

Measuring the Effectiveness of Coaching & Leadership Training



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Right now as you read this, over [70% of the workforce is looking for a new job](#). Companies fatigued by the "War for Talent" won't see a return on their investments for recruiting talent. People are leaving jobs every day due to a lack of professional development and recognition, which deters happiness and harmony for everyone. **There are many ways to tackle this problem, but the easiest way is by investing in your talent.**

How Do You Invest in Talent?

Coaching and leadership development programs have always existed. The question is: do they work? When I worked as an HR professional, I made sure our HR roadmaps focused on advancing talent so they could learn more, accelerate their growth, and provide returns on our investment. This is all easier said than done. **At the core to creating learning plans is understanding what the business needs in the future, and how you can advance people to be there for you now and later.**

How Do You Measure Effectiveness?

To truly measure the effectiveness of any coaching and leadership program you need to begin with measuring the effectiveness of what is currently working and not working in the organization. Are people happy? Do they feel informed of the overall company strategy? Do they see how their roles line up with company goals and mission? **You need to start by how your organization ranks in terms of performance, retention, and engagement.** These metrics are crucial to depict where you are now. Measuring in these three core areas now will be crucial to understanding your progress in the future.



The next important measure is understanding the future needs of the company strategy and whether you have the people to get there. If you do, great start.



If not, will you invest in them - or will you replace them? This question needs to be identified very early on as it will be guidepost to the coaching and training that you bring into the organization. **And lastly, you need to**

identify your targets on performance, retention, and engagement metrics year over year. Having these targets up front helps in building the bridge from where you are now to where you want to be with your people.

Let's Go Over That Again

So, just to recap: first, identify your key metrics based on the business and employee needs before you identify the coaching and training you want to bring into your organization. Once you have clear goals and metrics, the next step is to bring in the development needed for employees for them to get to the future state of the organization. For example if the goal is to increase sales by 5X over the next three years, then the organization needs to prepare how current employees to do this and determine if more need to be hired. Do the employees have the skill and agility to do this now? Are they coachable and do they have the fire in the belly to help in this initiative? How engaged are they now? Are they happy? Are people staying or leaving? **Identifying the answers to questions will help identify the path of coaching and development you need to bring in to ensure this goal becomes a reality.**

Getting Feedback

In order to get feedback data, engagement surveys can help, but **I highly recommend feedback forums like skip levels.** A skip level is when you speak to the employees

in a forum to discuss how they feel about the organization, how they feel about their managers and how they feel about their place in the organization. **It is meant to be a safe place without managers to get clear context and examples with possible themes and trends to focus on.** All of that feedback will help evolve the coaching and training you are looking to bring into the organization.

Why Skip Levels?

Context is important and often lost in engagement surveys, hence why skip levels are much better and produce conversations, which often lead to outputs. An engagement survey often leads to a lot of next steps without a lot of knowledge as to the core themes and why these are the core themes. You need to understand the why of the themes before you plan to address them. The core themes identified in these meetings will help gauge where your talent is along with your current hiring, retention and performance metrics. **Getting the story and context will help you see where employees are making bad assumptions when they don't understand the current state of the business.** This feedback will help to shape what training to bring in and why.



For example, sales people may be challenged not by their sales skills but by their communications skills and how they interact with their managers and team. Context is core to all learning planning along with current state data analytics and future state data goals. **Once you have this established, you can begin to truly measure the effectiveness of the learning you brought into the organizations for employees.** In addition, you will be able to measure your own success rate with the

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leadership team in how they helped others achieve their goals through the learning and development.

So...Problem Solved?

A training or a coaching session is not a one-stop, fix-all solution. It only works when the organization amplifies it through action, which creates value and buy-in as to why people are being asked to do something. **You need to create a clear “why” and plan to support the why so it cascades throughout the organization and doesn't die on the vine.** The why is another predictor measure to help assess if you have successfully launched a learning plan and the organization is embracing it and utilizing it.

Reinforcement by leadership and change champions helps link the why to employees and what is in it for them. The “what's in for me” factor needs to be established early on. And don't worry, it's actually pretty simple. **The “what's in it for me” factor for all coaching and training development is the ability to teach someone something that they didn't know yesterday.** This creates a future value for how they will advance and apply the new skills tomorrow.



In Conclusion

Create the why to advance the win and the data will help drive it. Measure everything along the way with the key metrics you have identified early on and continue to champion the why and how you are helping employees getting to a better tomorrow through training. **Education is a win-win for everyone when it begins with the why, and empowers people with new skills that help accelerate the future needs of the business.** 🚀