

**Adapt  
to future  
challenges**

# Mobilising coaching strategies

**AoEC supporting organisations  
with coaching based solutions**



An organisation, no matter how well designed,  
is only as good as the people who live and work in it.

**Dee Hock**  
Founder of Visa

# Contents

Welcome	3
What is coaching?	4
What does coaching support?	6
Who is coaching for?	8
Why coaching works and measuring outcomes	10
Activating coaching in your organisation	13
About the AoEC	15

## Welcome

**At the AoEC, we believe your people are your greatest competitive advantage. In a world where AI makes information instantly accessible, what truly sets your organisation apart is how your people show up - how they listen, question, reflect and challenge.**

This guide explores how coaching can activate those skills at every level. It's not about adding more content to your learning offer - it's about creating space for:

- listening without judgement
- asking the right questions
- reflecting understanding
- clarifying and challenging assumptions

These are the capabilities that build trust, unlock insight and drive meaningful change. And they sit at the heart of a coaching approach.

In this document you'll find practical ideas, thought-provoking questions and examples drawn from our work with organisations of all shapes and sizes. Whether you're just starting out or deepening an existing coaching culture, this resource is designed to support your journey.

We hope it sparks conversation, connects coaching to your strategic goals, and helps you embed it as a powerful thread running through performance, wellbeing and culture.

Warm regards



Kim



Joanna



Paul

**Whether you're upskilling managers, developing internal coaches, or embedding coaching into your culture - the AoEC would be honoured to support your goals.**

Send an email to [enquiries@aoec.com](mailto:enquiries@aoec.com) to get started.

# What is coaching?

---

## Coaching, mentoring, training and consulting – what’s the difference?

Coaching is often misunderstood and confused with other development approaches like mentoring, consulting, or training. As John Leary-Joyce, AoEC founder and CEO, explains:

Coaching is about improving leadership and management performance. The key issue is that it’s about using the inherent wisdom of the coachee to find their own solutions. Coaching is not about providing answers but helping people discover their own way forward through their background, knowledge and experience.<sup>1</sup>

### Here’s how each approach differs:

- **Coaching:** Facilitates self-discovery, reflection, and goal setting.
  - **Mentoring:** Offers advice and guidance based on personal experience.
  - **Training:** Delivers specific knowledge or skills to address known gaps.
  - **Consulting:** Provides expert analysis and solutions to solve defined problems.
- 

## Why coaching matters

Coaching helps people think more clearly, lead more confidently and work better together. It gives individuals space to reflect, grow and make meaningful change - while helping organisations build stronger teams, navigate challenges and stay focused on what matters most. It’s become a vital part of business performance, especially as leaders face flatter structures, leaner operations, hybrid teams and shifting generational expectations. That’s when coaching really proves its value - supporting people to do their best work in fast-changing, complex conditions.

## Coaching in a complex world

Today’s organisations operate in a landscape defined by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. Coaching equips leaders and teams to respond with clarity and confidence. Whether facing market disruption, organisational change or cultural transformation, coaching helps people stay grounded, adaptive and focused on what matters most.

---

## The power of team coaching

While individual coaching supports personal growth, team coaching strengthens how people work together. It helps teams build trust, clarify purpose and improve communication – unlocking collective intelligence and driving better results. In high-stakes environments, team coaching fosters alignment, resilience and shared accountability.

---

## Coaching as a culture

When coaching becomes part of the organisational culture, it transforms how people lead, learn and collaborate. Coaching conversations become embedded in everyday interactions, encouraging curiosity, ownership and continuous improvement. Organisations that embrace coaching see stronger engagement, faster problem-solving and a more resilient workforce.

---

## The leadership imperative

Leaders across sectors are increasingly recognising the value of developing coaching capability. In our experience working with organisations, coaching is consistently seen as a powerful tool for leadership development - supporting individuals to grow, adapt, and perform more effectively in complex environments.



The most effective leaders who stand the test of time know how to get the best out of their people; ultimately, their companies grow because the people in the company grow.

**Josh Bersin**  
Irresistible



Reflecting and reviewing learning so that it sticks and transfers back into the workplace is one of the most neglected areas of learning design and delivery and may be one that requires a culture change in your organisation.

**Stella Collins**

Neuroscience for Learning and Development

# What does coaching support?

**Coaching is remarkably versatile in its application across the modern workplace. It enhances executive performance, strengthens team dynamics, supports the growth of high-potential talent, and underpins learning and development initiatives.**

Increasingly, coaching also contributes to wellbeing - providing space for reflection, resilience and personal growth. Whether used to drive strategic change or embed a culture of continuous improvement, coaching adapts to meet the evolving needs of individuals and organisations alike. While coaching is sometimes mistakenly seen as a remedial intervention, its true power lies in proactive development - supporting growth, performance and wellbeing across all levels of an organisation. One of its most transformative benefits is equipping employees themselves with coaching skills. When individuals learn to coach, it changes how they lead, communicate and show up at work - building capability, confidence and a more reflective, empowered culture.

Let's take a closer look at how coaching shows up in practice - across leadership, teams, talent development, L&D, wellbeing and more.



## Executive performance

Coaching helps leaders sharpen strategic thinking, improve decision-making and lead with greater confidence - especially in complex, high-pressure environments.



## Learning and development

Coaching acts as a scaffold for L&D, embedding learning through reflection and application. It supports behaviour change and helps individuals integrate new skills into their daily work.



## High-potential development

Coaching accelerates the growth of emerging talent by building self-awareness, resilience and leadership capability - preparing individuals for future roles and responsibilities.



## Change and complexity

In times of transformation, coaching supports people to adapt, stay focused and lead through uncertainty. It helps organisations build cultures that thrive in fast-moving conditions.



## Culture change

Coaching supports the shift toward more open, inclusive and growth-oriented cultures. It encourages reflective leadership, empowers individuals to take ownership, and helps embed values and behaviours that align with organisational purpose.



## Team performance and dynamics

Team coaching fosters collaboration, trust and shared accountability. It helps teams align around purpose, navigate conflict and perform more effectively together.



## Wellbeing and resilience

Coaching provides a safe space for individuals to explore challenges, manage stress and build emotional agility - contributing to healthier, more sustainable performance.



## Case study: How CSP is embedding coaching to lead cultural change

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) is using coaching to drive a major cultural transformation. In partnership with the AoEC, CSP has rolled out a bespoke coaching skills programme across all levels of the organisation - from senior leaders to non-managers.

The initiative is building a more empowered, reflective and trust-based culture, with coaching now embedded in everyday conversations, leadership behaviours and organisational practices. Participants report greater confidence, improved communication and stronger relationships, with coaching seen as a shared language for growth and collaboration.



Coaching at its most basic level is a learning and development tool with the goal of producing behavioural change. However, the term 'coaching' also describes a leadership philosophy or a way of 'being' that influences how we interact with others at both a personal and professional level.

**Rebecca J. Jones**

Coaching with Research in Mind



# Who is coaching for?

**Coaching for all roles:  
It is no longer reserved  
for the C-suite.**

The democratisation of coaching means everyone - from early careers to senior leaders - can benefit from being coached and from learning coaching skills.

**At the AoEC, we work with managers and leaders across diverse sectors. Our approach to coach development centres on self-awareness and reflection, with “Who Am I?” as a core learning question. This deep understanding of self supports alignment between personal and professional purpose and enhances communication style.**



**This is another aspect of the future of work – expanding our human skills to add human value to every job in the company.**

**Josh Bersin**  
Irresistible



## CEOs and founders

Senior leaders are often focused on organisational performance, purpose, vision, strategy and board dynamics. Some founders are highly successful but haven't prioritised their own development. Others lead by example, using coaching to drive cultural change. Coaching at this level can be a catalyst - but only if the wider team is genuinely bought-in.

### Coaching considerations:

- Where might coaching support me and the wider team?
- How can I get the best return for coaching investment?



## Talent managers/ talent development

Responsible for attracting, retaining and engaging the right people, you understand the importance of aligning talent with organisational purpose. Coaching supports succession planning and enhances your employer brand.

### Coaching considerations:

- Who should get access to coaching?
- How do I optimise investment?
- How will I evaluate impact?

### Coaching formats:

- Action-learning sets for peer learning
- Group coaching to build communities of practice
- One-to-one coaching for personal transformation



## 3 Organisational development/ change managers

Change leaders know that transformation requires more than new processes - it demands new thinking. Coaching supports the human side of change, helping people adapt, engage and thrive.

### Coaching considerations:

- What is the role of coaching in building successful change?
- How will I evaluate coaching's role in change/project management?



## 4 First-line/ middle managers

Often promoted for technical expertise, managers may lack leadership training. Coaching skills help them build trust, communicate effectively and develop their teams. As Bill Schaninger writes in *Power to the Middle*:

Training middle managers to be better coaches can't be one thing among many. It has to be the thing that senior leaders stress in the new world of work.<sup>2</sup>



## 5 Early careers

Starting out in the workplace can be daunting. Coaching helps early career professionals build confidence, clarify goals and navigate their development. Forbes lists 20 benefits of career coaching for young professionals - early exposure to coaching sets the tone for future leadership.<sup>3</sup>



## Case study: Coaching as the foundation of ATG Entertainment's learning culture and business success

ATG Entertainment has partnered with the AoEC since 2014 to embed coaching into its leadership and learning programmes. Coaching is now central to ATG's culture, supporting inclusive growth, innovation and performance. Through initiatives like the Rising Stars programme, coaching empowers emerging leaders to reflect, grow and lead authentically. With over 800 hours of coaching delivered and a 77% retention rate among alumni, ATG's investment in coaching continues to shape its people and business success.



# Why coaching works and measuring outcomes

## Evaluating coaching impact

While ROI is often elusive due to the multifactorial nature of coaching interventions, return on expectations (ROE) offers a more practical and meaningful measure: Did we achieve what we set out to achieve? This aligns with Stephen Covey's principle of beginning with the end in mind.<sup>4</sup>

### A robust coaching evaluation framework should include:

- **economic value** – measurable business impact
- **personal value** – transformation at the individual level
- **societal value** – ripple effects beyond the organisation

The quality of the coach-client relationship is central to success. Providers must offer a methodology that prioritises client fit, psychological safety, and confidentiality. As Keith Keating<sup>5</sup> notes, leaders - especially those accountable for profitability - need confidence that coaching delivers tangible outcomes.

## Evidence that coaching delivers

Coaching is no longer a luxury - it's a strategic imperative. According to research from the Josh Bersin Company:<sup>6</sup>

- high-performing companies are 5.2x more likely to invest in coaching
- they are also 12.3x more likely to invest in group coaching than their lower-performing peers
- coaching is rated as the most impactful leadership development practice when delivered regularly and widely

These outcomes reflect a shift in how leadership is defined and developed. Today's leaders are measured not by control, but by influence, connection, and contribution. Coaching supports this evolution by enabling:

- contextual, continuous, and experiential development rather than episodic training
- the cultivation of power skills - such as empathy, trust-building, and resilience - that drive individual or team performance and wellbeing
- a move from hierarchical control to empowered networks of teams, where leadership is distributed and dynamic

For HR teams, coaching and mentoring are ranked as the most important developmental opportunity for career growth, based on responses from over 8,000 HR professionals.

---

## The neuroscience behind why coaching sticks

Coaching creates the conditions for lasting learning by engaging the brain's natural mechanisms for change. At its core, coaching activates the default mode network - the part of the brain responsible for self-reflection, future planning, and meaning-making. This supports deeper insight and goal alignment.

When a psychologically safe coaching relationship is established, it triggers the positive emotional attractor (PEA) - a state associated with openness, creativity and intrinsic motivation. This emotional state is critical for neuroplasticity, the brain's ability to rewire itself in response to new experiences.

Unlike traditional training, coaching is spaced, personalised and emotionally resonant - three factors known to enhance learning retention and transfer. As coachees reflect, reframe and take action, they reinforce new neural pathways, making change more sustainable. In short, coaching doesn't just inform - it transforms.



Wherever possible, measure a range of outcomes, ideally from each of the four types of outcomes in the coaching outcome framework (affective, cognitive, skills-based and results).

**Rebecca J. Jones**  
Coaching with Research in Mind



Research from Watershed reveals that 60 per cent of L&D managers face increasing executive pressure to measure learning's impact - up sharply from just 35 per cent in previous years.

**Keith Keating**  
Hidden Value

# Activating coaching in your organisation



## Assess your organisation's coaching maturity

Before setting a coaching strategy, take stock of what's already happening. Many organisations have multiple routes into coaching - some formal, some informal. Definitions can vary, and coaching is often confused with mentoring or training. Creating a shared language and understanding across the business is essential for consistency and impact.

---



## Set your organisation's strategy and vision for coaching

Coaching is a strategic lever - not just a development tool. It can support your organisation's vision, address HR challenges and shape culture. Whether you're focused on retention, leadership development or change management, coaching can amplify your impact.

---



## Invest in skills training

One-to-one coaching is powerful, especially when targeted at specific goals. But coaching skills training can scale your impact. Managers who coach build trust, develop others and lead with empathy. Training managers to use a coaching approach helps embed coaching into everyday conversations and decision-making.

---



## Choose the right coaching partner

Quality matters. Look for coaching providers with strong credentials, sector experience and a clear methodology. Since coaching isn't advice-driven, diversity of coach backgrounds can be a strength.

---



## Now is the time to act

Coaching is no longer a luxury reserved for a few. It's a strategic tool for unlocking performance, resilience and innovation. Whether you're shaping culture, driving change or developing future leaders, the right coaching strategy can help you lead with purpose.

## Questions to ask:

- what works well now?
- what do you need to continue?
- what might you need to add?
- what might you need to stop doing?

A coaching maturity model or audit can help you map current practice and identify gaps. This is a great starting point for building a coaching strategy that's aligned with your culture and goals.

---

## Questions to ask:

- where can coaching best support your organisation's vision?
- what HR challenges is your team dealing with - and how can coaching address them?

Many organisations focus on access to coaching. But don't overlook skills training. Equipping managers with coaching skills builds internal capability, fosters independence of thought and strengthens communication.

---

## Consider offering:

- coaching skills workshops for managers
- accredited programmes for internal coaches
- peer coaching and action learning sets

These options help build a coaching culture from the inside out.

---

## Ask about:

- training heritage
- supervision practices
- how impact is measured

Partnering with a provider who understands your context - and can flex to meet your needs - is key to success.

---

## Start by asking:

- what kind of organisation do we want to become - and how will coaching help us get there?

Partner with purpose. Invest wisely. Measure meaningfully. And above all, lead the way.



The AoEC has never felt like a supplier of training. They've acted as a partner in delivering our ambition to develop a more effective consulting workforce through the use of business coaching.

**Cap Gemini**

# About the AoEC

---

## Empowering leadership since 1999

Founded by John Leary-Joyce, the Academy of Executive Coaching (AoEC) has been at the forefront of coach training and organisational development for over 25 years. Our person-centred learning approach has helped thousands of leaders gain deeper self-awareness and harness their unique leadership styles to create meaningful, lasting impact across their organisations.

We believe that coaching is not just a skill - it's a mindset. One that enables leaders to navigate complexity, build trust, and lead with clarity and purpose. Our programmes are designed to transform how individuals think, act and influence, strengthening leadership at every level.

---

## Values-driven and future-focused

As a certified B Corp, the AoEC is proud to be a values-driven business committed to positive change. We partner with forward-thinking organisations that share our belief in the power of coaching to drive performance, culture and wellbeing. Whether supporting a CEO through transformation, enhancing board dynamics, or embedding coaching across a workforce, our work is tailored to meet the moment - and build for the future.

Our goal is to take the magic of the development we offer more broadly into your organisation, helping you create the outcomes you want for your people. We welcome conversations to explore your ambitions and how coaching can support them.

---

## Accredited excellence

The AoEC's qualification level programmes are accredited by the world's leading professional coaching bodies, including the International Coaching Federation (ICF), EMCC Global, and the Association for Coaching (AC). These accreditations ensure our training meets rigorous global standards and supports professionals in gaining recognised credentials that enhance their credibility and impact.

We assess coaching competencies against professional benchmarks, offer clear pathways for ongoing development, and provide tailored mentoring and supervision to sustain internal coaching capability. Whether you're developing new coaches or advancing experienced practitioners, our programmes support deep professional growth and organisational influence.

## Coaching for organisational impact

Every organisation is different - and so are its coaching needs. The AoEC partners with businesses to deliver bespoke coaching solutions that respond to context, challenge and ambition. From one-to-one executive coaching to building a coaching culture, our work helps leaders lead better, teams perform stronger, and internal coaches grow with confidence.

### We offer:

- **Executive coaching:** A confidential space for senior leaders to reflect, grow and lead with purpose
  - **Team coaching:** Support for boards and leadership teams to strengthen collaboration and collective performance
  - **Group coaching:** Peer learning that connects leaders, fosters insight and builds trust
  - **Internal coach development:** Advanced training, mentoring and supervision to stretch and sustain internal capability
  - **Workforce coaching skills:** Custom programmes that build coaching capability across employee groups, supporting culture change and everyday leadership
- 

## Start your coaching journey

**Book a conversation with us to explore in more detail. Ahead of our conversation it may be useful to think about:**

- where is your organisation's coaching maturity?
- what is your organisation's strategy and vision for coaching?
- what kind of organisation do you want to become - and how will coaching help you get there?

→ **send an email to [enquiries@aoec.com](mailto:enquiries@aoec.com) to start the conversation.**

## For further information please contact:

enquiries@aoec.com  
+44 (0)20 7127 5125

**The Academy of Executive Coaching (AoEC) is a global provider of coach training and coaching-based development, services and solutions to organisations and individuals.**

### Sources:

1. Leary-Joyce, J. (2014) *Fertile void: Gestalt coaching at work*. London: AoEC Publishing.
2. Schaninger, B., Hancock, B. and Field, E. (2023) *Power to the middle: Why managers hold the keys to the future of work*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.
3. Forbes Human Resource Council 2024: *20 Benefits Of A Career Coach For Early-Career Job Seekers*
4. Covey, S.R. (1989) *The 7 habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change*. New York: Free Press.
5. Keating, K. (2023) *The trusted learning advisor: A clarion call for the urgent evolution of HR and talent development leaders* - <https://keithkeating.com>.
6. The Josh Bersin Company/Sounding Board: *For the love of leadership development – A new model for a new world*.



[www.aoec.com](http://www.aoec.com)