



Building a Business Case for Coaching



What would better leadership mean for your organization? What could you accomplish? What challenges could you overcome? Leadership matters more now than possibly ever before. And the role of leaders and managers is shifting fast.

Businesses that want to thrive must equip their leaders for the challenges and opportunities that come with rapid growth, an ever-changing landscape, and ongoing uncertainty. Coaching at both individual and group levels can bridge the gap between your people and business strategies, creating purpose, connecting people to common goals, and building stronger, more resilient teams.

At AceUp, we tap our network of the industry's most experienced coaches to drive lasting change at the individual, team, and organizational levels for some of the most innovative companies around.

Boston Children's Hospital saw a 60% improvement in engagement, performance, and retention with AceUp.

This e-book takes a deeper look into coaching, its benefits, why organizations need it right now, and the major ROI that comes with it. Who should read this? Business leaders across all industries who want to build better leaders, stronger teams, and lasting, high-performing cultures.

Over the next five sections, you'll learn:

1. How different types of coaching can positively impact people and culture
2. The need for coaching and the benefits that come with it
3. Who in your organization could benefit from coaching
4. How coaching success is measured
5. How to ensure high-quality coaches

Why is it worth your time? An exclusive partner of **Harvard's Institute of Coaching (IOC)**, AceUp provides personalized leadership coaching for employees at all levels of the organization through an intelligent technology platform, providing a solution that is scalable, measurable, and impactful.



What is leadership coaching?

Leadership coaching is the partnership between a professional coach and an individual that encourages positive behavioral change both professionally and personally.

What are types of coaching?

When many of us think about what coaching is, we think about coaching practices that emphasize individual self-awareness centered on the one coachee. However, by adding group and systemic coaching into the mix, you are able to extend the benefits of coaching to support organization-wide changes and create a wider culture of coaching.

Group Coaching

A group coach helps to unlock both individual and collective challenges, directing the team to beneficial solutions. Group coaching offers an opportunity for teams to break down silos in the organization by coming together to:

- ▶ Tap into the collective wisdom of the peer group
- ▶ Uncover shared challenges
- ▶ Discover new leader-empowering solutions
- ▶ Strengthen relationships among colleagues

Systemic Coaching

Simply put, systemic coaching is a blend of working with both individuals and teams. As collaboration is the foundation, a systemic approach bridges the gap often associated with coaching between the individual experience and organizational goals. It focuses on all the parts of an organization.

Coaching an entire organization globally and consistently was impossible a few years ago but, thanks to recent technological innovations, we're able to make coaching much more accessible to larger groups of people and enable them to work in tandem.

A Culture of Coaching

As more people in your organization receive coaching, a culture of coaching is created. There is growing evidence that a clear connection exists between a culture that embodies coaching to one that creates extraordinary value for all stakeholders – customers, employees, stockholders, and the broader community.

In a perfect coaching culture, the entire company works as a “coaching neighborhood,” with the benefits multiplying every time an individual candidate gets coached. In this environment, positive behavioral changes like friendliness, support, advice, and collaboration – along with more static variables like information and power – flow across the entire network of correlations to expand influence. And psychologically safe, positive environments lead to peak performance.

Why coaching? Why now?

Over the last two years, leaders have had to navigate an uncertain and ever-changing landscape for themselves, their loved ones, and their employees. From managing the Great Resignation and adapting to hybrid work models, to reskilling/upskilling and succession planning, leadership coaching offers a proven way to help them be more agile in the face of the constant and quick changes in today's workplace.

Coaching is an invaluable tool for developing people across a wide range of needs in an organization.

According to Dr. Carol Kaufman of the Institute of Coaching (IOC), leadership coaches have been proven to improve in areas such as:

- ▶ Goal-setting and achievement
- ▶ The ability to ask for and receive feedback
- ▶ Transformational leadership
- ▶ Stress reduction
- ▶ Life and work satisfaction
- ▶ Agility
- ▶ The capacity to be a team player
- ▶ Cross-functional relationships
- ▶ Self-awareness
- ▶ Higher engagement
- ▶ Organizational strength
- ▶ Stakeholder management
- ▶ Ability to make others feel more valued at work

Coaches can also help their clients with a variety of personal challenges, like anxiety management, self-confidence, positive thinking, and well-being. While coaching can address a specific goal or initiative, a coach's focus is to use the goal as an example for solving other problems in the future.

Who can benefit from coaching?

While once reserved only for the very top of the leadership hierarchy, anyone who wants to make a positive change in an aspect of their life and career is an ideal candidate for coaching. Coaching helps:

Next Generation Leaders: Build the soft skills needed to shift to people leaders.

Mid-Level Leaders: Navigate increasing demands and responsibilities as they take on larger roles.

All Leaders: Effectively manage continuous change and rapid growth for themselves, their teams, and the organization.

“Coaching is a change methodology based first on individuals then ideally can ripple out to teams and organizations. It’s a shame-free approach to working with people to bring out their best.”

Dr. Carol Kauffman, Founder and Co-Chair
Institute of Coaching McLean/Harvard Medical School

Who should receive coaching in your organization?

To create systemic impact, research has found it helpful to also consider the organizational impact of who is chosen by asking these questions:

- How many regular contacts does this potential coachee have in your company?¹
- How frequently is this potential coachee connecting with others?
- How influential is the department that this employee or employees are in?

This is thinking systemically. Considering powerful connecting nodes in an organization, and those who operate them can accelerate the process of integrating a coaching approach throughout the organization. Sometimes this may mean passing over a high-potential employee – for now – in lieu of someone who can showcase this shifting approach more powerfully and widely. Sometimes it can mean providing coaching to an entire department that has vast influence.

¹How to Build a Culture of Coaching: xviii O'Connor, Sean, and Michael Cavanagh. "The coaching ripple effect: The effects of developmental coaching on well-being across organisational networks," *Psychology of Well-Being: Theory, Research and Practice*, 2013. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/2211-1522-3-2>

²Robison, Jennifer. "Give Up Bossing, Take Up Coaching: You'll Like the Results." Gallup, January 17, 2020. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/282647/give-bossing-coaching-results.aspx>

³"Building a Coaching Culture for Change Management." ICF/HCI Research, 2018. <https://coachfederation.org/research/building-a-coaching-culture>

⁴Robinson, Shauna. "The Case for a Coaching Culture," *TD Magazine*, January 2018. <https://www.td.org/magazines/td-magazine/the-case-for-a-coaching-culture>

What are the benefits of coaching in organizations?

Coaching is an invaluable tool for developing people across a wide range of needs in an organization. Eighty percent of people who receive coaching report increased self-confidence, and more than 70% benefit from improved work performance, relationships, and more effective communication skills. A robust culture of coaching can put your organization at a competitive advantage.

- Employees who use coaching to better know their strengths and apply them well can increase your profits by 14–29%.²
- A coaching culture provides emotional, social, and process support during a change (33%).
- It also accelerates and improves performance when a company is undergoing change (13%).³

Organizations that have intentionally created coaching cultures are more than two times likely to outperform their peers.⁴

Organizations using AceUp see consistent and measurable results like increased performance, higher employee engagement, and improved retention as well as better satisfaction and employee well-being.

After three months of using AceUp, employees demonstrate greater confidence, leadership, and organizational commitment.



96% feel more confident in their ability to succeed in their role.



92% find significant improvement in their leadership, communication, and organizational skills.



88% find that receiving coaching significantly affected their feelings about working at their company.

For an organization, coaching can:

- ▶ Empower individuals and encourage them to take responsibility
- ▶ Increase employee and staff engagement
- ▶ Improve individual performance
- ▶ Identify and develop high-potential employees
- ▶ Identify both organizational and individual strengths, along with development opportunities
- ▶ Motivate and empower individuals to excel
- ▶ Demonstrate a company's commitment to employee development

But it also has a long-term impact, helping with:

- ▶ Succession planning
- ▶ Upskilling and reskilling
- ▶ Growing people leaders
- ▶ Attracting and retaining talent
- ▶ Aligning leadership
- ▶ Building competencies
- ▶ Focusing on DE&I

How do you measure success?

Every company wants to know how this coaching investment is going to pay off. While it can be difficult to trace the value of coaching from coaching intervention to profits and stakeholder value, it is important to attempt to measure its impact as much as possible. And it starts with creating goals on the individual, group, and organizational level at the onset of the program.

86% of companies report that they recouped their investment in coaching, with an average Return on Investment of 600%.⁵

Some of the key areas to measure ROI include:

ROI on skill and competency development — This is one of the easiest areas to measure. It can be as simple as asking coachees what skill or skills they want to develop most, asking them to rate how good they are at it at the onset of coaching, and then asking them to rate themselves for progress at regular intervals. Quarterly assessments are usually the best. Research shows that it's difficult to demonstrate behavior change in fewer than 12 weeks. These assessments could also include the manager or other key players, perhaps by deploying 360-degree surveys.

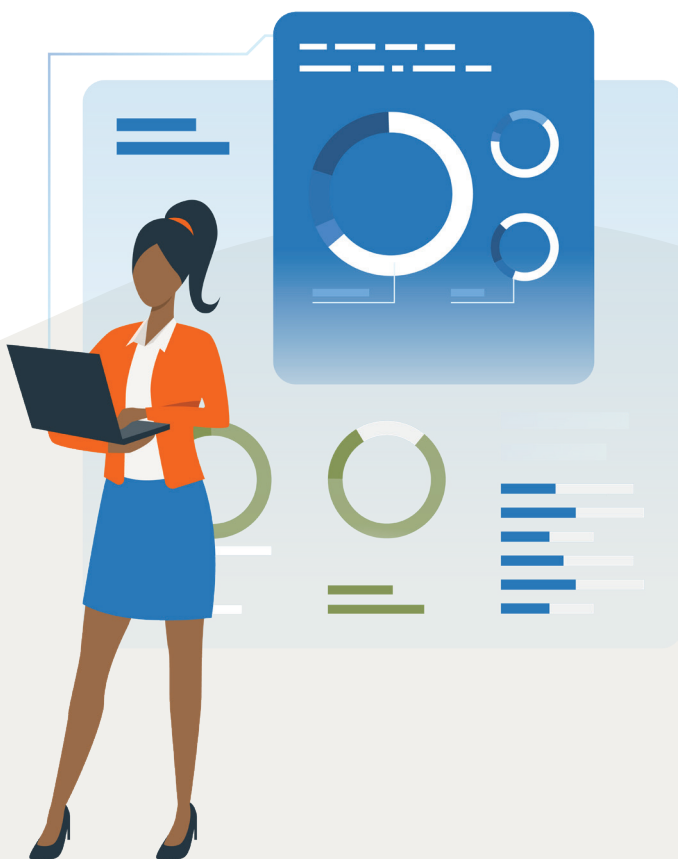
⁵ICF: 2009

ROI on engagement — Many companies already track employee engagement through internal HR surveys. Evidence of coaching can often be traced to an increase in employee engagement. Questions to ask: How engaged are employees in the workplace? Are specific teams with coaching interventions more engaged than their counterparts? How has this improved key indicators like absenteeism, loyalty, and referrals?

ROI on retention — Many corporations have precise dollar values on what it costs to replace an important employee. Coaching can help reduce employee turnover, particularly if retention is attended to as a key metric in rolling out coaching. Like engagement, it can be difficult to drive a direct connection between coaching and retention, but it is worth the effort. Questions to ask: Has preventable attrition gone down in teams with coaching intervention? How does this compare to companies in the same industry in your region? Has there been an uptick in retention for high-potential employees?

Companies use both formal and informal channels to measure ROI. These include occasional conversations with the coach (74.3%) as well as formal assessments (70%) and scheduled meetings (68.8%). But these are still mostly limited to a siloed coaching approach. In a culture of coaching, you need to collaborate with all of the stakeholders, take stock of business improvements before and after the program, and draw correlations for an accurate picture of the ROI.

It is only by keeping this holistic framework in mind that companies can enact a culture of coaching that, while it is implemented at grassroots nodes, is truly driven by business goals.



How can you ensure high-quality coaches?

The rapid growth of the coaching industry means the need for more coaches has increased. But while anyone can claim to be a coach, their training and experience make all the difference.

Who are leadership coaches? They are experts with invaluable guidance to offer. Coaches usually have a strong background and many years of experience and expertise in a specific industry or competency, like healthcare, biotech, education, or executive management, leadership transition, organizational change, etc.

Leadership coaches also have extensive training in behavioral change and personal development. They hold professional coaching certifications from organizations like the International Coaching Federation. While coaches come from a wide variety of backgrounds, one thing they have in common is a passion for challenging leaders to step outside their comfort zone.

More than 80% of our coaches at AceUp hold a Ph.D., MSC, or MBA degree, and more than 90% have managerial experience at a Fortune 500 company. Each is rigorously vetted to ensure they are a true master of the coaching craft and possess a demonstrated track record of behavioral change. Even after they are part of our elite global network of coaches, our exclusive partnership with the Institute of Coaching (IOC) provides our coaches with the most rigorous academic research and content available in the field. We are also the only coaching platform to employ EMCC-certified Coaching Supervisors. Professional coaching supervision allows an unparalleled ability to align your coaching program with your organizational goals.

Want to know more?

Want to know more about leadership coaching and all the benefits that come with it? If you like to see the results other companies have had, check out our [case studies](#). For more general knowledge on coaching, we've got some helpful [resources](#). And if you want to learn how coaching can unleash the full potential of your people, leaders, and teams, [request a demo](#) with us.

About AceUp

AceUp empowers professionals at all levels to maximize their impact through transformational coaching enabled by technology, empowered by science, and backed by data. We combine the power of one-on-one executive coaching, group training, and behavioral technology to foster a culture of coaching within organizations that drives systematic impact. [LEARN MORE ►](#)