



 **Sounding Board**

The Definitive Guide to Developing a Successful Leadership Coaching Program

Everything you need to know to elevate your leaders and
grow your company

The Definitive Guide to Developing a Successful Leadership Coaching Program

- **Introduction to Leadership Coaching**

Investment in the development of your team to increase employee engagement and reduce attrition.

- **How to Develop a Coaching Strategy**

1:1 executive-style leadership development for new managers all the way up to C-level executives, including change management and on-boarding for enterprise organizations.

- **How to Maximize the Return On Your Executive Coaching Investment**

Sounding Board coaching drives business priority alignment, leadership development, change management, and business outcomes.

- **See an Example of the Results of Executive Coaching**

The Sounding Board ROI is clear; our continuous feedback, up-leveling of talent drives business growth.

- **How to Ensure A Successful Rollout of A Executive Coaching Program**

Our Sound Coaching solutions generate more productive leadership and managerial behaviors that can immediately be applied to current work situations that directly impact business outcomes.

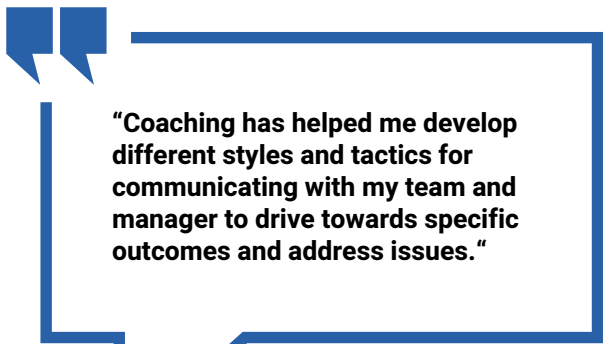
“Employees are stepping up to leadership roles at much earlier stages in their careers. They’re incredibly pressured to simultaneously drive strategy, perform functional responsibilities, and develop their personal leadership style. These new leaders are screaming out for development.”

- Christine Tao, CEO Sounding Board

Introduction to Leadership Coaching

Coaching is a highly personalized form of professional leadership development, with an action-oriented approach. Coaches partner with coachees to increase self-awareness and generate insights that can lead to lasting mindset and behavior shifts. Coaches may use a combination of questions, tools, frameworks and content to personalize the learning experience for each person.

What kind of impact can coaching create?



"Coaching has helped me develop different styles and tactics for communicating with my team and manager to drive towards specific outcomes and address issues."



"The coaching sessions and the reflections that come from them have me turning an eye inward in a new way, which has allowed me to shift my thinking and have more strategic conversations with my manager."

"Coaching is a great way to show your commitment to investing in your team's professional development. It's also a great way to reinforce ideas around continuous learning and developing a growth mindset, and it enables leaders to connect their leadership styles to organizational values to drive business impact."

- **Provide a trusted, certified, professional leadership and management resource to your teams for professional career development.**
- **Uplevel your team's leadership capacity in critical skills like communication, giving/receiving feedback, strategic thinking, managing up & across, leading & inspiring teams.**
- **Gain insight into and support your team in pursuing their developmental goals.**
- **Increase retention & engagement of high potential leaders.**
- **Generate real mindset shifts & behavioral changes**

Coaching is a great way to show your commitment to investing in your team's professional development. It's also a great way to reinforce ideas around continuous learning and developing a growth mindset, and it enables leaders to connect their leadership styles to organizational values to drive business impact.

Developing a Coaching Strategy

Now that you understand why it's important to offer leadership coaching to your teams, it's time to establish and execute your coaching strategy. Here are five steps to create a coaching strategy your company can get behind.

1

Define your vision

Great people leaders know that having a clear, repeatable vision can help rally your team and business partners. Your vision could be anything from becoming one of the "Best Places to Work," to eliminating attrition, to scaling fast. Choose something that is aspirational and consistent with your company's culture.

2

Get your team on board

Executive sponsorship is important for the successful roll out of a leadership coaching program. Make sure your exec sponsors and business partners understand the benefits of coaching so they are excited about and committed to the process. Make sure your key stakeholders understand the benefits of coaching outlined on Page 3.

3

Select the employees to target first

Depending on your vision and objectives, the employees to first target for coaching could be different. When nominating employees, one important thing to keep in mind is that coaching is a benefit. It is a way to show that you're committed to investing in your team's professional development. Think about where you want to invest and what impact those individuals will have if they can improve their leadership skills.

Some common profiles of employees who would benefit from coaching include:

- » **High potentials**
- » **New managers**
- » **Recently promoted employees**
- » **High profile project leaders**
- » **Those who have recently transitioned to a new role**
- » **Executive or leadership team**

Remember, it's prudent to start a coaching program where it can have a clear, visible impact. Once success has been demonstrated, you can roll out the program to more employees.

Developing a Coaching Strategy Cont.

4

Identify metrics

“What gets measured, matters” is a cliché—but it’s true!

Align with your stakeholders on the key metrics to measure for your coaching program. These could be employee self-reported satisfaction with coach, manager feedback, and promotion and retention rates. The best practice is to survey coachees and managers early and often. Make sure you choose a coaching platform that makes this easy.

5

Prioritize and define your roadmap

Work with your Sounding Board team to prioritize the cohorts of selected employees. Then begin to schedule communications and trainings with the right employees, managers and stakeholders.



○ Maximize Coaching ROI

To maximize coaching ROI, consider these five best practices established by the Corporate Leadership Council when selecting the right coaching platform for your company.

1

Hire Best-in-Class Coaches

When selecting a coaching platform, you want nothing but the best. At Sounding Board, only the most highly qualified coaches are invited to be part of our exclusive network, and all coaches are strongly vetted, going through a 3-step qualification process. Many of our coaches bring a blend of practical expertise and operational experience in addition to their professional training. Or they are career coaches with 10+ years of experience in organizational learning/psychology at companies such as Lyft, IAC, Genentech and Google, just to name a few.

2

Focus Coaching on Business Needs

Coaches need to understand the cultural, operational and business context of their coachees' environment. It's important that your coaching program places an emphasis on understanding company culture, values, processes, and goals. As part of Sounding Board's program, we learn about your company and collect feedback from managers and coachees at regular checkpoints throughout the coaching engagement. This ensures the coaching is impactful and aligned with the needs of the business.

3

Optimize Executive–Coach Matching

Coachees need to build strong, trusting relationships with their coaches. Make sure you choose a coaching platform that can successfully match coachees with appropriate coaches. Sounding Board aligns each individual to the best coach fit for them using a proprietary, 6-point matching system that has a 97% success rate.

Maximizing Coaching ROI Cont.

4

Secure Participation From Managers

Coaching is most effective when there is support and involvement from those around you. As part of the Sounding Board program, we collect feedback from managers and provide key stakeholders with visibility into what the coachee is working on. This creates a continuous feedback loop that drives performance across individual progress a corporate ROI.

5

Manage Coaches to Performance Standards

With external coaches, the diversity of coaching approach can create variable outcomes across the organization. While a variety of coaching approaches can be beneficial, it can also create inconsistencies in the impact of the coaching. At Sounding Board, our coaches receive ongoing supervision and development to ensure our coaches always provide the highest-quality coaching focused on driving the right business outcomes.

Sounding Board employees trained, certified coaches skill in tailoring their approach to the appropriate level. Sounding Board specializes in developing leaders, not just the way that works for the individual, but in ways that create deep impact for the company itself. This model combines the developmental needs of the individual with the manager's feedback and the goals of the company to create an integrated yet individualized approach to leadership development and business impact.

To maximize the ROI of a coaching program, it's critical that the coaching is effective and consistent across the organization.



Sounding Board Case Study:

Liftoff

Sounding Board Gives Liftoff's Managers the Skills to Lead Confidently



L I F T O F F

The Challenge

Many of Liftoff's talented team members were first time managers. They had minimal executive experience to draw from, and with the increased management demands of a rapidly growing company, cultivating leadership and management skills quickly became a priority.

Our Goal

To provide managers and high-value employees with leadership skills that scale with organizational growth.

Outcomes

Sounding Board quickly proved to have an overwhelmingly positive effect. Managers who completed the coaching program received higher survey scores in trust and team support. These leaders also self-reported greater confidence in their abilities.

- » After more than two years, more than half (60%) of the Liftoff participants have asked to receive further coaching after their initial 6-month engagement ended.
- » Several participants have been promoted, and perhaps most tellingly, all of those who completed the coaching program still work at the company.

Ensuring a Successful Rollout

○ Communicate with selected employees

While defining goals and identifying participants is important, it's equally important that you communicate with the employees who will be receiving coaching before they get started. You want them to understand why they were selected and provide them with information about the program so they recognize the amazing opportunity they're being provided. Get them excited about it! When participants are excited about coaching, they are more engaged, which will make the overall engagement more successful.

In addition to letting your employees know why they've been nominated for coaching, it is helpful to provide them with an understanding of what coaching is and how it differs from other training and development programs. If you need resources to provide them, check out our blog!

○ Communicate with managers

Check out our communication kick-off guidelines for additional guidance on sending out communication to your team.

○ Close contact with your coaching partner is key

One of the most important things is for communication to stay consistent throughout the process. This is why Sounding Board always recommends forwarding any communication you provide to your team. This ensures that Sounding Board can also stay aligned on the communication as we begin the engagements. Remember, coaches need context!





All Leaders Need a Sounding Board!

The modern workplace is evolving quickly. With companies growing faster than ever before, demographics shifting to younger managers, and employees rising through the ranks more quickly, today's enterprises need strong, inspiring leadership to guide them through these turbulent times.

Coaching helps new and experienced managers alike develop the leadership skills they need to fulfill their potential. Because only when leaders thrive can businesses fulfill their own potential.

Sounding Board combines best-in-class coaching with enterprise-grade technology and our proprietary, outcome-based Sound Coaching Methodology™ to help companies develop new leaders and drive positive business outcomes."

**Learn more and schedule a demo at
www.soundingboardinc.com**

