills over time, the same happens with coaching. This can be explained through the concept of 'attention density', which is the quality and quantity of actual attention paid to a specific set of circuits in the brain. Through repetition and continuous activity, new skills are more readily embedded.

REDUCING STRESS

Dr Richard Boyatzis of Case Western Reserve University has written about this interesting phenomenon, in a paper published in April 2006 in the Academy of Management Journal on Learning and Education called 'Building Sustainable Leaders Through Coaching Skills'. In this paper, Dr Boyatzis showed how getting leaders to spend time coaching others was reversing the debilitating physical effects of 'power stress' that executive's experience. It's long been known that stress can reduce cognitive capacities and decision making: the stress that leaders experience reduces their effectiveness and ability to think clearly.

As Boyatzis says, 'We propose that leaders may better sustain themselves by balancing the potentially stressful effects of exercising leadership with the ameliorative effects of coaching the development of others.'

So, teaching leaders to formally coach others helps build sustainable leaders, reducing burn out and increasing performance. This is particularly relevant today with the requirement for stress management policies and initiatives.

Perhaps much of this positive impact comes down to our innate human desire to make a difference to the world: give people a chance to do this, and they are rewarded with a range of positive physiological effects.

INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL SUMMARY

There are a number of factors that come into play. In summary:

	Hiring External Coaches	Training Internal Coaches	Benefit To The Business
Sourcing Possible Coaches	High Cost	No Cost	None
Business Nows	High Complexity	No Cost	None
Credibility	High Complexity	No Cost	None
Emotional Intelligence	Low Complexity	Medium Complexity	None
Cultural Fit	High Complexity	No Cost	None
Screening	Medium Cost	No Cost	None
Orientating To Organization	High Cost	No Cost	None
Coaching Skills Training	No Cost	Medium Cost	High
Program Management	Medium Cost	Low Cost	Low
Cost Of Coaching	High Cost	Negligible Cost	High
Staff Retention Of Those Coached	High Derailment Risk	Increased Retention	High
Scale Of Coaching Impact	Narrow, Selective	Wide, Systemic	High
Impact On The Coaches	Yes, But Not Organization	Yes, Including Organization	Medium

In summary, using external coaches has a number of ‘high costs’ and ‘high risks’ and one ‘medium cost’ above. Only one of these produces value in the organization, the coaching itself. Using internal coaches has one medium cost; however this investment has high returns back to the business. For a further illustration of internal vs. external coaching, compare the following:

Impact Of Internal Coaches	Impact Of External Coaches
40 leaders coaching, practicing coaching for 30 hours per year. Total cost \$300,000 (equiv. \$7,000pp)	40 leaders coached at a total of \$600,000 (equiv \$25,000 pp) 480 hours of coaching, 120 goals worked on
100 clients in one year 300 goals worked on 1000 hours of coaching	400 direct reports impacted Retention (at this level) and engagement improved
2,000 direct reports impacted Retention, engagement and productivity over 20% improved	Next level Minimal observed impact on performance, retention or engagement

There are many significant benefits to teaching the leaders to coach rather than sending this coaching process out of the organization. You are much more likely to get a lot more coaching done, due to cost and complexity. There are deep benefits for the coaches in terms of reducing stress, and you are increasing the quality of connections across the organization.

With all these benefits one might think that every organization would be hot on the trail of internal coaching programs. However many of the findings in this paper are counter-intuitive. The average HR executive assumes that people have to be external to be effective. They also believe that the training would be too difficult, and in some cases this can be true. Let's now explore some of the trends and best practice principles in training internal coaches.

3. UTILIZING INTERNAL COACHES

It was unheard of five years ago to be focused on internal coaching as a strategy. External coaching was all that was thought of, and companies were focused on that. We really started to see the growth of internal coaching about three years ago. Companies had sufficient experience of external coaching to see the benefits and people were starting to ask how this could be taken to the next level.

This chapter covers the internal coaching initiative. It looks at the idea of using internal coaches and how this may be met with some resistance, initially. It covers engaging leaders in a development initiative, who should be coaching and where to focus the coaching initiatives, ending with some thoughts around best practice.

a. Overcoming initial resistance to internal coaches

A study by Marshall Goldsmith (Goldsmith Morgan 2004) of 86,000 people across 15 global organizations found that internal coaches could produce the same positive results as external coaches. Many of my colleagues are now finding a big growth in the development of internal coaches in medium to large organizations.

The study by Levinson et al found 50% of companies were now using internal coaches.

We heavily over-estimate the importance of someone being 'external' in order for coaching to be effective. One of the reasons for this may involve brain functioning. The brain has a tendency to automatically fear any new social situation. The amygdala is finely tuned, like a tripwire that sets off at the smallest provocation. A study in 2005 showed that ambiguity alone sets off the amygdala. So, thinking about speaking to someone about quite personal matters is likely to bring on a fear response. Once we meet the person and find we like them, it's a different story, especially if they are not in your everyday team of co workers, an important issue in matching coaches and clients internally.

Through experience of having trained hundreds of internal coaches, and formally interviewing dozens of them and their internal clients, the experiences the clients have are the of the same quality and depth as seen in external coaching engagements.

Confidentiality and trust have to be deep – easily addressed with some key rules and systems in place.

Internal coaches do as good a job as external coaches, and in many cases a better one, given a reasonable amount of training. The only area where this sometimes is not the case is with the CEO and C-suite. These people may need to be coached externally.

Internal coaching is set to grow significantly over coming years and in time be a key part of the learning and development function of any medium to large organization.

b. Engaging leaders to participate in development programs

It's very difficult to get senior leaders to participate in any kind of development. Whether it's their travel schedule, sense of accomplishment or ego, finding ways to provide development opportunities to senior executives is a real challenge, and many organizations find their senior teams avoid any kind of training altogether. Consider the alternative development options for senior leaders.

I have offered executive coaching to 20 managers and seen four take up the offer. In a different initiative, I offered coach training to 20 managers and saw 19 take up the offer.

There are several issues driving this phenomenon. Firstly, executives are interested in learning how to get better performance out of their people. They want to know how to get their people to take more ownership and be better leaders themselves, thus reducing their workload. Many executives also like the idea of learning to coach in relation to dealing with their own children and communities, and some like the idea as something they might use in semi-retirement. Then, there is the fact that offering to make someone a coach increases their perceived status. It's not a threat in any way. Whereas, when you offer a coach to someone (as opposed to someone wanting to be coached), there is always a small part of them that might feel they don't need it, or feel threatened. Status is no small matter with senior executives. Telling an executive they are so accomplished you want them to coach others is more likely to get them involved in training than saying they have some learning gaps. Once they start to learn to coach, they see for themselves that they might have new skills to develop, and they learn these skills in their own time.

c. Who is doing the coaching?

The overwhelming trend within internal coaches is getting leaders and HR people, with the relevant coaching skills training, to be the coaches – with a fairly even spread between the two. These leaders and coaches are normally high performing team members, i.e. they are not people with any kind of performance issues, they are people with a high profile, who are quite successful. Sometimes these teams of coaches include the CEO and C Suite or a senior management team that are chosen to be coaches for other levels. An important fact here is that these people are only coaching part time, and it is very part time.

They are coaching one to two people, maybe three at the most – with the average around two people. It's quite rare to find someone coaching even four internal clients. For those who are the coaches, it is something they are doing as well as the other work they do. Out of over 50 projects, only one project wanted any of their coaches to be full time.

Olivero et al (1997) showed a 22.4% increase in productivity after management training but 88% increase after internal coaching. In one case study of internal coaching (NHS, 2004), 41% of recipients of internal coaching were promoted compared to 15% of the non-coachee group; and leadership and job satisfaction improved.

Being picked out for special attention when the intention is clearly positive can be a driver for positive change in behavior.

Even using managers as coaches can be beneficial. In CIPD research 2005, it was found that 19% of manager coaching was very effective, and 65% was effective. It can be useful to soften a command and control culture, improving management skills and capability, changing behavior of the coaches, resulting in greater employee engagement and commitment, improved business results, savings in time and cost, accelerated talent development and other unexpected spin-offs.

“The organization has identified clear performance differences between those who are coached and those who are not in terms of meeting targets and quickly addressing issues that arise.”

“We used to be hiring every week and I haven’t had to recruit for the last four months.”

Internal coaches are being used at every level right up to C-Suite. We are seeing this more and more in many organizations, across all sectors.

d. Where to Focus the Coaching

There are a number of places that you can focus coaches. The most common place that senior coaches are being used are at the areas of difficulty, the areas of transition that are going on inside an organization. If you look at the main functions of any Learning and Development department you will find a lot of energy spent on the core functions of bringing people on board, on helping managers go through transitions and on supporting high performers. So these provide some of the common focus points for coaching - on-boarding, getting people into the organization effectively as well as getting them to a new level, helping them go from being a technical expert to managing other technical experts as well as high performers.

Right now, the majority of Learning and Development (time, effort and money) spend is on training programs and on e-learning and various systems, also university programs and degrees. If you ask a high performer or person going through transition or new recruit what would be the most useful thing you could have to help you – the common response is to have someone to call on to help them move through this phase. It may be that we are not addressing what people are really looking for.

Let’s take a look at four of these areas in terms of providing coaching: on-boarding, skills development, transition and high performers.

ON-BOARDING

On-boarding is called different things - orientation, getting people into the organization. It's essentially about bringing people from the outside into a business. It can be cross-organization, e.g. someone joining a whole new team and a whole new function; it can also be expatriates moving to the same organization in another country.

The area of on-boarding and bringing new people into a team is an area fraught with difficulties and there is a lot of research now showing just how challenging this is. There is some research that said 35% of new executive failed within the first eighteen months of starting a new position in 2004. 35% is very high. Considering the huge cost involved in finding people, training them and getting them going and then having to do that all over again, it would be a worthwhile investment to get that number down dramatically. One example already mentioned is the change in staff turnover data with a rate of 30% reduced to 11% in one study.

On-boarding is an important area for internal coaching teams. Teams of internal coaches are replacing mentoring programs, or being brought in to upgrade mentoring programs. One of the reasons for this, is that coaching has a lot more structure classically than mentoring. Mentoring tends to be informal, with use on a needs-be basis. There are not defined numbers of sessions. On the other hand, formal organizational coaching has much more structure.

You have specific defined goals that you work with, you have a defined number of sessions - say for an hour each, for a defined amount of time and there is reporting at the end of it. All this means there is a lot more interaction actually happening than in the mentoring – for one, because it is being structured and managed.

HR people and leaders are being chosen as coaches – it is important to have a mix of both. The most common model is six months of coaching, conducted fortnightly. If the time between sessions lengthens to around four weeks, it's a bit more like a sounding board than really on the spot coaching and support for people.

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

An Australian Government department - IT department spent a lot of time developing relationships in the graduate schools. They had a whole team of people going there and working on hiring new smart young people but they found that after a couple of years they were losing a lot of them. These new recruits would come in and then go off and do something else. This department wanted to improve the on-boarding process and really deepen people's connections and understanding and success.

After training over 100 internal coaches across this whole organization, one of the bits of feedback was that the internal clients felt far more valued by the organization. They felt the business really cared about them. The organization spent tens of thousands of dollars finding them. Many people just don't feel that they are cared about - all you have to do is give them someone to talk to them for twelve hours over six months, not a lot of time investment, and you can make a big impact.

This person said this was the first resource the organization had ever given them that truly did help them to perform better, saying that having that sounding board really helped them, week in and week out, helped them to think, helped them to plan, helped them to organize their thoughts, that was something that was really helping compared to many other resources that had been provided.

Now some of the issues to keep in mind around teams of internal coaches for on-boarding are:

- Coaching has to be optional. It's important that people are educated about it so you increase the chances of usage but it has to be optional. The client has to want to use the service.
- There needs to be lots of structure and clarity so people know exactly what they are getting into. It's nice to turn it into a product. For example it could be an on-boarding coaching product where you have a brand and logo, and its 12 sessions over 6 months with specific outcomes.
- It's helpful to let the client to choose the coach. This is the best way of matching. The end user seems to be the best person to choose the coach.
- Remove every road block you possibly can, really help people to find the coach easily, meet the coach easily, learn about the coach easily, e.g. put up web sites with photos of the available coaches and put their phone numbers there.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Skills development is the second area for coaching. Skills may be sales skills or IT specific technology skills, for example technical support people, or general management skills, e.g. how to be a manager and how things are done in this particular organization. It's about developing teams of subject matter experts who are coaches for the rest of the focus community.

One of the reasons for this development is the increase in pressure on learning. People are being required to learn more and to learn more quickly at the same time decreasing face time. People don't have the time to spend in long training.

Secondly you have managers who are being told to provide training locally. For example there was a government agency that used to have a head office with all the staff located centrally. Now they have 55 offices spread around the world. That is a common theme - globally and nationally. Organizations are dispersing, whether it's through remote working, people working from home or just going to more localised environments. Managers need to develop skills in many locations and teams of coaches are very suited to that.

We are seeing the development of internal expert coaching teams on specific subject matters. The research backs this, showing that adding coaching to any kind of training initiative has a very significant impact. One study done in 1977 by Olivero Bain and Coppelman involving 32 managers over two months found the training increased productivity by 28%. The training plus coaching increased productivity 88% - almost three times the impact by adding coaching. Other studies show that coaching increases the effects of training six-fold.

The science of that is quite simple. The brain has limits to its ability to digest and there is a fixed amount of new ideas and new habits and skills you can learn in a day. It makes sense to break things into small bites.

With the speed of information, that which was learned five years ago may be invalid today. Even more reason for ongoing up-skilling and for specialist internal coaches.

TRANSITION MANAGEMENT AND HIGH PERFORMERS

One of the most common uses of internal coaches is around transition management i.e. when a leader goes through a transition into a significantly more senior role or their job changes substantially. The most common example of this is when a technical person becomes a manager for the first time, or a manager becomes a manager of managers for the first time, or a manager of managers becomes a functional manager for the first time. Each time this happens people need to learn new ways of working. It can be quite difficult to develop these new muscles because the way these managers work is hard-wired. This is the territory where things often go wrong and support can really make a difference. Internal coaches that have been through that transition before i.e. more senior players, can really help people through these phases of change.

Similar coaches can be used for high performers as well – i.e. those who have already been quite successful who maybe have some status in the organization who are being purloined to become coaches for high potential can coach those who have the possibility of becoming senior executives or who are just really high performers.

The types of programs being used in both cases are quite similar. Teams of senior managers and a few HR people who have been there and have credibility are coaching for six months or more, between fortnightly and as little as once a month.

Here are some case studies:

CASE STUDY

Another case study around talent management and retention of high performers involved a large US Fortune 20 company, that wanted to provide coaching for a couple of hundred high potentials. They had several hundred people in a specific pool of talent who were going to be their future senior executives and key leaders, and they wanted to provide coaching to all of these people over some time.

Coaches were trained in groups of 20, with the first 20 including the CEOs of some of the divisions and very senior executives in the C-Suite, to really send the right message. The coaches were then matched with one to two people each, to do six months of coaching every two weeks, so an hour of coaching every two weeks for six months, again using two business goals and one personal goal. The objective was to provide coaching to 200 plus high potentials over a few years. The cost and effort in that would have been prohibitive using external coaching. In doing this internally, the benefits too, stay in-house.

CASE STUDY

A consulting company had key people worth a lot of money to them. Every one of their senior consultants was bringing in a million dollars a year of revenue or more. The company noticed that they were losing a large number of these people every year. In revenue terms, this was around \$20 million revenue a year walking out the door that had to be regenerated and required rehiring.

The company introduced a coaching program for their high performers with coaches from the CEO to the C Suite and the next level down providing development, support and interactions with their top performers at the next level down. All coached non-direct reports, so they coached people that they were not directly managing - essentially coaching each other's people.

One of the big findings in this area (similar to on-boarding coaches) is that it's really helpful to set both personal and business goals.

The mix is about two business goals and one personal goal or a 50/50 mix but over and over the personal goals people set have a really big impact on their work performance. Some personal goals were "be as inspired at work as when I started" or "get home at 6pm three days a week" or "be as energised at work as I am on the weekend". The goals are always expressed in a solution focused way helping people to grow and develop. Personal goals provide significant benefits to people's business performance, which may at first seem surprising but makes a lot of sense in many ways when you think about it, e.g. valued in a holistic way, and patterns and habits in one area of our life flows across other areas.

The research of 30 internal coachees at one site shows a real impact on how valued people feel by the organization. One study found 90% of clients felt significantly more valued; 80% felt more motivated at work and 60% reported greater engagement on average.

By providing a coach, their level of motivation, engagement and how valued they feel is significantly enhanced. These things in turn improve retention and performance. Extrapolating – if each client sets two business goals and you have 30 people being coached, that is 60 business goals that are being set, and the nature of coaching is that people set bigger goals than they would without a coach. So, you have 60 really challenging business goals that people are going to achieve. Tracking the success of these, we find on average 85% of the goals are achieved. Coaching stretches and develops people and the organization. Here follows a quote from one client inside this organization:

"As a result of coaching I feel generally a lot more positive, I have become more self aware about what I need, for example, I noticed my own negative self talk and I know that I need specific targets and goals to remain focused now. I have also learnt that I am very hard on myself, I am asking myself the question, would you congratulate your best friend if they achieved this, has really opened my eyes".

The goal was "to be as motivated at work as when I started" and the client was a consultant in this consultant company, being coached by a senior manager. This person has really learned about themselves, and has further understood how they work and what they need to win and it's really helped them improve their performance – and the company has enhanced its retention.

e. Best Practice

Best Practice has been covered in specific areas within the text of this article already. Some fundamental points include:

- Define the client pool really clearly
- Have a clear product offering
- Define exactly who is going to be the coached
- Decide who is going to do the coaching
- Be clear on the purpose for coaching
- Understand what the program is about at a high level.
- Know what you are aiming to achieve
- Know how this fits with the business objectives
- Decide on the time frames (fortnightly for six months)
- Ensure coaches and clients are volunteers (i.e. have chosen to participate)
- Provide clear frameworks and structures for the initiative
- Decide on a clear, simple training program
- Have a safe structure including information for the client
- Include personal goals
- Build coaching into people's roles and rewards
- Allocate sufficient time and resources to learning to coach
- Have an internal sponsor to drive the logistics of the program
- Have a combination of HR and managers as coaches
- Build structured inductions for coaches and coachees
- Remove all roadblocks to doing the coaching
- Provide ongoing support and mentoring

These processes have been refined over years of work and research to arrive at "Best Practice".

Issues to be managed with internal coaching include: credibility, trust and confidentiality, conflict of interest, boundaries, demand vs. capacity. These can be resolved by supervision, thorough training, careful recruitment, review of activities and strong policy. Take care in the formal coaching of direct reports because of imbalance in the relationship. The agenda could be restricted to performance and skills.

4. INTERNAL COACHING TRAINING, DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

a. Training Internal Coaches

One piece of research showed that 100% of one group studied were using external coaching and 50% were now using internal coaching. An interesting piece of data was only 49% of those coaches were trained at all and only 12% were in fact certified in any way. In our experience training and certification are really important pieces and that while we all have strong capacity to be coaches its like learning to play an instrument and actual practice and study and learning can make a significant difference.

There are a number of options when looking at training - from an academic Masters degree, to International Coach Federation accreditation, to short skills-focused programs.

It is important to ensure that sufficient training is delivered to ensure sustainability of coaching skills, and yet optimise time within executive's busy schedules.

EXPLORING BLENDED LEARNING

The blended learning approach of three days of intensive training, followed by fortnightly telecalls for two months, including assignments, practical coaching and reading between classes is seen to be highly effective.

It is important that the training is streamlined and simplified, and delivered to high performing people. This is not remedial and it is not intended to develop all participants into fully-fledged coaches, but rather to ensure that they are highly successful in their use and application of coaching skills¹.

Learning to coach is like learning to drive. It takes a combination of understanding the parts of the car, learning the road code, and multiple practical driving lessons and opportunity to practice.

QUALITY STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATION

Just like you wouldn't drive without a licence, would you coach without passing a professional assessment and certification? It can be a long and complex road reinventing the wheel in the area of certification. It makes sense to partner with a provider who has already gone through this process, and so ensure quality standards for the organization.

Coaches can then decide on their own progression as to levels of certification and/or international credentialing. Many organizations e.g. EDS, Hewlett Packard, IBM and NASA, have developed communities of practice for their coaches to reconnect and further develop their skills, share ideas, learn, maintain connections and sometimes include supervision.

¹ Results Coaching Systems runs International Coach Federation accredited programs which include rigorous skills assessments. The pass rate is generally between 70-100% of participants.

b. Choosing a Model

When deciding on a coaching model – you can look at single focused models e.g. solutions focused or meta-models. Either way it is important to understand the limitations of any approach. The framework should be around the entire initiative – and fit with the organization and its vision. It should flow through to the coaches, encompass the individual initiatives and coaching conversations.

For example, Results Coaching Systems uses a brain based approach – a new neuroscience theory base which is shown to:

Increase stickiness

Enhance coaching effectiveness

Attract executives

This is added to solutions focus and positive psychology in the main.

The model needs to be able to show how it will deliver what you wish to achieve, e.g. Results Coaching Systems facilitates positive change by improving the quality of thinking.

Some considerations in selecting a coaching model include:

- What are the underpinning theories, models, science, beliefs and values?
- What are the processes involved? This can include, e.g. models and frameworks based on solutions focus (goals, strategies, actions), neuroscience (4 faces of insight), positive psychology (acknowledgement, feedback mechanisms) and an example of a combination model (FEELING).
- What evidence is there and what is measured? E.g. culture surveys, behavioral surveys, ROI.

Model needs to match the different individual interfaces, e.g. between the market and organization (onboarding and retention), between the organization and the client (performance, leadership and skills) and between the market and the individual (transition, networks).

Thinking models work well in coaching processes (dilemma), as do change models (Bridges, Lewin et al).

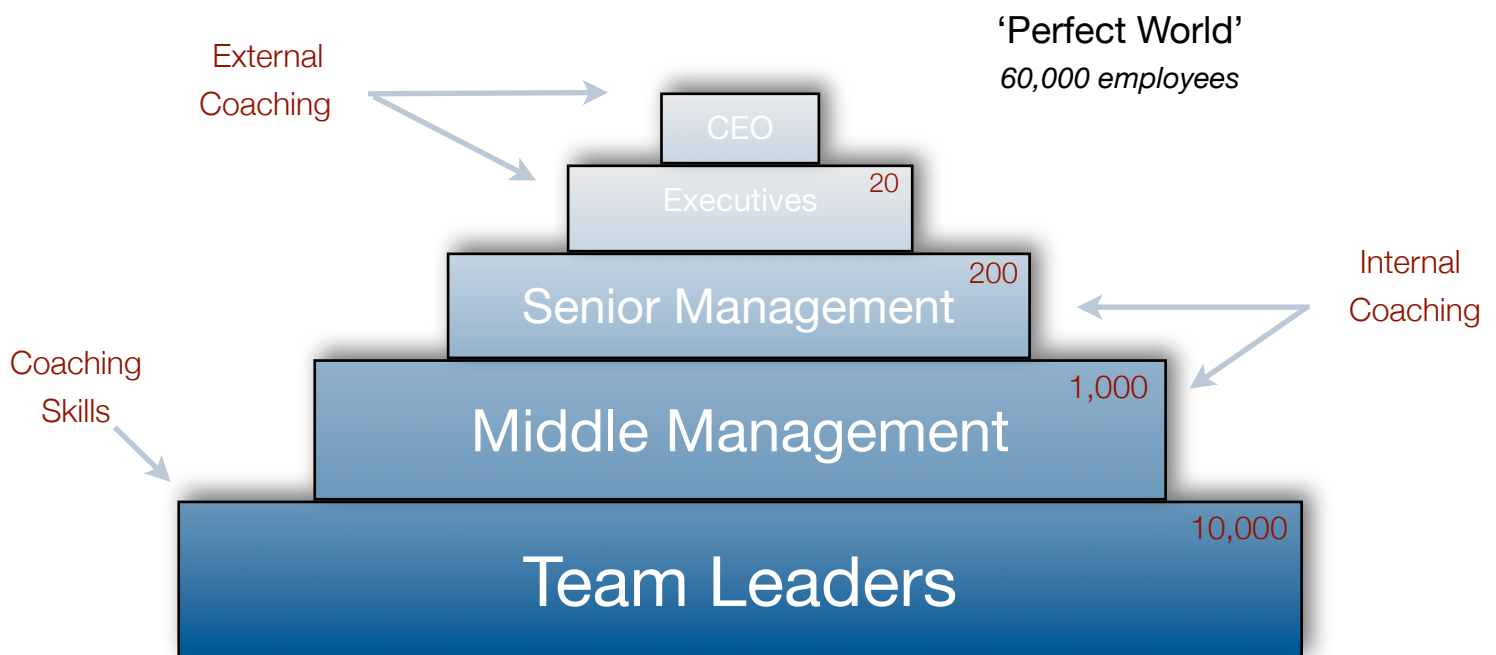
c. Design Issues

In designing a coaching framework, it helps to take a big picture, systemic approach. There are 4 main tools:



1. FOCUS ON A COACHING CULTURE

This is about strategic integration into Learning and Development. It covers areas including senior leadership development, talent management, transition, performance management, skills development and on-boarding.



2. SCALING INTERNAL COACHING

The benefits of internal coaching have already been covered including the ease of roll out, the impact of teaching leaders to coach, retaining the development benefits in-house, sharing knowledge in a structured way and cost (and others as mentioned in Chapter 2).

Developing leaders as coaches is easier to do in volume. It builds connections, develops them and reverses the stressful impacts of their roles. It is scalable and costs about 10% of the cost of external coaching.

Each leader can coach one to two internal clients (an hour per week). These coaches can be selected by internal clients based on the coaching requirements. Internal coaches, through their clients and relationship with direct reports and their clients' direct reports, impact on average 38 people per coach.

The initial implications for internal coaching are getting sign off to build a longer term plan, building the infrastructure and getting coaches trained.

CASE STUDY

A Fortune 50 financial services provider had a goal of providing coaching to 200 high potentials. Twenty C-suite executives were trained as coaches with one to two clients each using a 12 session coaching framework. A full ROI study was undertaken with results indicating a Return of Investment of 17 times (17 X ROI).

3. MANAGER AS COACH

This can be developed as a core management competency, and linked to current HR issues. Scalable delivery of high impact training is required. Bottlenecks to implementation include time, travel, budget and learning capacity.

An approach that works well is teleconference learning with time between calls used for embedding new learning and developing new muscles.

CASE STUDY

EDS used this approach. 44 classes worldwide were held with 1000 leaders trained over year one. A wide population was involved and 35 instructors selected from HR, GL&D and business. Real business challenges were used in the training of which there were teleconference classes and follow up. 79% reported good/high relevance to their role, and 83% reported good/high value in their role.

CASE STUDY

In a DB Breweries, New Zealand study – 68% felt more valued by the organization, 54% were more motivated at work and there was a 39% decrease in the likelihood of leaving.

4. EXTERNAL COACHING

This may be suitable for C-suite executives and the CEO, particularly in the case of politically sensitive information, or where specialized skills or experience are required. Much is written and available on Executive Coaching. See also Chapter 2.

MATCHING INTERNAL CLIENTS AND COACHES

In matching, there is a need to understand client attributes – who will coaching be offered to and will they ‘buy’. This then needs to be matched with coach attributes – select coaches based on the type of coaching that will be delivered within the organization context. Let the client then select from the relevant coach pool.

The coach needs to have the skills, appropriate qualities, attributes, understanding of wider organizational context and qualifications/standard.

The client needs to have the receptiveness and desire for change, and to be informed and educated about coaching. A positive working relationship is critical.

All this has to happen within an appropriate culture where there is buy-in of senior management, encouragement and support for learning and development, and understanding of employee preferences and clear strategic intent.

d. Implementation

There are a few things to do before you begin the process of rolling out an internal coaching program.

GETTING THE VISION RIGHT

First you need a clear vision and plan for what you are trying to achieve. A three to five year plan is really helpful here. Visions could be “In 3 years time half of our coaching will be done internally” and then, “In 5 years 90% of our coaching will be internal” - or a vision might be “Every manager has a coach if they want one” or “Coaching makes up 30% of the activities of our learning and development department”.

CASE STUDY

One organization that we are working with was very heavily influenced by an article they read in a learning journal where they saw that 50% of the amount of embedding of any training initiative was made up of the follow-up. In other words it didn't matter how much you improved the quality of the training itself but the follow-up process was where 50% of the value was. They realised they were doing no work to build teams of people to follow-up of any training or learning initiatives at all. They decided they wanted to become a coaching organization and to have coaching really a core part of what they do.

We have been working with this organization for a while now and we are in the process of training thousands of their leaders in coaching skills. This initiative is slightly different to having formal internal coaches; they are looking at every manager having some basic skills across the board. Then they're going to start building teams of internal coaches for specific L&D objectives as well.

GETTING BUY-IN

The second point to cover before starting a coaching initiative is to get buy in by senior leadership as well as other key stakeholders, of whom there are many. It is all about education, demystifying and informing through examples and case studies; letting people know what is possible with coaching and where efficiencies can be gained; how others are applying coaching and what it could do for them.

For example, the area of follow-up as a big part of learning is certainly a central theme in the education process. There was a very good article by Zegner in the January 2005 edition of the OECD Learning Journal called "The Promise of Phase Three" that talks about this. It is a really useful piece of research showing how follow-up is really 50% of the impact of a program.

INTERNAL COACHING EXPERTS

Thirdly you need internal coaching experts. Roles are being created in organizations such as "Director of Executive Coaching", "Director of Internal Coaching", "Head of Coaching Research" and "Senior Vice President of Coaching". This is becoming more widespread - so you need people who are experts and who go out and gather information from the industries and hone their skills to become internal experts. There also needs to be quality external resources to help fast track the process and provide focus.

Considering that it takes about three years to work out all the bugs from these internal coaching programs and to really fine tune them – it makes to partner with an organization that has already done this over and over. HR people can then focus on other initiatives and the organization's people.

CLEAR DEFINITIONS

Before you start, you need clear definitions of coaching: What do you exactly mean by coaching? You need coaching competencies in order to measure people's competency as a coach; you need to professionalise the role through e.g. coach certification. There should be coaching products e.g. four common products include - an orientation coaching product, a transition coaching product, a high performer coaching product and a senior executive coaching product.

There are many different definitions of coaching. Coaching draws from so many fields that it can mean so many different things. For some, it is positive psychology and emotional intelligence (EQ), for others, it is adult learning theory or sport psychology, mentoring and/or neuro-linguistic programming and for others its systems theory, change models, and many different schools of thought.

It is important to have a clear definition and also understand the schools of thought that the definition draws from. (See Choosing a Model.)

In terms of definitions of coaching, the definition that Results Coaching Systems uses is "facilitating positive change by improving the quality of thinking" in line with organizational goals. It's a simple but powerful definition. The approach used is self-directed and solutions focused (see below). This means assisting individuals to come up with their own answers and focussing on solutions not on problems. It is not telling people what to do and it is not counselling. This is a highly effective and impactful coaching approach to do internally.

'Clear Definitions'



MEASUREMENT

Another key area is research - specifically measuring the impacts of the coaching initiatives. It is really useful to be able to point to specific data about behavior change as well as business impact. A complete return on investment study can be done with a little bit of focus and effort. Some of the best thinking on this is from, Meryl Anderson, in his book "Coaching That Counts".

Many studies have covered Levels 1-3 of the Kirkpatrick Model, and some cover Level 4 too (Business Impacts, e.g. on retention, engagement, productivity and performance). More recent studies also include Level 5 – Return on Investment.

Some examples of the levels of measurement (using the Kirkpatrick model) include:

Level 1	Reaction <i>Do you like it?</i>	Collect positive feedback from coachees Likes/dislikes Uses numerical ratings
Level 2	Learning <i>Did you get it?</i>	Coachees to document learning milestones - learning logs Record of activities undertaken in a given period
Level 3	Application <i>Can you do it?</i>	Created opportunity to apply learning Collect feedback; individual, peer and manager Review progress on learning plans Collect critical incidents; individual, coach, manager
Level 4	Business Impact <i>What's the impact?</i>	Peer/customer feedback Learning/application record Business unit KPI's Performance in projects
Level 5	Return on Investment <i>What's the ROI?</i>	Collect costs Quality benefits Isolate effects Calculate a cost/benefit ratio for Year 1/Year 2...

In a recent case study – referred to on page 34 and reproduced below, a 17 times Return on Investment was determined.

CASE STUDY

A Fortune 50 financial services provider had a goal of providing coaching to 200 high potentials. Twenty C-suite executives were trained as coaches with one to two clients each using a 12 session coaching framework. A full ROI study was undertaken with results indicating a Return of Investment of 17 times (17 X ROI).

The calculation included:

Return:

<i>Positive Cashflow</i>	Total Sales	determined by increase in revenue x % confidence and % attributable x basis points
	Time Savings	Annualised % time saved x annual Salary x % confidence and % attributable
<i>Cost Reduction</i>	Cost Control	Accelerated project ROI, headcount savings, legal fee savings
	Client turnover	% increase in retention rate x Annual burdened salary x 1.5 HCI Factor

Investment

Coach training

Associated expenses

Client time commitment

Dollarised ROI	\$2,512,076.42
ROI Positive Cashflow Only	1.6:1
ROI Cost Reduction Only	16:1
Total ROI	17:1

RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATIONS

Finally there needs to be a great communications program to keep the coaching top of mind, to keep people aware of it, success stories, and research results.

5. COMMON QUESTIONS

Here are some key questions that people often have.

How senior can the coaching go?

The answer to that is all the way to the C Suite. Sometimes these executives coach each other but generally you can get the C Suite being the coaches and coaching the next level down. The higher you start, the better - having said that you can certainly train mid-levels of coaches who are doing very effective coaching at the next level down. Examples include training regional managers in a bank to provide coaching to the bank managers so that every bank or branch manager has a coach - that's very effective.

As mentioned earlier, coaching has a proven effect on the direct reports of the people being coached so that means you have got branch managers having a coach and that can impact them and their performance and the performance of their sales people in that bank.

Is confidentiality an issue and how do you address and deal with it?

It's not as difficult as we all first think. It requires clarity of understanding and structures to be put in place.

Are people interested - isn't everyone just too busy?

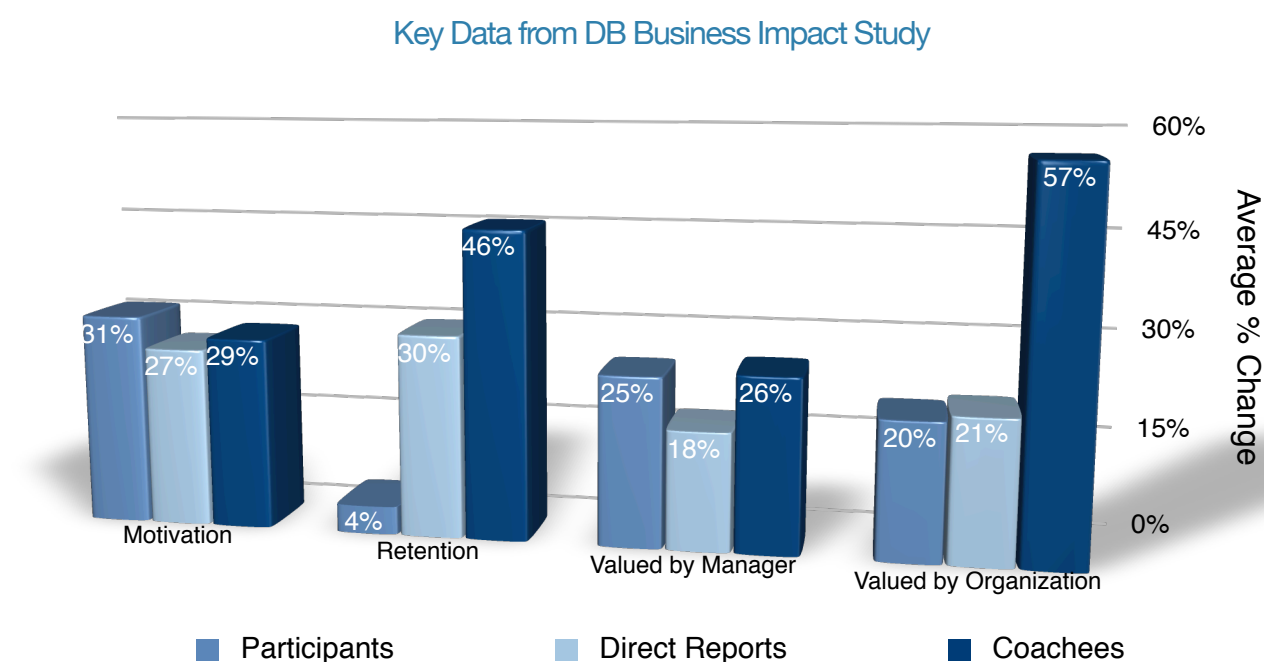
At first glance it might look like giving busy, stretched people even more to do, and this should in theory be a burden to the coaches. It is not the case. Once people adopt a coaching approach, they are freed up. One report cited a free day per week!

"Different way to approach people to get the best out of them. Not giving people answers, getting others to work through things themselves. Personally & at work, has freed up some of my time. A bit less stress as result."

6. CONCLUSION

Internal coaching definitely works. It is the initiative of choice in organizations undergoing change, and looking to embed a coaching culture. Of importance is how the internal coaching initiative is designed, packaged and implemented and ensuring alignment with the organization's vision and longer term strategy.

Thanks to measured initiatives, research results show that internal coaching has a significant impact on the coaches, clients, direct reports and the organization. Factors of note include (Level 4 – Business Impacts such as) improved retention, engagement, productivity and performance – all impacting favourably on the bottom line. Measurements such as ROI (Level 5) are returning significant figures, e.g. ROI X 17 in the recent AIG case.



It is clear that the field is wide open to further research. Some areas for further investigation include:

- A study comparing participants undergoing internal coaching vs. a similar number of participants undergoing external coaching
- Coaching direct reports vs. non-direct reports, and difference in corporate culture
- Competency levels of internal coaches
- Length of time that leaders coach for, on an ongoing basis
- Full-time dedicated coaches vs. leaders as coaches
- Systemic impact of coaching programs on engagement, retention, performance and productivity across the coach, the coach's direct reports, the client and the client's direct reports

If you are interested in research in this field, contact ruthdond@resultscaches.com

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www.workplacecoaching.com

www.davidrock.net

www.resultscoaches.com

8. ABOUT US

About Results Coaching Systems (RCS)

RCS is a global coach training organization, delivering high-impact coaching solutions to individuals and organizations across the globe. Its head office is in Sydney and it has additional offices in New York, London, Singapore, Bangalore, Johannesburg and Auckland, with coaches in over 30 countries.

RCS is one of the world's largest coaching organizations, and is fully accredited by the International Coach Federation. Its high-impact coaching and training methods enable lasting behavior change, can be scaled globally, and have been delivered through corporate and public training forums to more than 10,000 people worldwide. At this time, only 40 of around 250 coaching schools globally have programs accredited by the International Coach Federation (ICF).

The RCS methodology has been developed over ten years of R&D in the field of coaching. Its methodology is grounded in contemporary neuroscience, change theory, learning theory, systems theory and positive psychology - so there's a solid scientific underpinning to how to coach others. The distinct coaching methodology is results-oriented, based on the science of learning, and is ideal for use with smart, busy people. This coaching facilitates change through highly productive conversations that unlock insight in a few minutes, and supports clear goal achievement over time.

RCS also specializes in embedding internal coaching capacity within organizations and providing external coaching services to develop leaders, retain talent, improve performance, and change culture. RCS is one of the world's leaders in the field, having run close to 100 projects covering thousands of executives in 6 countries. RCS has a strong research base and application.

About David Rock

David Rock is the founder of RCS, has authored two books, "Personal Best", and "Quiet Leadership", as well as a number of papers. Results Coaching Systems is a founding sponsor of the Neuro-Leadership Institute, a not-for-profit institute coordinating and facilitating research on the brain

About Ruth Donde

Ruth Donde (ACC, MBA, B.Pharm) has extensive management and leadership experience across Industry and Corporate organizations. An internationally credentialed Coach, Coach Mentor and Facilitator/Trainer, Ruth is a global consultant and New Zealand Manager for Results Coaching Systems. She has written and presented papers at many global conferences.

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*“Can humans make as much progress
in the way we treat each other
as we have made in technology?”*

— Theodore Zeldin, Philosopher, 2004.
