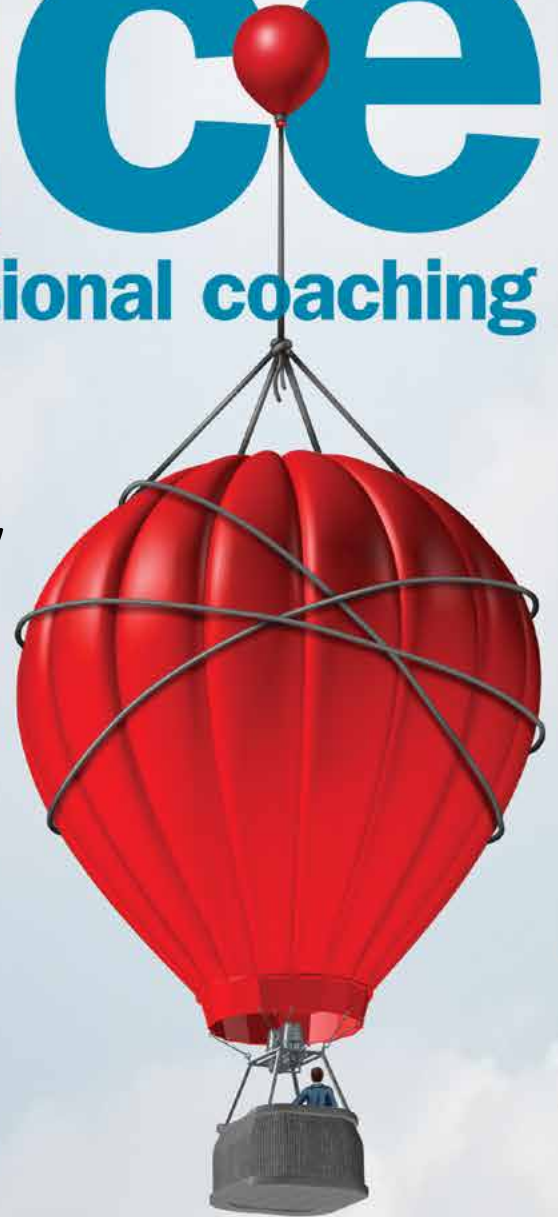


choice

the magazine of professional coaching

TAKING CARE *of* BUSINESS

Building a vibrant corporate
coaching culture



**Internal vs. External
COACHING**

**LEADING HEALTHY
CORPORATE &
TEAM CULTURE**

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TAKING CARE of BUSINESS

Building a vibrant corporate coaching culture



How do organizations decide that coaching is for them?

Who is the decision maker inside the organization and how do they choose and implement a coaching program? How do coaches market and get into corporate coaching programs? What are the different types of coaching required in corporations?

What qualifications and tools do you need to be a corporate coach?

Join us as we explore coaching in corporations.

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By Jennifer Britton, MES, BCC, PCC, CPCC, CHRL

The options for coaching in organizations today have never been greater. Do we engage an executive coach? A team coach? A group coach? Are we looking to build our own team of internal coaches or are we going to develop a roster of external coaches we can call on? Do we offer face-to-face coaching at the organization and have a “coach on call” or do we offer the anonymity of virtual coaching?

Every organization will have a different answer to these questions, usually shaped by organizational priorities, budget, and the overall vision of the type of coaching culture they want to create. Coaches are often asked to help sponsors and stakeholders wade through the sea of options.

This article briefly explores the current ecosystem of four corporate coaching options – individual coaching, group coaching, team coaching and leader as coach. For each, we’ll explore questions to consider and critical success factors to keep in mind.

From pairing high potentials with coaches, to having a “coach on call” internally, individual coaching provides immense value for individuals at all levels of an organization.

As the multi-year journey to build a coaching culture begins, at the most macro level it can be useful to surface the following questions:

- What’s the overall purpose of integrating coaching and/or of building a coaching culture?

- What strategic, or corporate, priorities does this support?
- How does coaching connect with other learning and performance initiatives in the organization (training, mentoring, etc.)?
- Who are/can be the champions of a coaching approach and culture?
- What are the metrics we want to track to ensure this is a good use of our resources?
- What best practices can we build from already?
- Who are the key individuals we want to involve and/or impact with coaching?

INDIVIDUAL/ONE-ON-ONE COACHING

Now well established in many organizations, individual one-on-one coaching offers the deep dive for today’s professionals to explore key issues of importance. From pairing high potentials with coaches, to having a ‘coach on call’ internally, individual coaching provides immense value for individuals at all levels of an organization.

Questions to Consider:

- What is the organizational level individual coaching should be positioned at – C-level, front line supervisors?
- Do we have a cadre of internal coaches, maintain a roster of external coaches, and/or have

coaches who can specialize in different areas and types of support?

- How do we measure coaching impact?

GROUP COACHING

Group coaching brings together small groups of professionals from across an organization. The potential for the broadening of perspectives, enhanced networking and the sharing of experience makes group coaching a popular option for scaling the coaching conversation to many.

Group coaching can be introduced as a stand-alone program, or as a follow-on to current training initiatives. Popular vehicles for organizational group coaching include programs for professionals transitioning at different stages of their career (new leaders, return from parental leave, retirement...), as well as group coaching for innovation and change.

Questions to Consider:

- Who can benefit from a group coaching process?
- Who will be open to learning from other peers?
- What other initiatives (training, learning) can group coaching support?

Group coaching works best when people want to be coached and it is not mandated. Those who appreciate a peer learning process also tend to flourish in the group coaching space. Finally, many indicate that they enjoy the reflective space created when listening and learning with others.

TEAM COACHING

Team coaching brings the coaching conversation to teams of all kinds. From intact teams to project



“
Be ready for the paradigm shift that can happen as a coaching culture gets built. The shift from a 'telling culture' to a 'coaching culture' is not always smooth.”

teams and remote teams, many organizations are looking to this approach to support alignment across a team and explore key issues related to relationships and results.

A critical success factor for this approach is that the leader needs to be willing to create the space and time for the team to have the discussions and make the changes required. The team leader is an integral part of the team coaching process, and needs to be open to whatever the conversations unearth. Change on teams takes time. Team coaching is not a one-off modality but an extended series of conversations, which sometimes involves others in the organization. Is the organization ready to invest in this intensive, or elongated, series of conversations?

Questions to Consider:

- What teams can benefit from coaching?
- What additional support can be provided to create the pause and ongoing conversation space teams need for this work?
- How do our other internal processes support a coaching approach with teams?

LEADER AS COACH

A final vehicle for building a coaching culture is equipping leaders with coaching skills. In organizations where there is shift work, multiple work locations, matrix teams and/or virtual and remote workers, this is a critical area for capacity building and developing a coaching culture.

Critical Success Factors:

- Isolate the core skills you want to develop – What do the core coaching competencies sound like in the organization?
- Model it – Have senior leaders be open to, and demonstrate, this new way of working and empowerment of the team.
- Slow down to speed up – Be ready to create the pause and focus needed to build coaching skills in the short term, in order to support people to go faster in the long term.
- Be ready for the paradigm shift that can happen as a coaching culture gets built. The shift from a ‘telling culture’ to a ‘coaching culture’ is not always smooth. Inflection points along the way may be filled with conflict as different ways of leading and teaming emerges across pockets of the organization.

BUILDING A COACHING CULTURE

As organizations start (or continue) to explore coaching modalities and

approaches for their context, many other questions surface. Who can be champions? What cost does it really have, not only with training but embedding it in the culture and making sure that people have time in the short term to invest? Finally, is it being modelled in leadership at all levels, and as the organization itself changes? This is especially true if there are mergers and acquisitions. New locations and parts of the business will also need to go through a similar process to develop the same culture.

Questions to Consider:

- What could a “leader as coach” approach look like at our organization?
- What skills are important to cultivate?
 How can a “leader as coach” approach support other coaching initiatives across the organization?

CONCLUSION

Every organization will have its own roadmap in creating a coaching culture. At the macro-level, here are several additional questions to consider:

- What do we see as the different roles different types of coaching can bring to the organization – individual coaching, group coaching, team coaching, leader as coach?
- What support, time and resourcing does each one need?
- How do our internal processes need to change as we adopt a coaching culture (consider talent management, feedback and performance conversations, compensation etc.)?
- How can the different types of coaching feed into each other?
- What other organizational experiences can we learn from?

Organizations and coaches alike can learn from those organizations that have evolved their own coaching cultures. Who can you look to in your industry? •