



Agency Executive Summary creating a Coaching Culture

Goal: exploring the extent to which coaching can be more widely implemented as a development tool for agency staff and to make recommendations on how to develop a mature Coaching Framework (Coaching culture) to reinforce the Agency Strategic HR Goals.

Workplace coaching

During the 1960s, workplace coaching became popular in the business world due to a changing view on leadership, the strong growth in the number of large companies, new theories on organisational development and the wider dissemination of psychological insights. In the 1980s, workplace coaching broke through on a large scale within organisations and was increasingly used as a preventive and development-oriented intervention. See box 1 for a definition of coaching by the International Coaching Federation (ICF). Common forms are: Executive coaching, Performance coaching, Career coaching & Team coaching. An increasing number of scientific studies demonstrate the added value of coaching (see Box 2).

Coaching in the 21st century

The development of online communications platforms, such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Hangout and WhatsApp, made it possible for people to connect anywhere and anytime. These technological developments mean that meeting in person is no longer necessary, as conversations can also be held online and remotely. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of online communications platforms specifically for learning and development increased significantly. This has accelerated the development of online coaching (see Box 3). In fact, the coaches participating in the 2021 Global Coach Survey expect 83% of all their clients to prefer online coaching.

The Blended coaching approach

Adding online coaching to offline face-to-face coaching (blended approach) offers benefits (see Box 4) and contributes to a steeper and more sustainable learning curve compared to traditional face-to-face coaching. See also Figure A.

Coaching Definition

Partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. The process of coaching often unlocks previously untapped sources of imagination, productivity, and leadership.

Box 1

Benefits of workplace coaching

1. Strengthening the way a person deals with problems, stress, and unpleasant situations
2. Improving the way, a person strives to achieve goals
3. Improving a person's attitude towards work
4. Increasing motivation
5. Improving performance at work
6. Learning new competencies
7. Enhancing well-being

Box 2

Online Coaching Definition

Online coaching is a non-hierarchical development partnership in which there is physical distance in the communication, and the learning and reflection process takes place both in the analogue and digital spheres.

Box 3

Blended coaching elements

1. Various online communication tools
2. Higher contact frequency increases engagement
3. Objectives split into small development steps
4. Ongoing coaching conversation
5. Real workplace experiences with continuous feedback loops
6. Location and time independency

Box 4

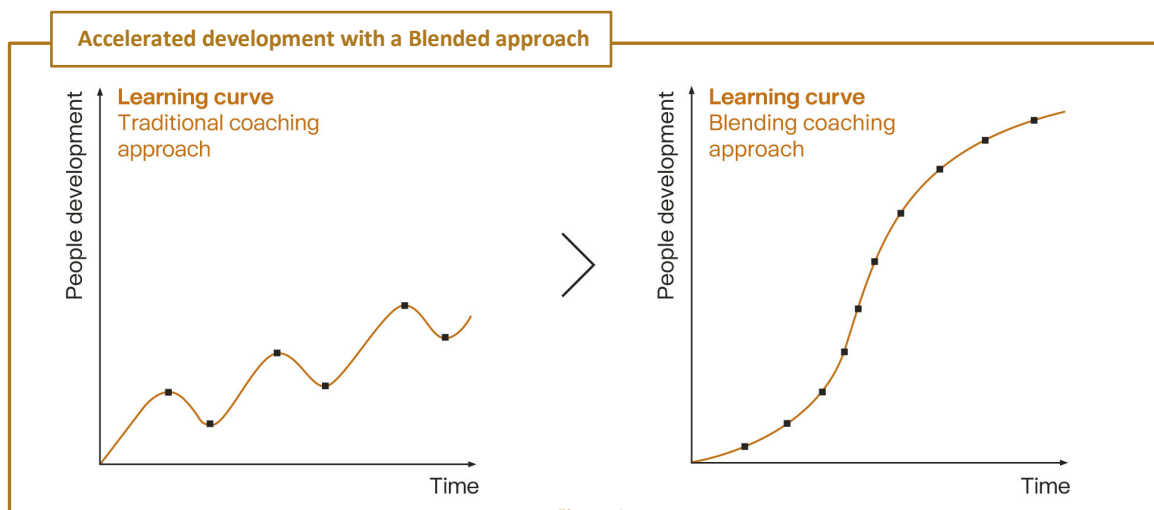


Figure A



From a tool to a Coaching Culture

Coaching in the workplace can be used in many ways and can even be seen as an underlying philosophy to shape L&D within an organisation. Using coaching as an underlying framework for OD and L&D is also referred to as creating a "Coaching Culture" (see Box 5).

A Coaching Culture and Agency: a perfect match

To determine whether developing a Coaching culture within the agency is feasible, a first essential step is to look at the 'Agency Strategic HR Goals'. The first goal immediately highlights the role of leaders. Compare the definition in Box 5 with the agency 1st strategic goal description in Box 6. This strategic goal strongly resembles the premise of a Coaching culture. See Box 7 for a summary of the benefits of a Coaching Culture.

Coaching Competencies as pillar of a Coaching Culture

A Coaching culture is built on the provision of **coaching** (as a tool) and the broad promotion of **coaching competencies** (as a behavioural aspect) in the organisation. The inclusion of coaching competencies across all L&D offerings to ensure that people in the organisation adopt a coaching attitude themselves. Closer analysis reveals that these coaching competencies (see Box 8) are already present in at least 50% of the 16 competencies listed in the **Agency Leadership Framework**.

Coaching Competencies

1. **Cultivates trust and safety:** create a safe, supportive environment that allows to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.
2. **Maintains presence:** being fully conscious and present, employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded, and confident.
3. **Evokes awareness:** facilitates insight by giving and receiving feedback, feedforward, and upward feedback.
4. **Ask powerful questions:** ask straightforward questions that reveal the reality of the situation
5. **Listens actively:** focuses on what is and is not said to fully understand what is being communicated in the whole context.

Box 8

ICF Coaching Culture definition

Leveraging effective coaching practices and coaching competencies to enable leaders and managers to develop and maximize the potential of their teams.

Box 5

Agency Strategic HR Goals

- 1) **Enable leaders for people management excellence**
Enable and equip leaders with the mindset, skills, and behaviours to put people management at the center of the agency's culture and act as role models in promoting a respectful work environment.

Box 6

Benefits of a Coaching Culture

1. High levels of trust created by open communication: people listen and understand and do not avoid challenging conversations.
2. Direct, continuous feedback is supported.
3. A growth mindset, in which challenges and ambiguity are welcomed as learning opportunities.
4. High levels of engagement and collaboration between all employees.
5. An ability to attain meaning and direction on all important endeavours, including meetings, projects, development plans and organisational initiatives.
6. The premise is that nobody has all the answers and that you get the most out of people through engaging them with the issues and challenges and helping them think through the choices and options.
7. A feeling of connectedness within the workplace. Each individual feels valued and respected for who they are and the contributions they make to the collective success of the organisation.
8. Leaders believe in the talents and resourcefulness of their team members and unlocking their potential.

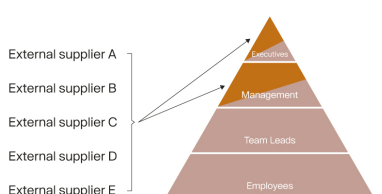
Box 7

Coaching Culture maturity levels

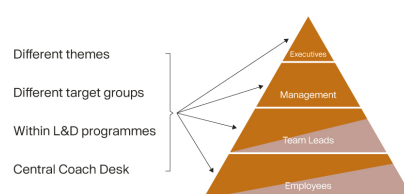
In a pre-coaching culture (low maturity), coaching is recognised as a stand-alone development tool and limited to executives and higher management. In a semi-coaching culture (basic maturity), coaching is offered more widely, organised at central level, and integrated within L&D programmes. In a mature coaching culture, coaching is available to all employees and coaching competencies are being developed throughout the organisation. See the three stages of a coaching cultures outlined in Figure B.

Three stages of a Coaching Culture

Low maturity: pre coaching culture



Basic maturity: semi-coaching culture



Higher levels of maturity: mature coaching culture

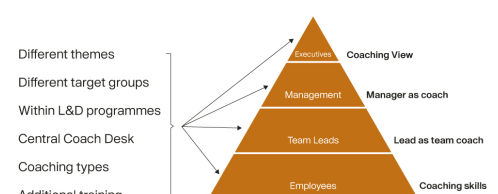


Figure B



The Agency somewhere between two Coaching Culture stages

Coaching within the agency is offered, albeit mainly to (senior) management, and coaching competencies are addressed in certain leadership programmes. In addition, various training courses are available in the online learning portal. Furthermore, there are some internal coaches and a range of external coaching vendors. All these ingredients present within the agency are shown in colour in Box 9. There is no unified coaching approach, centralised organisation, standardized evaluations process or training activities to train internal agency staff to shape a Coaching Culture. Therefore, we can place the agency in an intermediate phase between a pre- and semi-Coaching Culture.

The Coaching Culture Scale®

To determine more specifically where the agency stands, the Coaching Culture Scale® was used. This scale uses two variables (see Box 10). Depending on the number of coaching related activities and the number of employees who can use them, an organisation can be plotted (see Box 11).

Based on interviews and internal documents, we can place the agency in the 'quadrant A' with few activities & low availability. Interviewed staff also expressed a preference to develop a more mature Coaching culture within the agency. This means a shift from the 'quadrant A' to the 'quadrant D': many activities & high availability. Figure C shows the current level of maturity Coaching culture of the agency and the desired level of maturity.

This figure also shows the different phases that enable the growth towards a high mature Coaching culture. Box 12 contains a brief description of each phase and a proposal (roadmap) of when these phases can be implemented.

Coaching Culture related activities	
Coaching	Coaching competencies
✓ Executive coaching	✓ As topic withing L&D programmes
✓ Performance coaching	✓ Manager as coach
✓ Career coaching	✓ Supervisor as team coach
✓ Life(style) coaching	✓ MOOC's & e-learnings 'Coaching skills'
✓ Team coaching	
✓ Peer coaching	
✓ Coaching within L&D programmes	
Coaching infrastructure	
✓ Internal coaches	✓ Central Coach Desk
✓ External coaches	✓ Coach training
✓ Coaching skills trainers	✓ Team coach training
	✓ Coaching Skill trainer training

Box 9

The Coaching Culture Scale®

This scale uses two variables:

1. The number of various activities related to coaching.
2. The extent to which they are available to all employees within the organisation.

Box 10

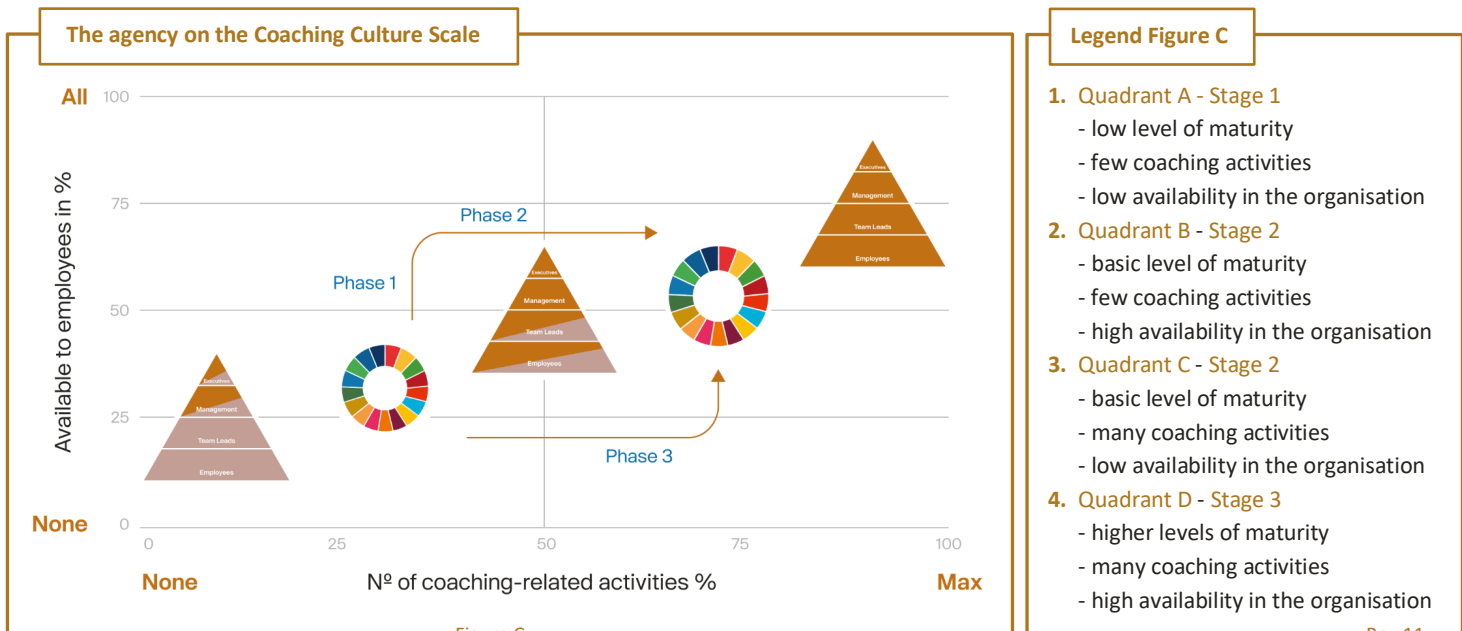


Figure C

Legend Figure C

1. Quadrant A - Stage 1
 - low level of maturity
 - few coaching activities
 - low availability in the organisation
2. Quadrant B - Stage 2
 - basic level of maturity
 - few coaching activities
 - high availability in the organisation
3. Quadrant C - Stage 2
 - basic level of maturity
 - many coaching activities
 - low availability in the organisation
4. Quadrant D - Stage 3
 - higher levels of maturity
 - many coaching activities
 - high availability in the organisation

Box 11

Roadmap to implement agency's Coaching Culture

Objective per phase

- ✓ Phase 1: making coaching available to more employees
- ✓ Phase 2: develop and implement more coaching-related activities
- ✓ Phase 3: strengthen the agency's Coaching Culture Infrastructure

Route

- Quadrant A -> B
- Quadrant B -> D
- Quadrant D

Planning

- March-December 202x
- February-August 202x
- March-December 202x

Box 12