

MANAGER-AS-COACH

Build responsive high-performing teams and thriving employee experiences



As a management tool, coaching is one of the most effective ways of engaging and retaining people and maximising performance.

Coaching utilises curiosity and empathy as a path to innovative and collaborative problem-solving, which generates business improvements.

THE CHALLENGE

- **74%** of managers wish they could do more to implement change but don't have influence or resources.[1]
- In one of the largest studies of burnout, Gallup found the biggest source of burnout was unfair treatment at work. That was followed by an unmanageable workload and unclear communication, support and demands from managers.[2]

The Great Resignation, Quietly Quitting and the Great Reshuffle all mean that organisations, and their employees, are navigating a Great Transformation, to find new ways to work well. The result? Employees are looking to organisations who do.

But are managers missing a trick? Coaching skills, traditionally seen as 'nice to have', are a sustainable and cost-effective way of interrupting the path to burnout. Coaching creates an employee experience that retains talent and engages people on the dimensions of meaning, change and empowerment; three characteristics that focus on the changing needs of employees.

- A study suggests that **60%** of employees want a fulfilling job and **66%** want to be able to truly be themselves.[3]

Put simply, managers with coaching skills are better equipped to have the conversations that matter.

SOLVING FOR A THRIVING WORKFORCE

Great managers help colleagues grow, recognise them for doing meaningful work, and make them feel cared about. Environments like this shape more inclusive cultures, where all colleagues thrive.

Managers need to be better listeners, coaches and collaborators and coaching skills, when used widely and well, deliver a significant ROI for organisations.

- So why is it that only **25%** have a dedicated line item in their budget for coaching and/ or coach training? [4]

The barriers that prevent managers becoming great coaches

A few include:

- Coaching is not prioritised, recognised or rewarded by the organisation
- Outdated belief that they must be experts first
- Fear of giving feedback or a disregard of its importance to others
- Uncomfortable with the vulnerability of not having all the answers
- The false efficiency of; "It's quicker if I tell them".

Overcoming these common barriers requires a mindset shift, an updated perspective on the role of the manager and development of key skills, perhaps none more important than delivering feedback well.

- The value of feedback, underpinned by coaching skills, suggests that **84%** of employees who have received meaningful feedback in the last week are strongly engaged.
- Comparatively **78%** of people who have not received meaningful feedback in the last week are either actively disengaged or not engaged. [2]

Feedback is a core responsibility of managers and yet employees repeatedly state that it is rarely frequent, specific and actionable.

Building a culture where feedback is normalised and not feared creates positive ripples throughout the organisation on retention and results.

Questioning, listening and empathetic curiosity are the heartbeat of coaching skills and easily learnt

When managers ask real questions, listen with empathy and curiosity and seek to co-create solutions, they build trust and the foundations of a culture of generative open dialogue. The benefits of integrating coaching into your manager and leadership skillset are multi-layered:



INDIVIDUAL

- Improved communication and relationships
- Behavioural change
- Personal growth



TEAM

- Increased cooperation and collaboration
- Performance improvement
- Reduced conflict



ORGANISATION

- Employee engagement
- Retention of talent
- Increased productivity

THREE SOLUTIONS TO BUILDING COACHING SKILLS

Solution 1: One-to-one performance coaching for managers

Managers remain the ‘squeezed middle’ and yet they have a huge impact on the performance and wellbeing of their people.

They play a crucial role in delivering results by bridging the gap between leadership priorities and employee expectations.

- **53%** of employees more likely to prioritise health and wellbeing over work than before the pandemic. [1]

And yet, not all managers arrive in the role equipped to deal with the needs and expectations of their people, and the organisational demands that are placed on them.

Providing targeted development to build their coaching skills is critical if they are to do their job well. Their development has a multiplier effect that cascades throughout their teams.



Coaching gave me so many practical skills and new approaches to leadership that I've not received from training courses. WDI coaching client

WDI's approach to one-to-one performance coaching integrates a structured goal-orientated framework with matching our highly experienced coaches to the coaching need. For example, WDI coaches bring individual specialities that enhance the coaching experience in areas such as inclusion, systemic thinking, and team dynamics.

Solution 2: Embed a tailored team coaching framework

In hybrid work environments, teams need more structure to communicate and build relationships well.

Team coaching offers a valuable framework to ensure employees contribute their lived experiences. Involving them in crafting the strategy and purpose that connect to the culture accelerates performance and amplifies the conditions for trust and dialogue.

- **86%** of employees and executives cite the lack of effective collaboration and communication as the main causes for workplace failures.[6]

Team coaching helps teams think and work together, with others and within their wider environment, to effect change. It's a powerful tool that overcomes conflict whilst having hard, yet important, conversations. It identifies what the team can do together that they cannot do alone, thus maximises their collective potential.



They are fantastic at partnering with a business, and providing the right level of challenge and focus, which helped us to get a tangible action plan in place, and bring us together. WDI client, Engineering

WDI's approach to team coaching is a human-centric inclusive one that strengthens the team's and individual's connection to both purpose and performance. We empower teams through providing systemic coaching frameworks for navigating change and uncertainty whilst practicing and developing the core listening and communication skills of the coach.

Solution 3: Build an internal coaching culture

Coaching is a people strategy that directly supports the business and its purpose. A coaching culture is a place where leaders and managers care, and actively seek to help people to grow, thrive and perform through effective conversations and honest, in the moment, feedback underpinned by trust.

In hybrid and remote working environments this becomes even more critical:

- **55%** of hybrid workers feel lonelier at work than before going hybrid.
- **43%** of leaders say relationship-building is the greatest challenge. [1]

Managers who use coaching skills create meaningful connections and generate a sense of belonging within hybrid and remote teams.



You have quickly understood the pressures and complexity of the environment and have worked hard to support our teams whilst also challenging the status quo to improve behaviour and culture. WDI client, Healthcare

Internal coaching skills programmes build the capacity and capabilities inside your organisation. We partner with our clients to co-create the right people centric approaches to creating a coaching culture.

We focus on the development of a core group of internal managers who act as skilled role models and culture makers across the business. Our approach is self-sustaining for our clients through providing the tools and structure to grow an internal coach community with the right mindsets, behaviours and skills.

IMPLEMENTING COACHING STRATEGIES

At WDI Consulting our vision is simple; to harness energy and intention in a way that enables individuals to perform at their best, and teams that harness the power of collaboration to enable high performing cultures.

Our passion and expertise lie in three interconnected areas: coaching, leadership development and organisational change.

Our approach is underpinned by our values of being inclusive, purpose driven and thriving for all.

We measure our impact based on our clients goals and purpose. Our coaching, leadership programmes and culture consulting consistently deliver measurable results.

Get in touch to have a conversation with one of our experienced team on how we can support you. We'll explore together your needs and customise a coaching solution that works systemically for the individual, team and organisation context and culture.

To learn more contact:

 Julia.Bubrin@wdiconsulting.com

 Lynn.White@wdiconsulting.com

 Clare.Russell@wdiconsulting.com

 [wdiconsulting.com](https://www.wdiconsulting.com)

Reference points

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- 2 Gallup.com; How Fast Feedback Fuels Performance (2022)
- 3 PWC; Global Workforce, Hopes and Fears Survey (2022)
- 4 HBR; Leaders Need Professional Coaching Now More Than Ever (2021)
- 5 Building Strong Coaching Cultures For The Future (2019)
- 6 Pumble.com; Workplace communication statistics (2022)