



# Best Practices for Running an Employee Coaching Program

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A high-potential employee, struggling with leadership skills, begins a coaching relationship with a senior executive. Over the next few months, they set actionable goals and craft strategies to achieve them. The employee practices new tactics, while the executive offers constructive feedback. As the coaching progresses, the employee gains confidence, improves their abilities, and begins to feel ready for the next step in their career.

This transformation isn't just a win for the employee — it's a win for the entire company.

By the time you're done reading this guide, you'll have the tools and knowledge to create a coaching program that brings moments like this to life throughout your organization.

**We'll guide you through the stages of creating an effective coaching program, including:**



**Planning and  
preparing to launch**



**Matching employees  
and coaches**



**Running your  
coaching program**

# Quick Overview of Workplace Coaching Programs

Coaching is often associated with sports, acting, or public speaking — but it's just as useful in the workplace. Like a coach helps an athlete get better at their game, a workplace coach helps employees grow, improve their skills, and tackle challenges.

Workplace coaching is a hands-on, personalized process where a coach gives feedback, helps employees practice, and guides them to improve. Whether it's one-on-one, in teams, or in groups, these programs focus on learning and self-awareness to boost productivity, career growth, and teamwork.

By creating a culture of learning, workplace coaching helps employees do their best work and grow in their careers.

## What workplace coaching looks like in action

Many organizations pair employees with coaches based on the skills they want to develop or the challenges they're facing. A marketing manager might work with a coach to refine leadership skills, while a sales rep might focus on improving negotiation techniques. Coaching sessions can involve goal-setting discussions, role-playing exercises, and job shadowing with real-time feedback.

Program administrators oversee the process, including recruitment, pairing, and tracking progress. They're also responsible for making sure the coaching experience aligns with business objectives.

## Why workplace coaching matters:



Helps employees learn new skills  
and do their jobs better



Supports career growth and  
personal development



Improves communication  
and teamwork



Guides employees through  
challenges and workplace changes



## Setting goals for coaching programs

Setting goals and objectives for coaching programs is crucial because it ensures the program is aligned with organizational priorities, provides clear direction, and enables measurable outcomes. Clear goals help track progress, justify investments, and demonstrate the program’s impact on employee performance and business results.

**To set these goals, coaching program administrators should:**

**Identify organizational needs**

Align coaching objectives with business challenges and strategic priorities.



**Engage stakeholders**

Consult with leaders, coaches, and participants to understand expectations and success indicators.



**Use the SMART framework**

Make goals Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound for clarity and accountability.



**Incorporate data**

Leverage past performance metrics, employee feedback, and industry benchmarks to inform realistic targets.



**Define success metrics**

Establish KPIs like improved retention rates, enhanced leadership capabilities, or increased productivity.



## Types of workplace coaching programs

01

**Executive coaching**

Helps senior leaders improve decision-making, strategy, and leadership.

02

**Performance coaching**

Helps clients overcome challenges, create action plans, and boost productivity.

03

**Career coaching**

Guides individuals in skill development, career planning, and goal setting.

# Coaching vs. Mentoring Programs: What's the Difference

Though the terms are often used interchangeably, coaching and mentoring serve different purposes in professional development.

## Coaching

Goal-oriented, focusing on building specific skills, problem-solving, and performance improvement

Typically short-term and structured with tools, training, and feedback.

Coaches provide specialized expertise, guiding individuals through targeted challenges.

Coaching is coach-driven, with clear objectives and performance evaluations.

## Mentoring

Takes a broader approach of fostering long-term career and personal growth.

Longer-term, flexible relationship built on trust and open communication.

Mentors share insights from personal experience, often (but not always) within the same industry.

Mentee-driven and non-evaluative, offering guidance and support rather than assessment.





# Benefits of Coaching Programs in the Workplace



Investing in employees pays off — not just for them, but for the entire business. A strong coaching program helps people grow, stay engaged, and work more effectively.

## How workplace coaching makes a difference:



### **Boosts productivity**

Employees work smarter, stay motivated, and hit their goals.



### **Solves challenges**

Coaches provide guidance to tackle problems and navigate workplace changes.



### **Closes skill gaps**

Helps employees build new skills in technology, management, leadership, and more.



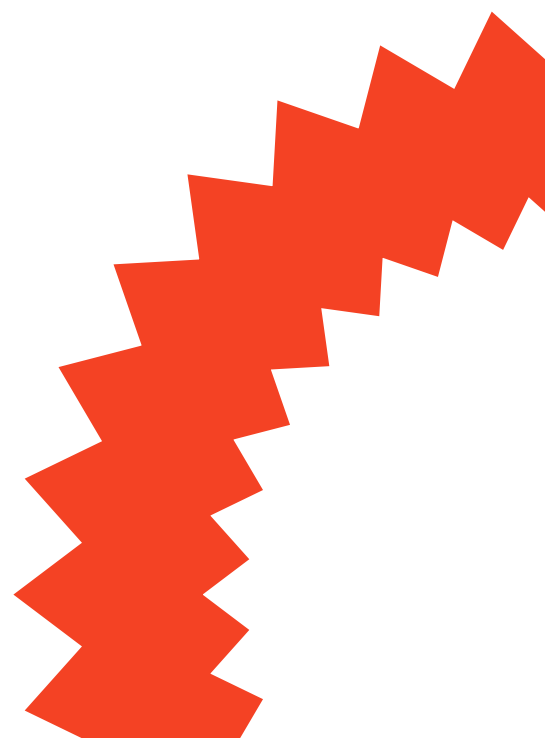
### **Strengthens confidence**

Encourages self-awareness and growth, leading to better decision-making.



### **Reduces turnover**

Employees who feel supported and developed are more likely to stay.



G2 found

**29%**

of sales professionals who receive weekly one-on-one coaching are top performers.



**A 12-week coaching study done in Vancouver, British Columbia revealed that:**

**47%**

of participants were in the high or moderate stress category after six hours of coaching, compared to 86% before coaching.

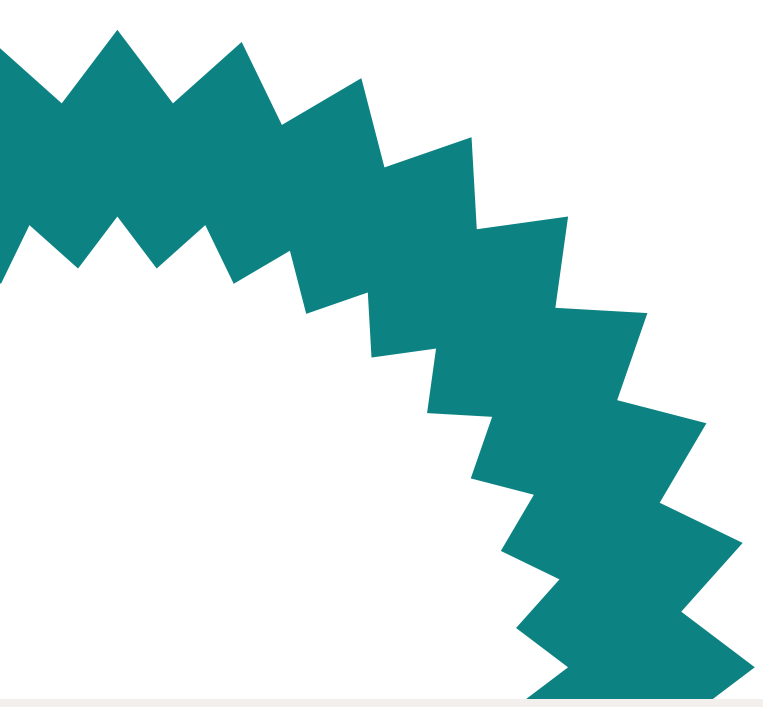
**70%**

of participants reported major progress towards reaching their goals.

**77%**

of participants noted an improvement in their job performance during the program.

The Louisiana Office of Public Health built their program around their organization's need to close skill gaps in areas like leadership and communication. After the program, employees reported more confidence and higher proficiency in skills across the board.







# Setting Up for Success: Best Practices for Launching Your Coaching Program

Launching a coaching program takes more than sending a single email or finding that one great coach. A successful program requires careful planning, effective promotion, and the right support system to achieve lasting results.

**To help you get started, here are three key strategies for a strong launch.**

## Plan Your Registration Process

01

A well-organized registration process is the start of a successful coaching program.

### Start with coaches

It's key to bring in both coaches and trainees early, but start by recruiting coaches first. Coaches are vital because their enthusiasm can help spread the word and encourage participants to join.

For example, if your program pairs senior executives with junior employees, highlight who the coachees might learn from to get them excited.

### Create a clear timeline

We recommend a three-week registration period to make sure no one gets left behind:

#### Week 1

Reach out directly to coaches to secure their participation.

#### Week 2

Open public registration to both coaches and coachees within the company.

#### Week 3

Follow up with stragglers who may have missed earlier communications or need reminders to sign up.

This phased approach creates momentum while ensuring everyone has ample time to register.

The more you build excitement and awareness, the more participation you can expect in your coaching program. A strong promotion strategy should help employees understand the value of the program and make them feel motivated to join.

### Build excitement early

Start promoting your coaching program well in advance of the launch. Make sure employees know the potential benefits of getting coached by senior leadership, such as:

A chance to get personalized advice from experienced leaders



Expanding their professional network



Growing their careers and navigating the workplace more effectively



Share success stories and data from similar initiatives or share quotes from famous coaching advocates. You could even host a kickoff event.

### Use an omnichannel approach

Relying on a single announcement won't cut it — people need to hear about the program multiple times and through different channels.

So, let's tap into our inner marketer and explore several ways you can promote your coaching program. They include:

- Sending out an email on behalf of an executive
- Sending an automated email from your coaching platform (e.g., pre-registration announcements, reminders)
- Leaving a note in relevant Slack or Microsoft Teams channels
- Reminding managers about the initiative, so they share it with their reports
- Hanging posters or bulletins around the office
- Posting it on your company social media
- Adding a PSA in large company meetings, like Townhalls
- Hosting a team meeting, lunch & learn presentation, Q&A webinar, or office hours
- Leadership endorsements (e.g., senior leaders sharing their support)

The more visible your program is, the more likely employees will engage with it.



## Create a communications plan

Plan and schedule all communications ahead of time, covering all three weeks of registration. This structured approach ensures no one misses out due to lack of awareness or busy schedules.

### Example communications plan

Send 2-3 pre-registration emails, and 2-3 scheduled Slack messages introducing the program, its benefits, and key dates.

During registration, send reminder emails and Teams messages at regular intervals to keep it top of mind.

Use follow-up emails and messages in Week 3 to capture late registrants.



A common challenge in coaching programs is having enough coaches for every participant.

**To solve this without sacrificing quality, consider these options:**

### Group coaching

Let coaches work with small groups instead of just one-on-one. This makes coaching more accessible and encourages learning from peers.

### Multiple mentees per coach

If group coaching isn't possible, give each coach two or three mentees instead of just one. This spreads out the workload while getting more people involved.

By managing coach workloads well, your program can stay sustainable and provide valuable support.

**Here are some ways to pitch coaches on taking on more learners:**

#### Gain More Experience



Different coachees need different support. Taking on more than one will help you gain more experience and perspective.

#### Make a Bigger Impact



The more coachees you have, the more you can help grow your organization and guide others.

#### Earn Accreditation



By coaching more people, you can increase your hours, which may count toward a certificate or accreditation.

#### Support Your Organization & Admins



One challenge in coaching programs is having enough mentors. Taking on more coachees helps support the program and administrators.



# Matching Participants Best Practices

A great coaching experience starts with the right match. When coaches and coachees are paired thoughtfully, they're more likely to engage, build strong connections, and achieve meaningful outcomes.

A well-matched partnership fosters trust, motivation, and alignment with goals—whether your participants or administrators are leading the matching process. By optimizing the matching experience, organizations can provide a smoother, more impactful journey for everyone involved.

## Use Automatic Matching to Save Time and Optimize Matching

01

Some coaching platforms streamline the matching process by using an algorithm to match mentors and mentees. When participants register for the program, they answer questions about their role in the company, as well as personal preferences like goals, strengths, and skills. The matching algorithm then uses these answers to find the best matches.

Admins can fully customize the questions and matching process, ensuring a tailored experience. The result? No more tedious manual matching — the software handles the bulk of the work, allowing admins to focus on bigger-picture tasks.

## Give Both Coaches and Coachees a Say

02

While the algorithm does much of the heavy lifting, you can give both coaches and trainees a role in the decision-making process. When mentors and mentees feel like they have a choice in their matching, they're more likely to be invested in the relationship, which leads to stronger connections.

## Use Two Rounds of Matching to Capture All Interested Participants

03

To make sure you match up as many people as possible, matching typically happens in two stages:

### The First Wave

Most participants — the eager ones — will match up quickly in the first wave, typically 50-70% of your users. These participants are excited to get started and will schedule their first meetings within the first week.

### The Second Wave

Some participants will need a little more time. They might have missed initial emails or just need a reminder. These "stragglers" will benefit from a second round of matching, allowing them to complete their questionnaire and finalize their matches.

## Communicate Matches Right Away to Build Momentum

04

Once matchings are complete, don't wait to get the conversation started. For example, Together's platform sends out an automatic email with the subject: **(Name), you are now matched with (coach/coachee)**

**From here, you can decide what you want to happen next:**

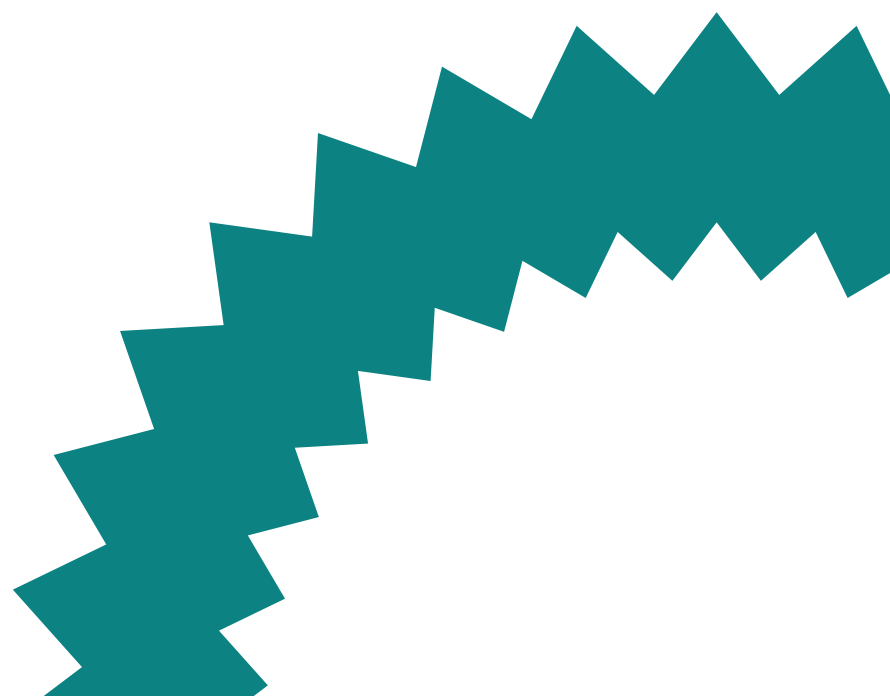


Coach personally reaches out to their coachee



Coachee reaches out to their coach

We generally recommend having the coach reach out first, as this is an effective way to kick off the relationship. As the expert or leader, coaches naturally take the initiative, which sets the tone for the partnership.



# Tips and Best Practices for Running Your Coaching Program

Once your coaching program is up and running, the journey isn't over. It takes ongoing attention to keep things running smoothly and keep providing impact.

Here's how to manage your program effectively and keep it engaged without overburdening your admin team.

## You'll learn:



Helpful resources for coaches and coachees



Tracking key metrics for success



Gathering feedback and following up



How to manage attrition and learn from it

## Provide Resources for Mentors and Mentees

01

Set your participants up for success with clear resources that guide their coaching journey. These resources help keep the program engaging and purposeful.

## Agendas:

Agendas provide a framework for both coach and coachee to stay focused while allowing room for organic conversation. Rather than feeling rigid, an agenda serves as a guide to help participants make the most of their time together.

Below is an example of a goal-setting session agenda. You might create other agendas for topics like: networking, skill-building, and problem solving.



## Example Agenda: Goal-Setting Session

- 01** **Check-in (5 min)**  
How are things going? Any wins or challenges?
- 02** **Review Past Goals (10 min)**  
What progress has been made? What obstacles came up?
- 03** **Identify New Goals (20 min)**  
Explore aspirations and set clear, achievable objectives.
- 04** **Action Plan (10 min)**  
Define next steps and strategies to stay on track.
- 05** **Wrap-up (5 min)**  
Summarize key takeaways and schedule the next session.

Agendas aren't about structure for structure's sake—they provide a roadmap that keeps coaching sessions engaging, effective, and tailored to the coachee's growth.

### Example questions:

Provide sample questions that encourage thoughtful, development-focused discussions. For example:

- What skills do you want to strengthen in the next few months?
- What obstacles are you encountering in your role?
- What's a challenge you've faced recently that highlighted a skill gap?
- How do you prefer to learn, e.g. hands-on experience, discussion, or formal training?
- Are there any tasks or responsibilities you'd like to take on to grow in your role?



Use reports to track the health of your coaching program without overwhelming your team with manual data entry. Here are a few metrics you can monitor with coaching software:

### Active sessions

Are coaches and coachees meeting as planned? Software tools can automatically track these sessions, saving you time.



### Completed matchings

Make sure your matchings are being successfully completed and progressing with the help of reporting dashboards.



### Feedback/satisfaction scores

Monitor participant satisfaction through automatic feedback collection. This gives you real-time insights into whether the coaching relationships are on track.



Using a software platform lightens the load on admins by automating data collection and providing easy-to-read reports, making it simple to gauge program success at a glance.

### These reports will tell you things like:

- Did coaches and coachees connect for their first meeting?
- Do they provide feedback after each meeting?
- Does the feedback they leave indicate they are growing or having fruitful conversations?
- Do the feedback scores indicate a good fit?

Make the most of your coaching program with these expert tips:

**How to coach employees like the pros**

Regular check-ins keep your program on track and keep participants engaged. Don't wait until the end of the program to assess progress.



### Send a mid-program survey

Conduct surveys midway through the program to check how participants are progressing toward their goals. Ask questions like, "How's the coaching relationship evolving?" and "What would enhance your experience?"



### Create a feedback loop

After each coaching session, collect feedback to ensure that conversations are development-focused. If there's an issue, software tools allow you to quickly identify gaps and take corrective action.

Automated surveys and feedback help you stay engaged with participants without additional administrative work.

### You can ask questions like:



How has your coaching relationship been developing?



Are you reaching the goals you set at the beginning of the program?



Has the program met your expectations so far?



What would make this program better for you in the future?





Attrition is a natural part of any coaching program, and it's okay if not every coach or trainee stays until the end. What's important is that you track any exits, gather critical feedback, and use it to continuously improve the program.

While attrition is inevitable, feedback from participants who leave can offer valuable insights. Are they leaving due to lack of engagement or unmet expectations? Using reports and feedback allows you to pinpoint areas for improvement. Automated exit surveys and real-time data help admins respond quickly and make necessary adjustments.

As the program evolves, using software tools to monitor attrition trends, manage participant feedback, and adjust matchings will ensure that the program continues to meet its objectives, even as participants come and go.





# What Every Successful Coaching Program Has In Common

Here's a quick checklist for your successful coaching program:

## Length of Program

6-8 months, or whatever timeline works best to achieve your program objectives.



## Marketing

Begin marketing your program 4 weeks ahead. This gives enough time to create excitement & recruit coaches/coachees.



## Omnichannel Promotion

Use multiple platforms and modes of communication to reach as many people as possible.



## Build Excitement

Become an evangelist for workplace coaching. Be so proud of your program, people can't help but notice.



## Location

Offer both virtual & in-person coaching opportunities.



## Meaningful accountability

Check in with participants throughout the program to see how they're progressing, whether through informal qualitative feedback or via a goal-tracking tool. They'll appreciate that you're making an effort to make them feel heard.



## Program Recruitment

Open registration/sign-up for coaches 3 weeks ahead of matching. This will allow you to gauge the number of coachees you can take on.

Open registration/sign-up for coaches 2 weeks ahead of matching. Use the final week to catch any stragglers or balance out your numbers.



## Coach to Coachee Ratio

Shoot for 5 coaches for every 4 coachees. This is the magic ratio that will allow you to pair everyone happily.



## Individual Development Plans

An individual development plan (IDP) outlines an employee's unique goals, steps to achieve them, and a timeline. Goals may include certifications, skill-building (e.g., digital marketing), or growth opportunities like job shadowing.



## Surveys

At a minimum, send a mid-point and end-point survey. If possible, ask matchings for feedback after every session.



## Matching Process

Using software to automatically match coachees to coaches takes a significant burden off of program administrators.



## Frequency of Meetings

1-2X per month



## Content/Resources

Coaches and coachees will need structure and resources in order to have a successful relationship.

- Provide agendas for each session; ensure to include guiding questions for before, during and after
- Link to resources, handbooks, videos, and case studies to help coaches and coachees prepare for their sessions



# Examples Of Successful Coaching Programs

To help you visualize your own coaching program, take a look at these examples:



The online retail giant has multiple training programs under the Amazon Technical Academy to train nontechnical employees for software engineering careers.

An example is their Associate2Tech program where they prepare front-line employees without previous IT experience to move into more technical roles.



From entry-level positions to executive roles, Marriott offers development programs for employees at all levels. The company's Global Voyage Leadership Development Program is designed for recent university graduates, while the Marriott Development Academy is intended for aspiring managers who want to take on leadership roles.



With a long-standing commitment to employee development, Macy's offers the Macy's Store Management Executive Development Program, which provides high-potential employees training in leadership, strategic planning, and business management skills through coaching and job shadowing.



More than just a bank, Wells Fargo offers opportunities for its financial advisors to enhance their processes through the Practice Management & Leadership Development program. This program provides group learning and coaching programs to help them improve their personal skills, modernize their practices, and gain new clients.



# About Together

Together's mentoring and coaching software empowers enterprise organizations to drive performance through relationships. Whether you're running traditional or peer mentoring programs, closing skill gaps through coaching, or just want to connect employees over a cup of coffee, Together matches employees at scale.

Together has consistently been granted the #1 mentorship software award for user experience by G2, the world's leading software review site.

Together Administrators Report...

- 94% improved employee skills
- 95% a more connected company
- 100% improved inclusion and support
- 79% improved retention

Some of our customers include

**Teladoc**  
HEALTH

*Kellogg's*

 **randstad**

 **Discovery**

 **Crayon**

 **NEW YORK LIFE**  
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Want to see how we can help you  
bring your mentorship program to life?

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