

HRPNW

A Human Resources Consulting Company



A Practical Guide to **Coaching for HR Leaders**

Actionable steps to help lead through complexity
and sustain performance



The Broad Responsibility of HR Leadership

HR professionals and senior leaders are often the stabilizing force within an organization. They guide managers through complex situations, manage culture and compliance risk, and help teams navigate change.

Yet they rarely have the same level of support themselves.

Leadership capacity directly impacts organizational performance.



Business Impact

- 71% of HR leaders report higher stress levels in recent years ([SHRM](#))
- Managers account for 70% of the variance in team engagement ([Gallup](#))

WHEN LEADERSHIP CAPACITY IS STRAINED

- Decision cycles lengthen
- Turnover risk increases in key roles
- People issues require more time and escalation
- Burnout emerges within critical functions
- Strategic initiatives lose traction

HOW COACHING STRENGTHENS CAPACITY

- Creates structured space to think through challenges
- Strengthens leadership capacity and clarity
- Improves consistency in decision-making
- Supports sustained performance during periods of pressure

Driving Impact through Coaching

3 Areas Where Coaching Delivers Strong Value



LEADERSHIP AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT COACHING

When coaching is most valuable:

- Expanding scope or preparing for the next level
- Increasing strategic influence within the organization
- Evaluating long-term career direction
- Navigating role ambiguity or internal positioning

Coaching in action:

- We match leaders with the right expertise to step back, clarify priorities, and define next steps aligned to real business context.

Business Impact

- Stronger leadership bench and improved retention

EXECUTIVE AND TRANSITION COACHING

When coaching is most valuable:

- Stepping into a new leadership role
- Leading through restructuring or organizational change
- Managing complex team dynamics or performance issues
- Preparing for succession or expanded responsibility

Coaching in action:

- We offer a trusted space to pressure test decisions, strengthen communication, and maintain consistency under pressure.

Business Impact

- Faster ramp-up and improved team stability



HEALTH AND WELLBEING COACHING

When it is most needed

- Lower productivity and output
- Declining energy, focus, or decision quality
- Difficulty maintaining boundaries in high-demand roles
- Leaders who are performing, but not sustainably

Coaching in action:

- Practical adjustments to workload, recovery, and routines that support long-term performance.

Business Impact:

- Reduced burnout risk and more consistent leadership effectiveness



Toolkit: Simple Practices That Improve Leadership Effectiveness

This toolkit is designed to help HR leaders apply coaching principles in a practical way. The focus is on improving clarity, decision-making, and consistent leadership performance.

An Effective Coaching Environment

An effective coaching environment creates space to step back from daily demands and approach decisions with greater clarity and intention.

Key elements include:

- A quiet space to step back from daily demands
- Opportunities for structured reflection on priorities, strengths, and gaps
- Clear communication and articulation of leadership positioning and next steps
- Practical planning tied to real organizational context

”

I felt fully supported and comfortable as she helped me uncover blind spots and sticking points with clarity and care.”

- HRPNW Coaching Client

Use Coaching to Stay Ahead of Challenges

Use coaching for:

- Preparing for transitions
- Anticipating team risks
- Clarifying priorities before pressure builds

This shift from reactive response to proactive direction setting.

Preparing for your coaching session

Maximize Coaching Effectiveness and Progress

01

Define the desired outcome before the conversation. This moves the conversation from general discussion to focused progress. Clarify:

- What decision or situation needs attention
- What success would look like
- What feels unclear or stuck

02

Identify the challenge you want to address.

Focus on one current challenge such as a team dynamic, leadership decision, or career question. If there are multiple challenges, make a list and address one at a time. Depth is more valuable than breadth.

03

Distinguish between thinking and validation.

Be clear on what you need:

- Space to think something through
- Or confirmation on a decision already made

This improves the quality of the dialogue.

04

Translate insight into one concrete action.

Identify one action to take within the next few days. Examples:

- Prepare key messages for a conversation
- Address a delayed decision
- Reset expectations with a team member

Small actions create a sense of accomplishment and momentum.

05

Revisit decisions after implementation

After a key decision, reflect:

- What worked well
- What could be improved
- What you would do differently next time

This builds long-term capability.



Putting Coaching Into Practice: 3 Techniques

01 | Create a “decision framework” before high-stakes conversations

Preparation is key to clarity. Before a difficult leadership or people decision, take 15 minutes to:

- Define what matters most in this decision
- Assess potential risks and trade-offs
- Clarify the desired outcome

This simple structure improves clarity and reduces reactive decision-making.

02 | Identify one major capacity constraint

Instead of addressing multiple issues at once, focus on the single factor creating the most friction in your role. For example, rather than trying to “fix burnout,” ask: *What is one thing currently draining the most energy?*

Write down one action to reduce it this week. Addressing one constraint creates a sense of accomplishment and a sense of direction.

03 | Separate thinking time from execution time

Multi-tasking can be viewed as a strength, but frequent task switching can fragment attention and reduce focus.

Block 30 minutes weekly for strategic thinking only, to prepare for decisions and anticipate challenges. Avoid email and meetings during this time. These uninterrupted periods often spur on creative ideas and more effective problem-solving.

About HRPNW

HRPNW empowers your business by maximizing your workforce potential. Offering tailored solutions and a comprehensive array of people services, we are your partner to develop strategic long-term solutions and handle day-to-day needs.

Capabilities include:

- HR Leadership - Providing functional oversight by filling HR management leadership gaps.
- Strategic Talent Acquisition - Recruiting exceptional talent at scale.
- Business Partner Expertise - Including employee relations and retention.
- Executive Coaching - Aligned with desirable business outcomes.
- Compliance & Systems - HRIS, ATS, payroll, benefits and other HR systems.
- Wellbeing Coaching - Connecting wellness to positive business outcomes.

Advantages of working with HRPNW:

- Contingent and fractional expert professionals are available for interim or project work.
- Highly skilled team members with exceptional professionalism and fit to your industry and needs.
- Flexible arrangement and ability to scale with organizational needs.



Diane St. John is the owner of HRPNW, LLC, a full-service consulting company. Diane holds her Executive MBA from the University of Washington and is SPHR and SHRM-SCP certified. With decades of HR leadership in biotechnology, nonprofit and commercial sectors, Diane and her team of experienced professionals help organizations flourish.



HUMAN RESOURCES PACIFIC NORTHWEST



People and Productivity Solutions for your Business

HRPNW.COM