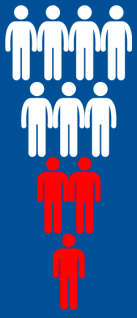# COACHING FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

TAKING THE STAKEHOLDER APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP COACHING

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# LEADERSHIP TRAINING IS **POPULAR**, BUT HERE IS THE **PROBLEM**

Organizations use training, facilitated workshops, counseling, mentoring, reflective writing, journaling, action learning, role play, simulations, leadership exchange, psychometric testing, 360-degree appraisal, leadership consultancy, e-learning, leadership coaching to develop emerging and experienced leaders (Bolden, 2005, p. 16). Whereas each intervention can stand alone, leaders can also use any combination of these activities to fit the organization's needs.

Leadership training interventions are very popular. But here is the problem.

The majority of learning happens on the job—in the form of an experience—and many times, a negative experience. Training teaches new and often familiar principles, but it stops short of unpacking the insights or providing individualized feedback on using the concepts in everyday interaction with team members. The transfer of learning from a formal classroom setting to workplace context represents a significant problem among leadership development activities in today's organizations (Day, 2000, p. 586). Most leadership insights come through experience, not classroom training.

Leadership training courses offer one type of leadership development practice, but there are 14 more to choose from. In a study of executive coaching, Larcker et al. (2013) found 100% of coaches enjoyed receiving coaching and leadership advice, but only 33% actually receive coaching or leadership advice from outside experts (p.1). A 2018 study by HR.com found 56% of organizations use instructor-led training to provide leadership development, and 51% use coaching.

Here is the point. Regardless of which leadership development strategy is most popular, leadership coaching is gaining ground in organizations.


Source: HR.com, 2018
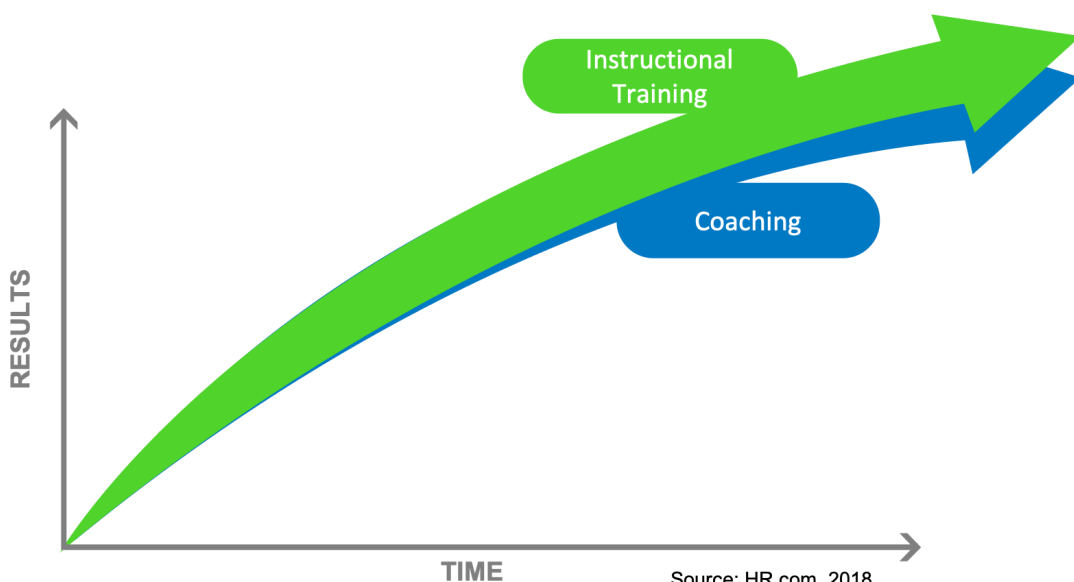
The
FUNDAMENTAL VALUE OF LEADERSHIP COACHING

All leaders make decisions, in the moment, with—at best—80% of the information they would ideally want. Granted, the challenges CEOs and middle managers face are of a different nature than those tackled by middle managers and team leads. Therefore, leadership development strategies are no longer optional as they greatly assist leaders at all levels to navigate high-stakes environments. As a leadership development intervention, coaching delivers results for individual leaders, work groups, and the organization-at-large.

"Coaching is a strategic initiative that expands leadership capability."

Dianna and Merrill Anderson in "Coaching that Counts"
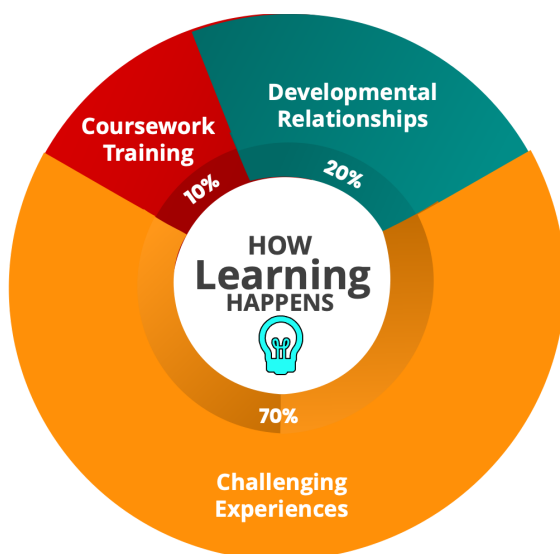
UNPACKING EXPERIENCES IN A COACHING RELATIONSHIP

The transfer of learning from a formal classroom setting to the context of work represents a significant problem with the most common problem in leadership development activities in today's organizations (Day, 2001, p.586). Yarborough (2018, 49) found 10% of learning derives from coursework and training, 20% of learning comes from developmental relationships, and the other 70% emerges from challenging experiences. Coaches help leaders to unpack experiences and design action plans.

Coursework Training 10%
Developmental Relationships 20%
HOW Learning HAPPENS
Challenging Experiences 70%

INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL OUTCOMES

of Leadership Coaching

Organizations dedicate resources to developing the human capital of individual leaders in the form of individual knowledge, skills, and abilities (Day, 2000, p. 585). Coaching produces three significant outcomes for individual leaders.

SELF-EFFICACY IN LEADERSHIP ROLES

Imposter syndrome is running rampant, especially among younger leaders. Increasing self-efficacy leaders to thrive by increasing their confidence in his or her ability to carry out the behaviors required by their designated role (Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014, pp. 632,642). Coaching leaders to improve self-efficacy helps to increase their ability to cope with job demands and stressors in an organizational context (Theeboom et al., 2014, p. 4). They can use these coping skills to deal with job stressors both now and in the future.

SELF-AWARENESS AND MANAGEMENT

Self-awareness represents another individual-level benefit of leadership coaching. A personal competency of emotional intelligence, self-awareness involves identifying one's own emotions along with their impact, using intuition to guide decision-making, and recognizing one's strengths, limitations, self-worth, and capabilities (Goleman et al., 2004, p. 39). Leaders receive data and information through the emotional reactions of themselves and their teams. Anderson and Anderson (2005) emphasized the role of coaching in improving a leader's ability to detect and decipher information received through emotion in order to uncover assumptions, shape intentions, and move forward exhibiting more constructive behavior.

SAFE-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Coaching provides current and future leaders with a safe environment to learn and unpack insights gleaned on the job. Leaders can practice creative strategies for managing change and conflict, improving communication and self-confidence, retooling skills, achieving professional and personal goals, and building meaningful and productive cross-cultural relationships (Carey et al., 2011, p. 52). Psychological safety is critical to achieve learning and development outcomes.

GROUP-LEVEL APPROACH

to Leadership Coaching

Group executive coaching affords an advantage over individual coaching. Leadership expert Peter Northouse explained the intensity and focus of the group dynamic encourages more courageous conversations and brings about "tipping points for change" (Northouse, 2016, p. 311). He lists several benefits of group executive coaching, including:

- A context for cathartic experiences and emotional cleansing
- A shared emotional experience results in a sense of community
- A feeling of relief after realizing confiding fears and challenges
- A safe environment to unpack and understand dysfunctional behaviors
- An opportunity for vicarious learning, experimentation, and new future scenarios
- Helping others increases leaders' positive emotional state and self-image.

THE IMPACT OF GROUP LEADERSHIP COACHING

Corporate and small business executives rely heavily on their teams to perform operational tasks, make decisions, manage team members, and deliver results. Thus, interest is growing around using group executive coaching as a leadership development intervention (Ward et al., 2014, p. 63). Group coaching assists emerging and establish leaders in developing associated skills such as governance, oversight, and making decisions about direction setting, talent management, and resource allocation (Berman, 2019, p. 75). Experienced leadership coaches create team psychological safety to help group members to overcome threats of embarrassment, admit errors, ask for help, and discuss problems (Day, 2000, p. 603). Leaders often elevate their team's functioning by modeling newly developed coaching skills on their own teams.

PAIR GROUP COACHING WITH ONE-TO-ONE & PEER FOLLOW-UP

Group coaching is not the end of the story. Business leaders expressed a high degree of satisfaction with leadership development interventions that combine group coaching with one-on-one follow-up (Ward et al., 2014, p. 73). These sessions begin with group coaching led by an external coach, but they transition to become a peer coaching initiative. The group-to-peer coaching intervention strategy helps executives to unpack dysfunctional behavior and investigate the emotional realities driving unproductive behavior (Northouse, 2016, pp. 311–312). Leaders often share repressed feelings, anxieties, and conflicts in this safe environment to discover reasons why they actions stop short of delivering the results they are looking for. When properly structured, group coaching with follow-up peer coaching sessions can help senior executives to manage career transitions from positions requiring more leadership acumen than functional expertise (Ward, 2008, p. 67). Follow-on peer coaching can be arranged with internal or external coaches.

Using the peer coaching model

Coach leads reflection on work practices, leadership styles, group dynamics, decision-making and culture

1:1 Follow-up Sessions

With external coaches

Group Coaching Approach

Introductory session presents the process and instruments

Coaches use pre-selected tools to assess leadership dimensions, styles and behaviors

With internal coaches

Leadership Coaching from an
ORGANIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

LEADERSHIP COACHING SUPPORTS AND STIMULATES CHANGE

Coaching occupies a unique position in organizational life—it supports and stimulates change. Hunt and Weintraub (2007) described executive coaching as a leadership development intervention targeting individuals currently experiencing leadership transitions or who are expected to do so in the near future (p.13). In these cases, change is not automatic or guaranteed. Nor can leaders effectively question emotional realities, reevaluate cultural norms, and adopt new behaviors in isolation. When coaching interventions are planned, coordinated, and well-managed, leaders can more successfully navigate the winds of change.

SUCCESSFUL COACHING INITIATIVES CREATE VALUE

The cascading effect of a successful coaching engagement creates positive change for the coached leader and their team members. Dianna and Merrill Anderson (2005) described coaching as "a strategic initiative that expands leadership capability" (p.122). So those who are effectively coached are more likely to coach others. To be successful, leadership coaching must create value for individuals to encourage enrollment and organizations to perpetuate company sponsorship.

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT IS AN END IN ITSELF

Due to an impending leadership talent shortage in organizations worldwide, the need for leadership and talent development is paramount. Despite an overall concern with performance and productivity, development should be pursued as an end in itself. Employees, and especially younger workers, gravitate to organizations highlighting development as a competitive advantage for attracting talent.

So how do organizations approach leadership coaching from a **value-creating** perspective?

STAKEHOLDER APPROACH

"Who wants to see results from coaching?"
"What specific results do they want?"
"Why do they want those results?"

Evaluating coaching as a leadership development tool works best using the multi-stakeholder contracting approach. Due to the involvement of multiple stakeholder goals in developmental coaching engagements, Van Coller-Peter and Burger (2019) recommended this form of contracting to effectively align and optimize outcomes, provide ongoing feedback, and report results.

· 3-Cornered Contracting includes the coach, client, and line manager.
· 4-Cornered Contracting includes the coach, client, line manager, and organizational sponsor.

Such approaches increase the likelihood of satisfying multi-level client goals. Success factors include a healthy organizational culture, internal support, readiness for change, ongoing alignment, and evaluation of impact.

Finally, coaches can partner with human resources departments to select reliable and valid measures of leadership behavior to evaluate effectiveness. Executive coaching that "explicitly targets leadership development must by necessity, use reliable and valid measures of leadership behavior that gather data from a wide range of stakeholders to assess the impact of the coaching intervention" (MacKie, 2014, p. 120). Stakeholders select proper measures in conjunction with the coach. Data should be gathered from a wide range of stakeholders to assess impact.
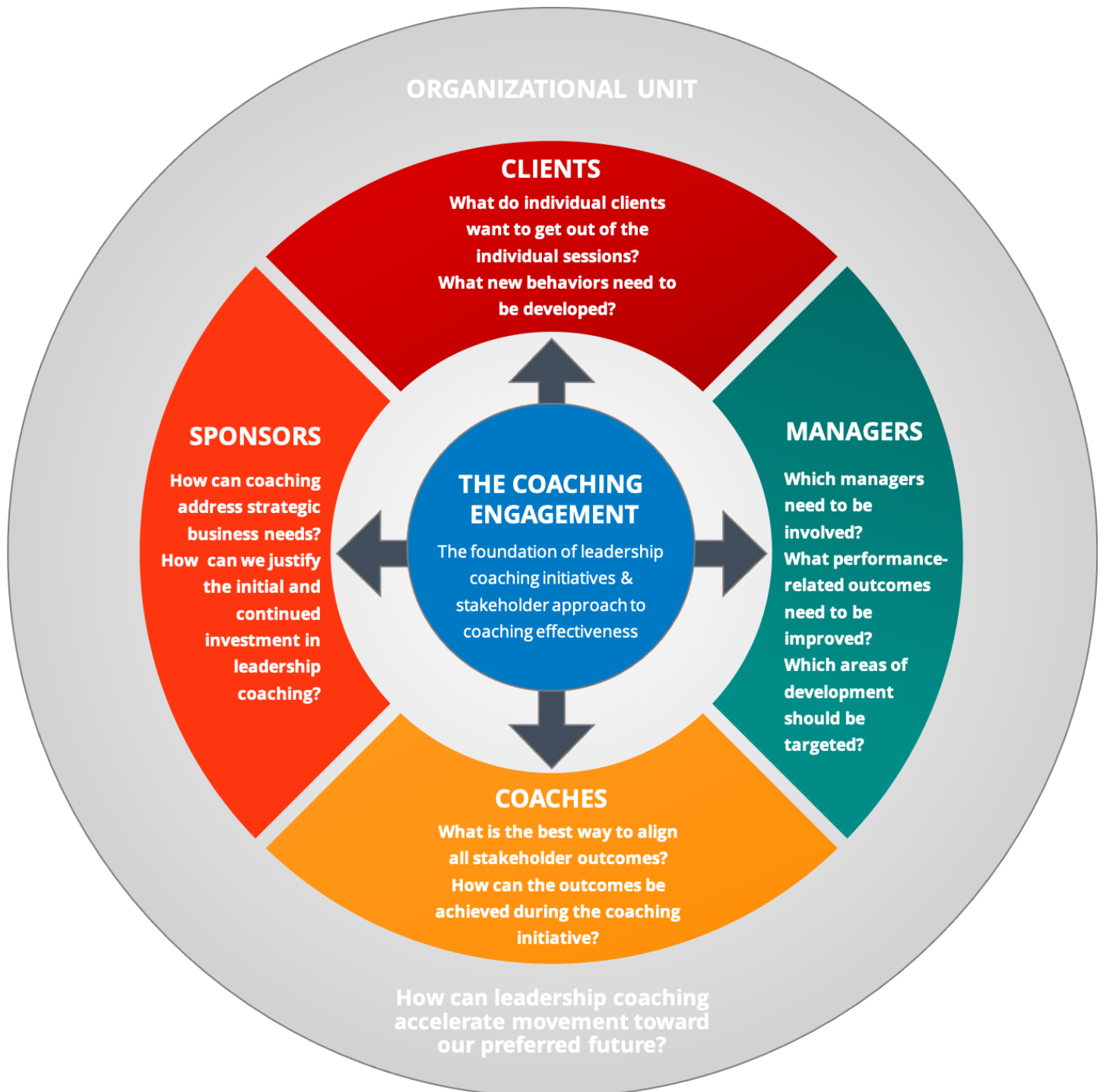
THE "FACE" OF RESULTS

If a coaching initiative fails to help an organization to achieve its goals, decision makers can begin to view it negatively. In its final stages, an unmanaged initiative will be viewed as a frill after cycling through a downward spiral of unmet stakeholder expectations (Hunt & Weintraub, 2007, p.125). Adopting a stakeholder approach assigns a "face" to the results.) Five specific stakeholders for whom coaching initiatives must deliver results include coaches, coachees, sponsors, direct managers, and the organizational unit (Crane, 2008). Setting a solid foundation is all-important for experiencing all intended benefits of leadership coaching.

ORGANIZATIONS DEPLOY LEADERSHIP COACHING TO:

- Develop and retain leadership **talent**
- Launch and sustain **change**
- Improve individual and organizational **performance**
- Support **succession planning** and management

THE STAKEHOLDER APPROACH
to Leadership Coaching

ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT

CLIENTS
What do individual clients want to get out of the individual sessions?
What new behaviors need to be developed?

MANAGERS
Which managers need to be involved?
What performance-related outcomes need to be improved?
Which areas of development should be targeted?

SPONSORS
How can coaching address strategic business needs?
How can we justify the initial and continued investment in leadership coaching?

THE COACHING ENGAGEMENT
The foundation of leadership coaching initiatives & stakeholder approach to coaching effectiveness

COACHES
What is the best way to align all stakeholder outcomes?
How can the outcomes be achieved during the coaching initiative?

How can leadership coaching accelerate movement toward our preferred future?

Is Your Organization

COACHING-FRIENDLY?

The ability to produce positive results is paramount for coaching initiatives. Successful coaching initiatives respect individual coaching relationships while parlaying value from those relationships to the strategic business objectives (Anderson & Anderson, 2005, p.122). Coaching-friendly organizations also place a high value on:

- 🔒 building and maintaining trust
- 👍 establishing healthy relationships
- 🔑 treating employees as ends in themselves, rather than means to an end
- 📚 building a diverse and innovative organization
- 🔗 transferring organization-specific knowledge via relationships
- 📏 individual and organizational learning
- 📈 management activity to help individuals produce results
- 💬 seeking guidance versus the "sink or swim" approach
- 👥 performance management and appraisal
- 🔁 total quality management and continuous improvement (Hunt & Weintraub, p.57-64)

COACHING IS NOT A "FIX"

Many employees have experienced true coaching but some executives have used coaching to "fix" employees. Using coaching to fix performance problems has stigmatized its use within companies. An expert coach-facilitator works with organizations to restore positive perspectives of coaching. By providing a leadership coach to an executive group, firms level the playing field and give equal opportunity to all participants. This action removes the stigma and favoritism associated with secretive, work-sponsored coaching engagements (Day, 2000, p. 591). This helps renegotiate the psychological contract of "coaching to fix performance" and replaces it with "coaching for development."

DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION HAVE A NEGATIVE VIEW OF COACHING?
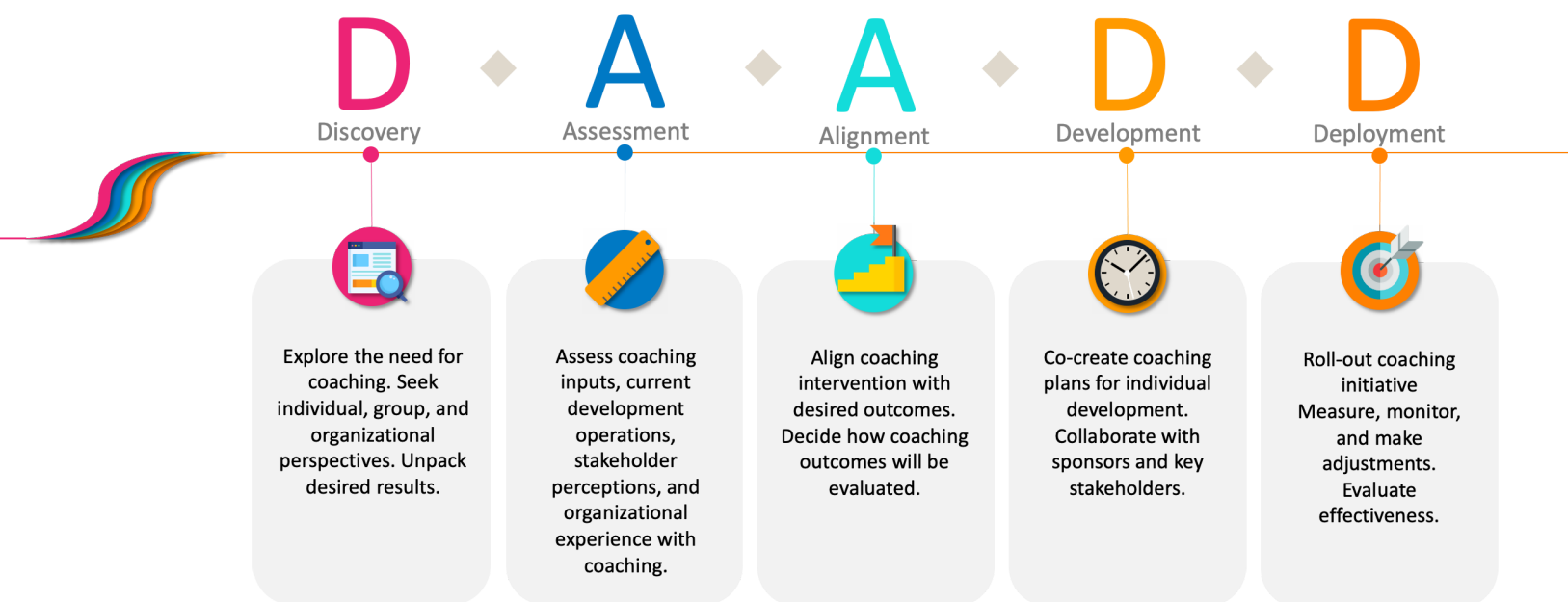
If so, you can shift the perspective.

- Brainstorm ways to use coaching for development and succession planning instead of "fixing" performance issues
- Level the playing field and increase access to coaching
- Offer equal opportunities to receive coaching
- Educate employees on what coaching is and how it functions
- Use comparisons to distinguish coaching from other practices such as mentoring and counseling
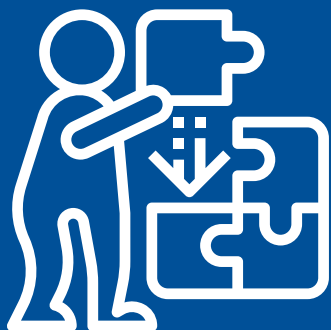
INTEGRATE COACHING INTO YOUR ORGANIZATION

1. Plan to **deliver value** on 3 levels: in the leader's inner life and immediate context, between leaders and their teams, and for the whole organization.
2. Clarify the **direct links** between desired coaching outcomes, individual development needs, and strategic business goals to avoid a disconnect between individual learning and organizational progress.
3. Use **competency models** to assess effectiveness of developmental coaching engagements and ensure alignment between individual development activities and future talent and leadership needs.
4. Consider the **Leadership Circle Profile** (Anderson & Adams, 2016), which provides a 360-degree view of leadership competencies, can supplement and complement competency models. The assessment is a free, valid, and reliable way to assess individual leadership competencies.
5. **Combine executive coaching** with any of the other 14 leadership development interventions.

A Model for Leadership Coaching Readiness

D — Discovery
A — Assessment
A — Alignment
D — Development
D — Deployment

Discovery: Explore the need for coaching. Seek individual, group, and organizational perspectives. Unpack desired results.

Assessment: Assess coaching inputs, current development operations, stakeholder perceptions, and organizational experience with coaching.

Alignment: Align coaching intervention with desired outcomes. Decide how coaching outcomes will be evaluated.

Development: Co-create coaching plans for individual development. Collaborate with sponsors and key stakeholders.

Deployment: Roll-out coaching initiative Measure, monitor, and make adjustments. Evaluate effectiveness.

TEAIIANO
Leadership Solutions

Since 2004, Teaiiano has worked with individuals, leaders, and organizations to move through uncharted territory and achieve their preferred vision for the future. We specialize in managing the complexities of a shared approach to vision development and strategy-making.

HOW WE HELP LEADERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

With the right tools and guidance, CEOs, COOs, HR Directors, and Executive Directors break through barriers and overcome obstacles to position their organization for future growth.
We feel a deep sense of purpose to help our clients:
- Engage new possibilities
- Deescalate internal issues
- Mitigate crisis situations

Teaiiano offers a range of solutions to help executive and senior leaders advance their organization's progress toward their preferred future. **Learn more** about our work with organizations.

LEADERSHIP COACHING

Teaiiano collaborates with executives, managers, team leaders, and business owners to bring about lasting behavioral change. This partnership helps leaders gain self-awareness, clarify goals, achieve development objectives, and maximize performance. We help leaders and managers to:
- Develop a more effective leadership style
- Maximize communication and interpersonal skills
- Focus on top priorities
- Increase well-being and work-life balance

Leadership coaching can take place in both individual and group settings. **Learn more** about our coaching solutions.

COACHING INTEGRATION

Have you ever wondered if coaching can work for your organization?
You may be surprised to discover how coaching is used in your organization already.

Chances are your team members already engage in coaching conversations. We examine how coaching currently exists within your company and provide tools to make it more effective.

Our OD approach starts with a conversation to assess how coaching skills are currently used. We also explore the effects of coaching and discuss possible organizational outcomes. We align the coaching process with individual, group, and organization-wide results and measure the outcomes to determine coaching effectiveness. **Take the Coaching 360 survey**.

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