

Coaching for Talent Development:

ADVANCING STRATEGIC OUTCOMES FOR ORGANIZATIONS & LEADERS

OUR POINT OF VIEW, RESEARCH, AND SOLUTIONS



Leadership Development Is a Balancing Act

Organizations must weigh personalization and scalability, immediate needs and long-term strategy, innovation and stability, and hard skills with broader capabilities to drive success.

Coaching, too, lives within this tension point:

- **How is coaching prioritized in your organization?**
- **What role does coaching individual leaders play in your broader organizational strategy?**
- **Is coaching a selective benefit, a resource for all, or something in between?**

We're a global leadership development partner that understands the push and pull. And here's what we've learned works best:

Coaching creates the greatest impact when woven throughout your leadership and talent development strategy. When purposefully aligned with both individual and organizational outcomes, coaching becomes a catalyst to address the complex, competing demands leaders face.



To achieve this alignment goal, you should approach your coaching strategy like your leadership development strategy:

- **Begin with the end in mind.** Clarify the purpose and expected outcomes. Understand the desired impact or change tied to those outcomes.
- **Address both the leader and the organization.** Identify individual leadership challenges and organizational priorities. And importantly, connect the 2 to amplify impact.
- **Stay grounded in research.** Work with data, not opinions, about leadership success and derailment factors. Apply the time-tested foundations of cognitive development, habit formation, and how people learn to lead. Understand impact data and continue research to provide relevant solutions and meaningful evaluations.
- **Add depth with related content and opportunities.** Help make learning stick. Connect assessments, feedback, knowledge, and tools to learning goals for a deeper and more comprehensive experience.
- **Design for transformation.** Create experiences that energize and motivate leaders to grow into their roles. Build strong networks of accountability and support for sustainable behavioral change. Embrace true transformation by helping leaders adopt the mindset and presence behind their behaviors, not just practice the behaviors themselves.



Why Leaders Need Coaching

Coaching is a personalized engagement where a trained coach and a leader work together to achieve specific outcomes. Coaching provides time and space for reflection, helping leaders gain self-awareness, expand their perspectives, and discover ways to address current challenges and prepare for future priorities. Through this partnership, leaders develop deeper insights that guide their growth and leadership effectiveness.

Organizations turn to coaching to address needs, such as:

- **Strengthening the leadership pipeline.** Prepare people identified through [succession planning](#) or talent reviews before or after they move into a new role.
- **Addressing skills gaps.** Provide guidance and accountability for learning or improving skills such as communication, delegation, and managing others.
- **Complementing retention efforts.** Offer coaching as a benefit to support leaders' engagement, growth, and learning.
- **Reinforcing strategic or cultural capabilities.** Support key people to implement shared priorities.
- **Steering leaders through disruption.** Create a sounding board and guide for executives making decisions in complex and uncertain environments.

Individual coaching — when integrated into core and customized leadership training solutions — enhances leaders' self-awareness, perspective, sensemaking, goal attainment, and application of their learnings to their role. Coaching for executives, a focused form of individual coaching, helps them lead under pressure and use their strengths more effectively.

Overall, people who receive coaching believe the experience makes them more effective leaders. They report that coaching helped them address key challenges, internalize specific lessons, and contribute to their organization's success. Thanks to leaders' newly developed mindsets and skills, coaching can impact organizational outcomes such as strategy execution, teamwork, and change management.

The Most Valuable Benefits of Integrated Coaching



In our research, leaders cite self-awareness and perspective as the top drivers of impact.

Self-awareness: Through coaching, leaders explore who they are, what drives their behavior, and what impact they want to make. This aligns with research that coaching helps leaders recognize their strengths, weaknesses, behaviors, and how others perceive them.

Perspective: A broader perspective can reflect a leader's qualities, experiences, or growth. Coaches provide an unbiased lens that helps leaders reframe and navigate their challenges.

[Dive deeper](#) into this research.



Common Coaching Pitfalls To Avoid

For coaching to achieve its promise in your organization, it must be integrated into your talent ecosystem, organizational priorities, and every stage of your leaders' growth. But coaching doesn't always live up to that promise, leaving organizational leaders and coachees wondering what they're getting out of their investments.

We created this report to help you uncover what may be getting in the way of effective coaching in your organization. Let's start by looking at the recurring challenges we hear from clients as they work to integrate coaching in their organizations.

1. MISALIGNMENT
2. LACK OF FOCUS
3. RIGIDITY
4. SUPERFICIALITY

We'll provide recommendations based on our research and experience to address each challenge, take a closer look at outcomes-based coaching, and introduce our approach to partnering with clients on coaching for leadership development.

If you're ready to elevate your coaching approach and deliver stronger leadership development outcomes across your organization, read on.

What enables coaching to deliver successful outcomes?

Alignment, focus, flexibility, and depth.

1. COACHING IS MISALIGNED

THE CHALLENGE

*"We have leadership development, and we have coaching.
The two aren't connected."*



Coaching is a powerful part of leadership development. It improves individual and collective capability, creates a common leadership language, and builds momentum for strategic and cultural change.

The roadblock is misalignment. Coaching is often disconnected from other leadership development initiatives and the broader talent development strategy. It may be viewed as a perk tied to retention, a nod to career growth for high performers, or a limited effort aimed at a small population or a specific skill. Too often, organizations treat coaching as a standalone effort, scattered across multiple L&D providers and applied inconsistently across global offices, leading to a lack of alignment with organizational strategy and leadership expectations. The ability to track or demonstrate impact is inconsistent.

In contrast, when coaching is linked to research-based leadership development, the results are notable:



Alignment Challenges

- Resources are wasted on fragmented efforts, reducing ROI and credibility for both coaching and development initiatives.
- Coaching focuses on personal preferences or external trends rather than skills and mindsets the organization actually needs.
- Coaching themes and language clash with the organization's strategic priorities, causing misalignment in communication and leadership tone.

97%

of leaders say that CCL's coaching offered a "great" or "very great" value.

90%

of leaders say our coaching helped them make progress on their goals to a "great" or "very great" extent.

96%

of leaders in our executive coaching solution drove greater organizational success.



When leadership development is aligned, coaching drives people toward shared outcomes and strengthens the entire organization.

How can organizations move beyond fragmented coaching efforts to create a unified approach that advances both individual leadership growth and organizational objectives?

- **Seek a partner with leadership development expertise, not just coaching certifications.**

What leadership and learning models are behind the approach to coaching? Is there depth — more content, more solutions, more expertise — that the organization and leaders can draw on? How does coaching align organizational goals such as [transformation](#), innovation, or retention with individual goals like strategic thinking, [influence](#), or authentic presence? The quality of coaching depends on excellent coaches, but maximum impact occurs when both organizational and individual needs are aligned and supported.

- **Ask for data.** What research informs the coaching solutions? What knowledge does the partner have that's relevant to your industry and your leaders? Do they measure impact through pre- and post-coaching data such as participant self-reporting, 360s, pulse surveys, and stakeholder interviews? The answers will help create alignment as you plan a coaching program and set the foundation for assessing effectiveness.

- **Be willing to think bigger.** What is changing in your industry and organization? Who can help you examine the challenge of [leadership in disruption](#)? What organizational outcomes do you want your leadership development and coaching efforts to achieve? What are the meaningful measures (KPIs, engagement scores, team performance indicators) your organization wants to use to determine ROI? Your leadership strategy and coaching solutions are shaped by today's context and need to be forward-looking.



We take a strategic, organization-wide view of coaching. Think of CCL as an architect of coaching solutions that integrate seamlessly with your broader leadership and talent development strategy, ensuring coaching remains aligned, consistent, and connected to real organizational priorities.



2. COACHING IS UNFOCUSED

THE CHALLENGE

“Coaching is happening across the organization, but we’re not confident it’s driving meaningful results on our key priorities.”



Focus drives results. While leaders may set clear coaching goals, these goals don’t always focus on the organization’s most critical leadership needs. For example, one leader might emphasize strategic thinking while another works on change leadership. They make progress individually, but collectively their efforts don’t add up to address broader organizational priorities.

Individual coaching goals also tend to emphasize skill development rather than the leadership outcomes those skills should create. Leaders might aim to improve capabilities like delegation or feedback, but the real need is to achieve results such as higher leader engagement or better [talent development](#).

When organizations fail to set a clear purpose for coaching from the start, leaders risk hitting targets that have little to do with the organization’s priorities. The frustrations clients face — and seek our help to resolve — **fall into 3 categories:**

1. COACHING DECISIONS ARE MADE WITHOUT CLARITY ABOUT ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS.

Sometimes coaching operates at a distance from strategic organization-wide conversations, or it’s built around a single group or issue. Other times, what organizations think their leaders need to develop doesn’t actually deliver the expected results. Your coaching partner should ask questions, share data and research, and encourage clarity before a coaching effort begins.



Focus Challenges

- Progress is dispersed across individuals, failing to drive results at the team or organizational level.
- Skill-building is isolated from meaningful leadership outcomes, making real value hard to measure.
- Organizational learning and culture may stagnate, as coaching doesn’t drive sustained change.

2. COACHING DOESN’T ALWAYS ADDRESS CONTEXT-SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES.

Sometimes coaching is too abstract, so leaders don’t view it as relevant to their real challenges or tied to their priorities. Coaches should bring relevant strategic insight, industry knowledge, and experience with senior leaders — and use this expertise to focus development on what will have the greatest impact. This requires careful, upfront planning and focus based on organizational needs, context, and desired outcomes.

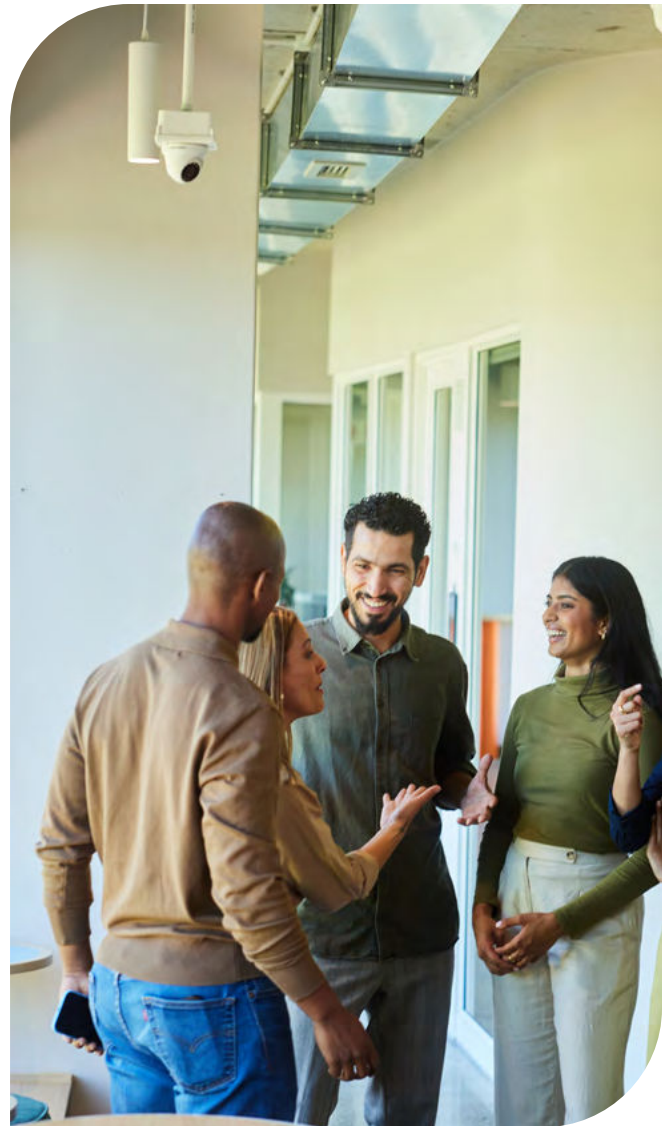


3. INDIVIDUAL GOALS AREN'T CONNECTED WITH TEAM OR ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES.

Even if the link is made when designing a coaching strategy, it often gets lost along the way. At CCL, we use key elements to build the bridge before, during, and after a coaching engagement.

- Extensive research, including the [most common leadership challenges](#) faced at every level, helps identify issues — and solutions — that are affecting performance among a population or across the organization.
- [Assessments](#), selected based on coaching strategy and leadership challenges, confirm existing capabilities and competencies, reveal complex leadership issues, and help guide action.
- Alignment conversations between coachees and their managers set expectations around goals and emphasize outcomes important to the organization. These conversations also increase buy-in: [our research](#) shows that the more coachees feel supported by their managers, the more progress they make on their development goals.
- Curated content and tools encourage application of insights in real-world contexts.

While coaching should be flexible enough to adapt to a leader's real-time demands, that flexibility shouldn't come at the cost of focus. A clear focus and structure help ensure that even with shifting schedules, coaching stays aligned to organizational priorities and delivers meaningful results.



Our coaching is **designed for people and built for organizations**. It is built around outcomes and tailored to address **both personal growth and the strategic goals of your organization**. Research-based, measurable focus areas create continuity throughout a coaching program while ensuring the experience meets individual leader needs.



3. COACHING IS RIGID

THE CHALLENGE

“We waste our coaching dollars because the provider can’t adapt to the changing needs of our organization and our leaders.”



Leaders across industries and roles are dealing with [polycrisis](#) — a barrage of interconnected crises that demand balancing short-term responses with long-term resilience. They need coaches who are a good match and can adapt along with them.

Organizations, too, are looking for coaching partners that can grow and adjust to their evolving strategies and needs. Their industries, expectations, and requirements are different and call for unique solutions.

We hear from clients and prospective clients that it’s not easy to find a coaching partner who can meet high global standards with consistency, address complex local needs, and support their talented leaders. It’s even more difficult to find one who can adapt at scale.

Independent coaches and small boutique providers fill a niche but can’t scale.

Organizations are asking for coaches who are specialized — not just in a particular industry, but on a specific topic. At the same time, organizations want confidence in the approach and the ability to weave an enterprise-level throughline across various functions or units. The logistics of managing many small coaching partners can be inefficient at best, or feed into other challenges of being misaligned, unfocused, or superficial.

On the other hand, large providers give access to many coaches — but they may fail to deliver strategic impact, acting more as “coach brokers,” not strategic partners or subject experts.

Large, multi-national organizations have an added challenge: the need to scale effectively across geographies, roles, and cultures with consistent quality and impact.



Flexibility Challenges

- Strict schedules disrupt continuity, turning coaching into episodic events rather than sustained development.
- Lack of customization prevents timely responses to urgent leader or organizational priorities.
- Inflexible programs hinder innovation and new techniques, slowing growth.





Finally, many organizations want to leverage internal capability as part of their coaching and development strategy. They may have skilled facilitators and coaches who know the culture and the industry and can help scale a program. Or, they're looking to bring a [coaching culture](#) into the organization and teach coaching techniques to leaders. Coordinating with internal teams and integrating content and methodology requires both flexibility from the provider and coherent approaches or frameworks that can be transferred broadly.

Our response to clients with these frustrations is to design solutions as unique as they are. Whether your coaching strategy involves targeted groups and niche needs, large-scale or global reach, or initiatives to develop internal capacity to hold [coaching conversations](#), our coaching practice can flex and grow.



For [executive coaching](#) specifically, our **membership model** creates another kind of flexibility. Based on the leader's need and focus, and aligned with organizational needs, the organization selects an outcome and a membership length best suited to achieve desired goals. The coach and executive decide the frequency and length of sessions, and may also connect between them to reinforce ongoing growth and development. The flexibility of the membership model makes it easier for executives to dedicate the time required to **reflect, integrate new learning, practice new behaviors, and navigate changing conditions.**



4. COACHING IS SUPERFICIAL

THE CHALLENGE

“Coaching hasn’t delivered lasting change. It takes time and energy, but the impact fades quickly or makes no difference after it’s over.”



Effective coaching creates time and space for a leader to think about their development and role in the organization. It’s an opportunity to reflect, try new skills, or consider a different approach. Often, coaching is stimulating but not potent enough to create lasting change or transformative results for the individual or the organization.

Transactional or surface-level coaching may be useful for reinforcing a skill, jump-starting a new habit, or providing short-term support.

Coaching for transformation is different — but it’s not easy to do.

The most powerful forms of coaching are **designed around the human side of change**. Coaching isn’t about advising or teaching. **It’s about:**



Depth Challenges

- Organizations see limited culture change as coaching doesn’t spark systemic leadership transformation.
- Coaching feedback is transactional, missing opportunities to foster critical reflection and insight.
- Coaching stays surface-level, missing deeper mindset shifts needed for sustained leader growth.

Personalized Insight

Individual coaching provides the challenge and support that expands perspectives, sparks awareness, creates curiosity, and inspires action. [Vertical development](#) boosts leadership capacity, not only competence — for example, how you think, not only what you think.

Micro Experiments

Through coaching, leaders have the freedom to explore and experiment as they interpret new information and build capacity to modify behavior.

Internalizing Key Learnings

Coaching solidifies lessons learned, including those gleaned through hardship, risks, and mistakes. New skills and new mindsets can be called upon in everyday situations to achieve desired outcomes.

When coaching goes beyond the surface, it enables deep mindset transformation and is the catalyst for leaders’ personal growth.



Our approach to leadership development has always been about expanding human potential, and our coaching is no different.

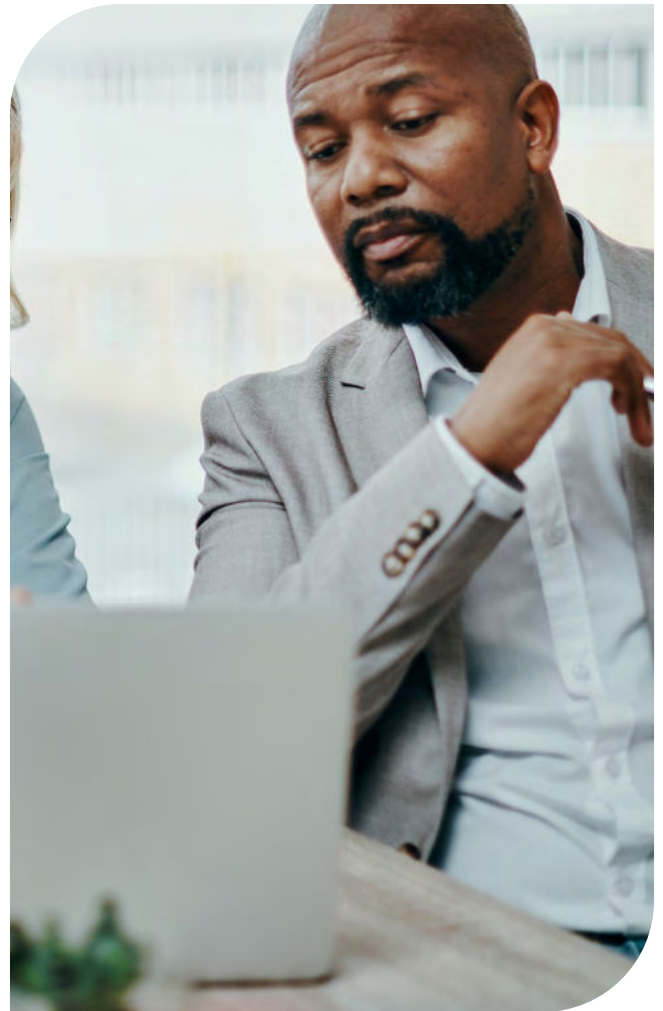
We follow the proprietary **RACSR framework for coaching — Relationship, Assessment, Challenge, Support, Results**. This time-tested model is based on adult learning and our research about how leaders develop. Rather than vaguely structured coaching conversations, the coaching experience is optimized for learning.

Using that foundation, we've created an **evidence-based, neuroscience-informed** approach that delivers faster results and enduring transformation. Our coaching methodologies are influenced by research around neuroplasticity, emotional regulation, goal-directed behavior, social neuroscience, and more.

[New research](#) points to **psychological capital** as another differentiator between superficial and transformative coaching. Psychological capital, or PsyCap, is an individual's positive outlook on situations and their likelihood of success, which is grounded in their motivated effort and persistence. It's a combination of 4 positive psychological states — hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism — that, when considered together, are conducive to personal and professional growth.

PsyCap is emerging as an indicator of learning and leadership development, and **effective coaching creates an environment for leaders to engage in this positive psychological state that's ripe for development**. What's more, PsyCap is contagious: Coaching that improves PsyCap for leaders can also lead to psychological growth throughout the leaders' networks, resulting in a greater capacity for productivity and [wellbeing](#) across the organization, according to our research.

By building psychological capital and embedding mindset shifts and capabilities, **transformation can happen at both the individual and organizational levels**.



Our coaches are among the most experienced practitioners of **human centered transformation**, combining coaching credentials, leadership knowledge, and a deep understanding of human development. They understand how people **think, behave, change, and grow**. They're trained in coaching techniques that maximize brain-based learning, and they understand how to structure coaching conversations that promote lasting cognitive change. Equally important, every CCL coach listens deeply and **builds connections** rooted in trust and psychological safety.



Our Coaching Model Drives Systemic Transformation

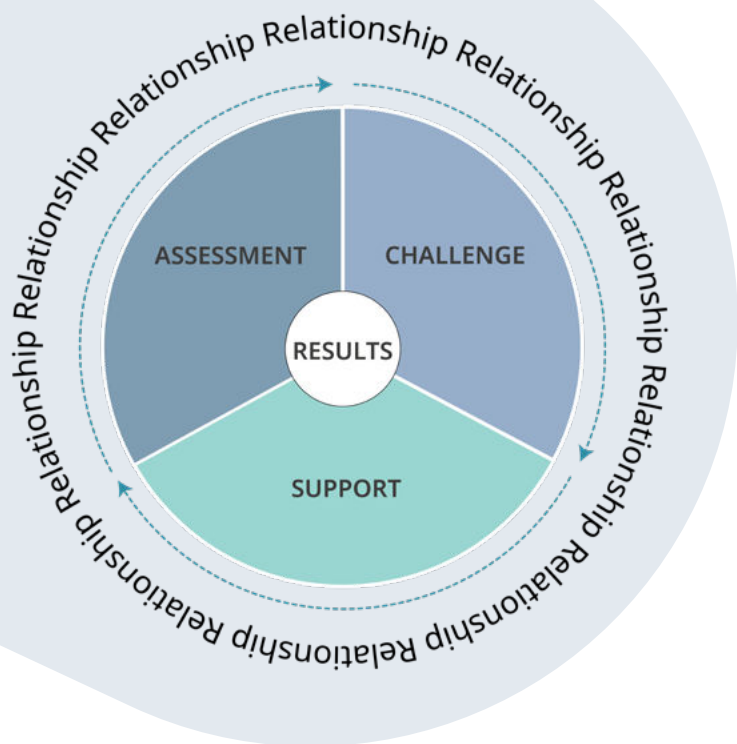
Our approach to coaching is consistent — no matter the context, the coach, or the coachee. That's because every CCL coach is immersed in our research-based and proven coaching model: Relationship, Assessment, Challenge, Support, Results (RACSR).

The model puts **Results** at the center of the coaching process — a constant reminder to identify and work toward goals and outcomes.

It emphasizes the **Relationship** between the coach and leader, which is a critical predictor of coaching outcomes.

The other 3 elements — **Assessment – Challenge – Support (ACS)TM** — are foundational to adult learning and drive leadership development in any setting. Based on decades of research and informed by practice, ACS is built into every CCL leadership development effort.

RACSR ensures coaches systematically build relationship foundations that enable learning, conduct assessments that reveal cognitive patterns, provide challenges that stimulate growth, and measure results that matter. Rather than relying on ad hoc coaching conversations, your leaders experience a structured approach designed to optimize brain-based learning.



RESULTS

Establishing next steps and accountability happens at the end of each session, as the leader is constantly moving toward key milestones.

CHALLENGE

Experiences that challenge the leader deliver great developmental impact. Challenges can take 2 forms: obstacles in the environment and developmental stretches to be experienced to grow.

RELATIONSHIP

CCL coaching relationships are a partnership of equals, where the coach drives the process while the leader sets the agenda.

SUPPORT

Balancing challenge, leaders need resources to help them overcome obstacles and tolerate the discomfort of being stretched.

ASSESSMENT

Enable leaders to get authentic and unbiased feedback about leadership skills and style. Coaches dig deep by asking powerful questions and listening for facts, emotions, and values.



Focused on Outcomes, Guided by Coaching

For leadership development, an outcome-oriented approach ensures that solutions are tailored to the challenges and opportunities faced by leaders, enabling them to apply what they learn directly to their work environments. We bring that same philosophy to coaching, too.

Effective leadership coaching starts with a clear purpose, defines what success looks like, then supports what's needed to get results.

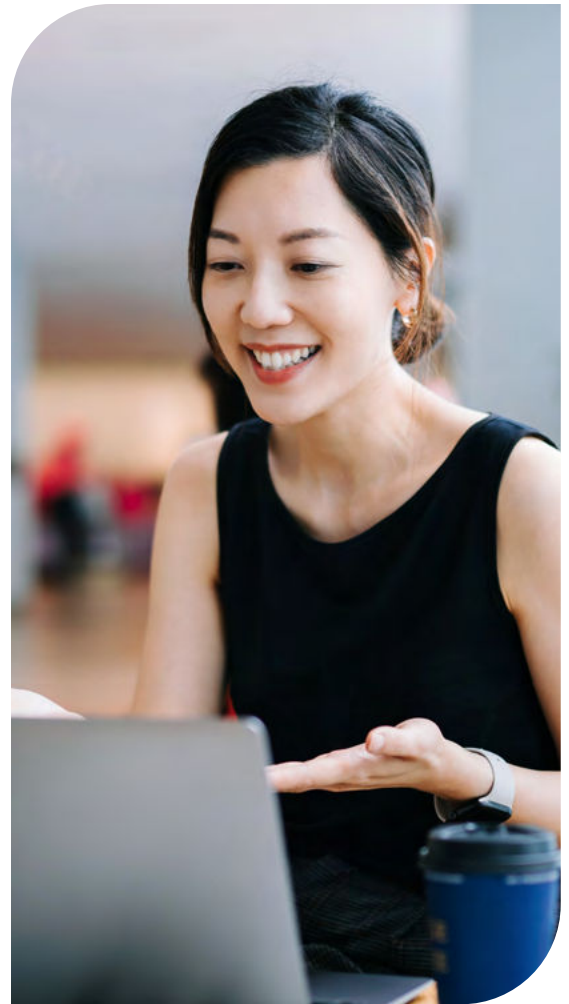
>> FIRST, CLARIFY YOUR BIG PICTURE.

Before we propose any leadership development solution, including coaching, we spend time with organizational leaders and L&D teams to understand their why.

We ask questions like:

- ***What are your major organizational challenges and opportunities?***
- ***Can you describe the ideal future state of your organization?***
- ***What's the leadership outcome that you're not currently generating for the organization?***
- ***What do you want to achieve or change through leadership development?***

Answers are often tied to organizational change (aligning with a new strategy, transforming toward the future, and leading through uncertainty) and better performance across people, teams, and units. Organizations are asking for coaching strategies that help leaders and teams become more effective in their context, while also addressing concerns or priorities, such as role transitions, [leader burnout](#), or navigating global challenges.



Coaching for leadership development can help organizations achieve many outcomes, but the best path requires knowing where you want to go.





NEXT, ZERO IN ON WHAT DRIVES DESIRED OUTCOMES.

We connect organizational goals to individual leader development through the design process. When we design a solution, we help clients choose a focus area that will shape the coaching process for each leader.

We analyzed our extensive data and experience to understand common leadership development themes and associated coaching outcomes. **For executive coaching, we identified 7 key focus areas that lead to important outcomes:**

Focus Area	Individual Outcomes	Organizational Outcomes
<p>Leader Effectiveness</p> <p>For leaders seeking to refine their leadership style, manage challenges, and align their goals with organizational objectives.</p>	<p>Leaders improve their overall effectiveness, impact, and strategic decision making.</p> <p>Common outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Improved ability to communicate effectively with teammates and stakeholders▪ Better able to handle complex interpersonal dynamics and conflict▪ Enhanced ability to adapt to new challenges and opportunities	<p>The increased ability to navigate complex interpersonal dynamics and resolve conflicts fosters a more collaborative and harmonious work environment.</p> <p>More leaders have increased self-awareness and a shared language of effective leadership.</p>
<p>Role Transition</p> <p>For leaders stepping into new positions who need to quickly adapt to and align with organizational goals.</p>	<p>Individuals transitioning into new roles gain clarity on their new responsibilities and the skills needed to meet expectations.</p> <p>Common outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Strategies to navigate challenges associated with the role transition▪ Effective relationships with new stakeholders▪ Improved trust, collaboration, and engagement in the team or work group	<p>Faster and more effective integration of leaders into new roles leads to reduced transition time and enhanced productivity.</p> <p>The organization better prepares and transitions its pipeline of leadership talent.</p>



Focus Area	Individual Outcomes	Organizational Outcomes
<p>Organizational Change</p> <p>For leaders involved in leading, influencing, and modeling the changes the organization is pushing toward.</p>	<p>Leaders are equipped with the skills needed to drive successful change initiatives, with a focus on strengthening change leadership, communication, and stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Common outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased ability to champion change • Team or work group alignment to support the change • Greater capacity to impact the change process 	<p>The enhanced alignment and support for change across teams and work groups leads to smoother transitions and reduced resistance.</p> <p>Increased stakeholder engagement and buy-in fosters a culture of adaptability and continuous improvement.</p>
<p>Managing Time, Stress & Energy</p> <p>For leaders to enhance their work-life harmony, prevent burnout, and maintain sustained performance.</p>	<p>Leaders optimize their productivity and resilience, and gain greater focus and clarity.</p> <p>Common outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved prioritization of work in support of key goals • Better clarity about when and how to expend energy at work • Ability to apply techniques to stay engaged and motivated 	<p>Leaders find the strength they need to make tough decisions and model resilience for others across the organization.</p> <p>Leaders improve their organization's capability to achieve ambitious goals by staying engaged, motivated, and effective — even during times of overload and overwhelm.</p>
<p>Team Effectiveness</p> <p>For leaders seeking to foster high-performing teams and address team dynamics and conflict resolution.</p>	<p>Leaders build more effective teams through goal setting, enhanced communication, and improved collaboration.</p> <p>Common outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective team coordination across different roles • Greater commitment to accomplish team goals 	<p>There is strengthened organizational capacity to build and sustain high-performing teams across various functions and roles.</p> <p>Enhanced team performance and productivity leads to more efficient achievement of organizational goals.</p>



Focus Area	Individual Outcomes	Organizational Outcomes
<p>Communication, Presence & Influence</p> <p>For leaders looking to improve their impact by mastering active listening, strategic relationship building, and persuasive communication.</p>	<p>The leader's ability to establish and maintain a reputation as an effective leader is enhanced.</p> <p>Common outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clearer awareness of how leader behaviors impact others ▪ Clarity about interacting with others in ways that reinforce how the leader wants to be perceived ▪ Increased ability to influence across a broad range of stakeholders 	<p>Improved organizational communication and collaboration leads to more effective teamwork and decision making.</p> <p>Organizational culture is strengthened through leaders who model effective communication and relationship-building behaviors.</p>
<p>Global Leadership</p> <p>For leaders navigating and leading in a complex, interconnected, and culturally diverse global environment.</p>	<p>Leaders develop skills in cultural intelligence, strategic global thinking, and cross-cultural communication.</p> <p>Common outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More effective at engaging with various cultural perspectives ▪ Improved ability to adapt communication style to suit various audiences ▪ Ability to foster effective collaboration in a global context 	<p>There is enhanced global collaboration and teamwork, leading to increased organizational agility and adaptability in response to the complexities of a global environment.</p> <p>Improved cross-cultural communication and understanding results in stronger relationships with global partners and stakeholders.</p>



» Integrate coaching into your leadership development strategy.

When you're clear about the outcomes you're looking for, we can help you design the right coaching approach for any group and any leader. **Here are some examples drawn from our experience with global clients.**



Coaching as a key element of a broader executive program.

Regional presidents and area vice presidents in a security company learned the value of executive coaching first-hand, as they sought to elevate the way they lead. As part of a 6-month development journey, each leader received multiple 1:1 executive coaching sessions. The leadership development program's mix of in-person and virtual learning, coaching, and real-world application helped leaders apply knowledge without disrupting daily responsibilities.

Coaching as a catalyst for scalable global growth.

A large regional restaurant business was expanding to be a global player. A key goal was to attract and retain frontline and middle managers. Coaching 200 senior leaders to identify and instill core values and ways of working was followed by feedback coaching for managers in the new locations. Through large-scale virtual sessions, the organization achieved its goals and strengthened the pool of leaders who are skilled and supported across regions. Recruitment, retention, and career mobility among millennials, and now Gen Z, improved.

Coaching as a spark for a healthier community.

A regional health foundation set out to amplify its vision of a healthier community by strengthening the leadership bench across local nonprofits. Each year, the foundation sponsors mid-level managers to participate in a deep coaching experience. Participants not only report stronger performance in their own organizations but also have become more effective catalysts for change in their community. Many participants mentor colleagues, share tools they have learned about with their peers, and engage in peer networks that enhance collaboration across organizations. The foundation's investment in people translates into the region's increased capacity to tackle complex health and social challenges with their grantees.

Coaching as a driver for leadership capacity.

A university student affairs and housing team sought to strengthen its leadership capacity during a period of significant transition. Following an initial program experience with CCL, the team surfaced key challenges around post-COVID planning, cross-unit collaboration, and inclusive decision making. The experience prompted nearly all team members to pursue executive coaching. Through coaching, leaders reported greater clarity in navigating ambiguity, improved ability to engage diverse perspectives, and stronger alignment across the department. The university's investment in leadership development is helping shape a more adaptive and collaborative student experience.



The Partner for Your Plan

No matter your organization's approach to leadership development or the coaching challenges you encounter, you need a reliable partner.

We are architects of individual transformation and organizational change.

CCL is a global provider of [leadership development solutions](#) with more than 50 years of expertise and a community of highly experienced, senior-level coaches around the world. Our leadership development frameworks and programs, world-class assessments, research-based development tools, and powerful coaching approaches are time-tested. We measure the impact of your investments through analytics and evaluation.

Crucially, we know how and why these elements fit together. Our leadership and coaching experts design and implement experiences that transform leaders and drive organizational outcomes.

We have one of the largest, most rigorously managed coaching practices in the world.

CCL coaches are a community of carefully selected and trained global experts. They're highly skilled, with diverse cultural, educational, and organizational perspectives. Many have held senior leader roles, and most have certifications by outside professional and regulatory entities including the International Coaching Federation.

Our coaches reflect our clients, including:

- Capacity to deliver coaching in 19 languages, including Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Cantonese, English, French, Mandarin, Russian, and Spanish.
- Broad and deep industry expertise, including fintech, banking, manufacturing, health and life sciences, nonprofit, food and beverage, higher education, and automotive.

What We Expect of Our Coaches

HIGH STANDARDS

Less than 3% of coach applicants are accepted, with only the most experienced making the cut

EXPERIENCE

- Minimum 5 years as a full-time coach
- Advanced degree (PhD or master's degree)
- Coaching credentials (ICF, CCE Global, or EMCC)

RIGOR

- 200 hours minimum training required
- Mandatory 15–20 continuing education hours each year

Our coaches don't operate independently. They're well-versed in leadership development, our coaching approach, and our research-based content. They collaborate with one another, our leadership experts, and our client services teams to ensure consistent, high-quality coaching and leadership outcomes. Coaches are also overseen by a dedicated team that ensures global talent and performance management, continuous development, and thorough follow-through to client feedback.



We solve for your leadership coaching challenges.

Our leadership solutions experts consistently help clients create coaching programs designed specifically for leadership development.

Aligned & Proven

Our strategic, organization-wide view of coaching and our deep leadership expertise provide a different perspective on your coaching efforts. Coaching doesn't need to stay disconnected from or at odds with other learning and leadership development initiatives.

Research-based leadership development and coaching frameworks, proven methods, and extensive data underpin our approach. The result is coaching that's aligned, consistent, and connected to your organizational and talent development priorities.

Focused & Outcome Driven

Our leadership coaching is outcomes-based and tailored to address both personal growth and the strategic goals of your organization.

We understand the challenges that you and your leaders are facing, and we've established coaching focus areas to address them. Each leadership focus area is research-based and measurable, serving as a guidepost to ensure results. The leader's focus area is central to their coaching conversations and is infused through curated assessments, tools, and learning content.

Flexible & Scalable

Our coaching experts offer you the best of both worlds: tailored solutions with a turnkey approach.

We combine global reach with local relevance, and adapt to your organization's unique needs, size, and complexity, all while maintaining high standards and a shared leadership language. As we match leaders with the right coach, we consider the organizational outcomes as well as each leader's goals, experience, skills, personality, and preferred language.

Integrated coaching is co-created with you, embedding coaching into your organization and creating a strategic lever to build leadership capacity, speed readiness, and boost organizational performance.

For executive coaching, our membership model provides flexibility within the coaching engagement itself to meet the needs of each leader and build a personal coaching relationship and cadence that works for them.

Faster Results & Lasting Change

Our leadership coaching goes beyond the surface to foster individual and organizational transformation.

We built our practice with a human-centered, research-based approach. Our models and systems are designed around how adults learn, and every aspect of the coaching experience enables deeper learning and lasting impact.

From the initial coaching conversation through the full experience, our coaches build the relationship and apply proven techniques to ensure a powerful experience and desired results.



We provide a robust coaching platform that's easy to use and fuels leadership outcomes.

Our cloud-based platform creates built-in efficiency through which we can provide scalable, organization-wide coaching. It's easy for leaders to select a coach, schedule sessions, and communicate with their coach in a private and confidential setting. It centralizes assessment prework, goal setting, and session notes.

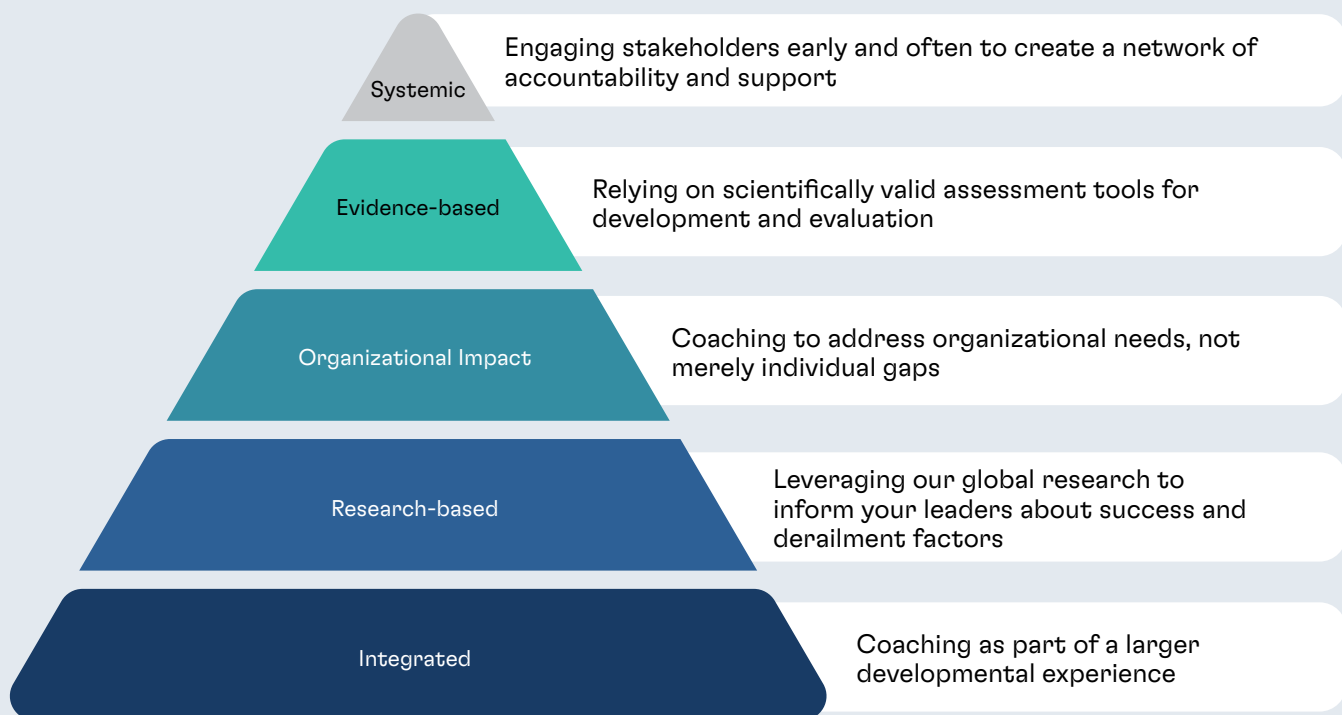
But it's more than just a hub for scheduling and managing sessions. It's designed to keep coachees engaged, connected, motivated, and learning. Through the platform, coachees can have multiple learning touchpoints between sessions, including access to more than 200 lessons and resources.

The people who coordinate coaching in your organization can easily monitor usage and track participant progress. Once sufficient data is available, the CCL program manager can share trend and theme reports, and impact and evaluation results.

We meet clients where they are.

We're a global partner who closely manages our coaching practice in alignment with our research, mission, and unparalleled expertise. And we always keep the needs of your organization and your leaders front and center. Our commitment to excellence ensures that every interaction and every solution builds from where you are today and drives toward the future you're shaping.

Our Approach to Coaching



Integrate Coaching Into Your Leadership Development Strategy

We'd be delighted to discuss your organization's leadership challenges and identify a coaching approach that complements and reinforces your strategy.

Our team of leadership development experts is ready to assist and support you. Connect with our client advisors today to start the conversation at ccl.org/coaching.



Coaching Resources

These industry-pioneering frameworks and models have emerged from our decades of research and experience, and they're infused and threaded throughout our portfolio. Whatever coaching experience your organization selects, you can be confident in our models, tools, and proven methods.

Our Research-Based Approach

We define leadership as a social process that produces the outcomes of **Direction – Alignment – Commitment (DAC)**[™].

The DAC framework underpins all our research, practice, teaching, and design.

Further reading:

[What Is Leadership?](#)

[Direction + Alignment + Commitment \(DAC\) = Leadership](#)

Assessment – Challenge – Support (ACS)[™] is a powerful framework that identifies 3 critical elements driving leadership development.

Assessment is information that identifies strengths, development needs, and overall level of effectiveness.

Challenge refers to experiences that require new skills and perspectives or create imbalance, providing an opportunity to question established ways of thinking and acting.

Support represents elements of an experience that enhance self-confidence and provide reassurance about one's strengths, skills, and established ways of thinking and acting.

Connection to Leadership Coaching

Coaching helps leaders see their role in creating collective outcomes.

Direction: Clarify goals and vision and identify ways to ensure that everyone understands the desired outcomes.

Alignment: Learn to align roles, responsibilities, and resources, or spot and fix gaps that may slow collective progress.

Commitment: Explore how to build commitment to team or organizational goals by identifying motivators, addressing barriers, and encouraging ownership and accountability.

RACSR is our coaching model, with the core elements of **ACS** strengthened by the **Relationship** between coach and leader and the focus on **Results**.

Our coaches guide and encourage leaders to assess their situation and their skills, seek appropriate challenges, and create the necessary support to meet those challenges and achieve desired outcomes.

ACS is carefully balanced to ensure we're not under- or over-challenging leaders, overwhelming them with feedback, or failing to provide the support they need to achieve their goals.

With an effective coaching partnership, the leader is constantly moving toward key milestones and needed impact.



Our Research-Based Approach

Based on levels, or stages, of thinking, vertical development is about growing the capacity needed to handle complexity in current and future challenges.

This approach fosters perspectives and leadership mindsets that enable expansive thinking, greater wisdom, and clearer insights.

Further reading:

[Vertical vs. Horizontal Development: Why Your Leaders Need Both to Succeed](#)

The ability to remember and apply new skills and concepts weeks, months, or years later is dependent upon successful **learning transfer**.

To make learning stick, we consider what happens before, during, and after a development experience. And we activate social / emotional learning — because learning doesn't take place in isolation.

Further reading:

[Make Learning Stick: Improve Learning Transfer](#)

Self-awareness, communication, influence, and learning agility are the **Fundamental 4** — the timeless, core leadership skills needed in every organization, regardless of role, industry, or location. How each is applied shifts and changes based on role and context, but these are always required for effective leadership.

Further reading:

[The Core Leadership Skills in Every Role](#)

Connection to Leadership Coaching

Coaching helps leaders explore and challenge their existing mindsets, encouraging them to adopt **broader perspectives** and more adaptive ways of thinking.

Coaches may also support leaders in honing their **critical thinking and decision-making skills**, allowing them to tackle complex challenges with greater confidence and insight.

Our coaching engagements follow a “Prepare, Engage, Apply” approach to foster lasting change.

The **Prepare** stage includes coach selection, an orientation meeting, and leader assessments.

The **Engage** stage is the time for the coach and leader to discuss assessment insights, set goals, and create an action plan. They also align with the leader's manager or other stakeholders.

The **Apply** stage involves the coaching sessions, the leader practicing new actions and learning between sessions, and tracking progress.

Self-awareness: Coaches help leaders gain a deeper understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, and impact on others.

Learning agility: Coaches encourage leaders to embrace new experiences, learn from mistakes, and apply lessons to future challenges.

Communication: Coaches guide leaders to convey messages clearly, listen actively, engage in meaningful dialogue, and refine their communication style.

Influence: Coaches help leaders develop strategies for building trust, gaining buy-in, and driving positive change within their teams and organizations.



Our Research-Based Approach

Our **Situation – Behavior – Impact (SBI)™ feedback model** is a simple way to structure feedback conversations to capture and clarify the *Situation*, describe the specific *Behaviors*, and explain the *Impact* that the person's behavior had.

When feedback is given consistently and well, people are more engaged, effective, and open to learning and growth.

Further reading:

[Improve Talent Development With Our SBI Feedback Model](#)

Connection to Leadership Coaching

Through coaching, leaders learn to use feedback for their own development and to support candid conversation with their teams and direct reports.

Situation: Coaches help leaders identify and describe specific situations where behaviors were observed. This clarity ensures that feedback is anchored in concrete examples, making it more relevant and understandable.

Behavior: Coaches guide leaders to focus on observable behaviors rather than personal attributes or assumptions. This objectivity helps to reduce defensiveness and encourages open dialogue about the actions that need to be addressed.

Impact: Coaches assist leaders in articulating the impact of behaviors on others and the organization. By highlighting the effects of actions, feedback becomes more meaningful and motivates leaders to consider the consequences of their behaviors.

Our widely recognized **70-20-10 framework** explains how people learn: with about 70% of their knowledge coming from hands-on and challenging experiences and assignments, 20% from developmental relationships with others, and 10% from coursework and training.

Further reading:

[The 70-20-10 Rule for Leadership Development](#)

By aligning with the 70-20-10 framework, coaching provides a holistic approach to leadership development.

70% experiential learning: Coaching supports people in learning from real-world experiences by helping them reflect on their work, extract valuable insights, and apply these lessons to future challenges.

20% relationships: Coaching itself is a developmental relationship, providing personalized support, feedback, and guidance. Coaches often help leaders build and strengthen other important relationships, such as mentoring and peer networks.

10% formal education: Coaching complements coursework and training by helping leaders integrate and apply what they learn to their specific contexts.



Our Research-Based Approach

We've identified 4 core skills that, when used widely, create a common language, a better foundation, and a stronger platform on which to build other organization-wide initiatives.

We call these the core behaviors for **Better Conversations Every Day™**: genuinely listen to understand, ask thought-provoking questions, give feedback that challenges thinking, and establish next steps.

Further reading:

[How to Coach People](#)

Connection to Leadership Coaching

The 4 core skills are built into coaching engagements:

Listening to understand: Our coaches go beyond actively listening to elicit 3 different perspectives: facts, emotions, and values.

Asking powerful questions: Coaches ask questions to fuel the leader's development, moving the leader forward and provoking new insights.

Challenging and supporting: Coaches encourage the leader to try something different, shift perspective, or take on an ambitious goal while creating an environment of safety and support.

Establishing next steps and accountability: Coaches ensure the leader is clear on what happens between coaching meetings — how will they apply insights and experiment with new behaviors?



Center for Creative Leadership



At the Center for Creative Leadership, our drive to create a ripple effect of positive change underpins everything we do. For 50+ years, we've pioneered leadership development solutions for leaders at every level, from community leaders to CEOs. Consistently ranked among the world's top global providers of executive education, our research-based programs and solutions inspire individuals in organizations across the world — including 2/3 of the Fortune 1000 — to ignite remarkable transformations.

Meet our people where you are: ccl.org/locations.