



— The ultimate guide to getting leadership coaching approved

5 essential strategies to win stakeholder support and secure budget buy-in



Your leaders need more. Here's why coaching delivers.

Getting buy-in for coaching isn't just about budget approval—it's about unlocking leadership potential across your organization. With only 40% of leaders rating leadership quality as high ([GLF 2025](#)) and trust in managers plummeting from 46% to just 29%, organizations face a critical inflection point.

Traditional leadership training isn't cutting it, and **doing nothing risks leaving your leaders unprepared for today's challenges**. The cost of inaction is real—disengaged teams, missed opportunities, and leaders who struggle to navigate complexity.

Coaching creates tangible business impact, connecting leader growth with measurable outcomes like productivity, execution quality, and revenue performance. Whether you're launching a new coaching initiative or expanding an existing one, this guide will help you build a compelling case for why your organization can't afford to wait.



Understanding how to develop leaders inside a company is one of the biggest challenges for every founder and CEO. Torch helps create better leaders. Pretty much a no-brainer.

-JUSTIN KAN, Co-founder of Twitch

1. Present the data that matters

To get buy-in, you need to show that coaching isn't just another leadership program—it's a proven driver of business results. **Coaching isn't a 'nice to have'; it's a strategic investment in productivity, execution excellence, and bottom-line performance.**

The leadership development challenge

The problem with traditional leadership development:

- **Low completion:** Most learners abandon online courses, with completion rates between 5%-15%.
- **Knowledge evaporation:** People forget 75% of new information after just 6 days.
- **Confidence gap:** 67% of executives doubt their leadership development programs work.
- **One-size-fits-nobody:** Generic programs fail to address individual or organizational needs.

Why coaching delivers where other approaches fall short:

- **Personalized growth:** Coaching adapts to each leader's unique strengths and challenges within their actual business context.
- **Trusted growth:** Leaders develop fastest where they feel supported, can take risks, and openly share challenges without fear of judgment.
- **Built-in accountability:** Regular check-ins create momentum and commitment to meaningful change.
- **Real-world integration:** Learning happens in the flow of work, not in theoretical isolation.

The leadership impact numbers:

- **Accelerated business execution:** 88% of leaders show measurable improvement in goal achievement and execution quality within the first 60 days
- **Higher team output:** Teams led by coached leaders show 15% higher engagement
- **Stronger organizational retention:** 30-50% higher retention rates among coached leaders
- **Greater decision velocity:** Leaders make high-quality decisions 40% faster after focused coaching
- **Measurable ROI:** The International Coaching Federation reports an average ROI of 7x the cost of employing a coach

When presenting this data, **connect it directly to your organization's current challenges**. Is execution speed an issue? Highlight how coaching improves decision quality and execution alignment. Concerned about talent flight? Show how coached leaders retain key talent at significantly higher rates, saving \$50-200K per retained employee.



The measurable impact

Strong leadership is a business advantage. Organizations with strong leadership benches are 2.9X more likely to be top financial performers and 3.5X more likely to be recognized as most admired companies (GLF 2025).

Yet, leadership gaps persist. Only 32% of leaders feel prepared for today's demands, and nearly 40% cite leadership confidence in the face of disruption as a top challenge (Torch Leadership Survey Report 2025). Coaching bridges this gap by developing self-awareness, strategic thinking, and adaptability—driving real business results. Coaching turns potential into lasting impact:

- ✦ **Improved business execution:** Leaders report significantly better decision-making, management of teams, and stakeholder connections
- ✦ **Behavior transformation:** 88% of participants show measurable growth in just 60 days
- ✦ **Greater adaptability:** Leaders develop increased flexibility in their approach, particularly as the coaching relationship deepens
- ✦ **Enhanced performance focus:** Leaders maintain productivity during disruption, helping teams stay focused on outcomes rather than process
- ✦ **Higher engagement:** 15% higher team engagement compared to non-coached leaders
- ✦ **Stronger retention:** 30-50% higher retention rates and 3x likelihood of promotion
- ✦ **Increased operational efficiency:** Up to 88% improvement in productivity through goal-setting and feedback
- ✦ **Performance elevation:** 76% higher likelihood of exceptional performance reviews translating to improved business outcomes

2. Map your stakeholder landscape

Leadership coaching requires support from multiple stakeholders, each with their own priorities and concerns. Understanding each approver's perspective helps you craft messages that address their specific business objectives.



An executive sponsor

Look for a respected leader who has personally experienced coaching's benefits to champion your initiative. Their authentic testimony creates powerful advocacy.

Top concerns: Business impact, organizational performance, leadership execution velocity.

Winning approach: Help them share specific examples of how coaching strengthened their decision-making and created measurable results throughout their teams.

“ I was shocked by how much I could learn about myself in such a short time. I feel calmer and more thoughtful. I am more aware of how people respond to certain approaches.

-JOSEPH T, Engineering Lead



Finance stakeholders: Building the bridge to approval

Rather than seeing Finance as a hurdle, start with genuine partnership. Early conversations transform budget discussions into collaborative efforts to strengthen the organization.

The power of early conversations

Engage Finance early—share your thinking, invite their perspective, and build the case together. This shifts the dynamic from selling coaching to partnering on business impact.

Connect to what matters most

When discussing coaching, focus on what matters most to Finance:

- **Talent economics:** "Each retained leader saves us \$100K+ in replacement costs"
- **Performance lift:** "Teams with coached leaders deliver projects 20% faster"
- **Decision quality:** "Better-informed strategic choices that drive results"

Start small, show impact: The 90-Day Shift

Torch's 90-Day Shift program demonstrates coaching's value quickly without requiring full-scale investment. This structured approach **helps organizations gain critical insights into leadership capacities, identify key barriers to success, and co-create a roadmap for transformation**—giving Finance leaders a clear, data-backed case for long-term leadership development.

Remember, **Finance leaders want thoughtful plans with clear connections to business outcomes.** By using real organizational data to highlight leadership strengths and gaps, you can turn potential budget concerns into a compelling case for investing in leadership growth that drives meaningful, sustained change.



Human Resources

Chief Human Resources Officer / Head of People

HR is an essential ally in securing buy-in and budget allocation.

Top concerns: Alignment with business strategy, measurable ROI, talent retention economics.

Winning approach: Position coaching as a performance accelerator with tangible financial impact through reduced turnover costs (\$50-200K per retained leader) and improved execution metrics.

Learning & Development Leaders

These stakeholders need to see coaching's advantages over other development approaches.

Top concerns: Program effectiveness, resource optimization, measurable skill application.

Winning approach: Share examples of how Torch's contextual coaching connects individual growth to organizational outcomes with 88% of leaders showing measurable skill application within 60 days.



Business Unit Leaders

These stakeholders will evaluate coaching against their specific objectives and challenges.

Top concerns: Team performance improvement, execution speed, alignment with functional goals.

Winning approach: Show how coaching addresses their specific business challenges—whether improving decision velocity, enhancing cross-functional collaboration, or accelerating market responsiveness.



Technology & Security Leaders

These stakeholders will evaluate implementation requirements and system integration.

Top concerns: Platform security, user experience, integration with existing systems.

Winning approach: Highlight Torch's seamless implementation, enterprise-grade security protocols, and minimal IT burden for rollout and maintenance.



Department Leaders

When funding comes from specific departments, these leaders become crucial stakeholders.

Top concerns: Impact on team performance, alignment with departmental goals, resource allocation.

Winning approach: Involve them early in the selection process, connect coaching directly to their team's strategic priorities, and position them as champions for measurable performance improvement.

“Without Torch coaching, I would not have identified areas to focus my growth efforts. My coach was able to visualize what areas to work on and offer real advice on how to improve.

-ROBERT B, Executive

3. Quantify impact beyond traditional ROI

Coaching isn't just another leadership perk—it delivers measurable business results. Leaders who trust their managers are 11X more likely to embrace feedback, coaching, and development ([GLF 2025](#)). By building this critical foundation, **coaching creates a multiplier effect** that extends beyond individual growth, shaping how teams **execute, align, and achieve strategic goals**.

Organizations that integrate coaching into broader development strategies see 4.9X higher leadership capability improvement ([GLF 2025](#)). But the true value goes beyond skill-building—**coaching drives execution**. Coached leaders make better decisions, create stronger alignment, and sustain high performance, making coaching an essential lever for hitting OKRs and long-term business priorities.

Move beyond theoretical frameworks to demonstrate coaching's **real-world impact on execution, goal attainment, and business results**.

The leadership impact matrix:

1. Individual transformation

- Develop targeted leadership capacities that enable adaptability and resilience
- Build self-awareness and confidence that translate to decisiveness under pressure
- Foster purpose-driven leadership that energizes and inspires others
- Measurement timing: Baseline, mid-program, 3-6 months post-program

2. Team performance

- Increase psychological safety and trust within teams
- Improve collaboration across functions and time zones
- Enhance innovation through greater openness to diverse perspectives
- Measurement timing: 3-6 months from coaching initiation

3. Operational excellence

- Improve decision quality and velocity
- Reduce wasted time and resources through clearer priorities
- Enhance execution through more effective delegation and accountability
- Measurement timing: 6-12 months from program launch

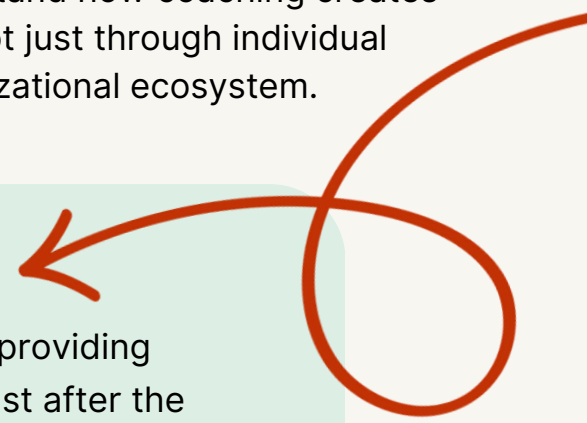
4. Organizational resilience

- Strengthen leadership bench strength and succession readiness
- Build change capability and adaptive capacity
- Develop more inclusive cultures that attract and retain diverse talent
- Measurement timing: 12+ months from program initiation

This comprehensive view helps stakeholders understand how coaching creates value through multiple interconnected pathways—not just through individual development, but by strengthening the entire organizational ecosystem.

The Torch advantage:

Torch's platform captures these metrics in real time, providing visibility into coaching's impact as it develops—not just after the fact. This allows for continuous optimization and creates a compelling narrative for ongoing investment.



4. Address the cost of waiting

Frontline leaders are feeling the strain—while C-suite leaders report a stronger sense of purpose—frontline leaders experienced a 20% decline in their sense of purpose while C-suite leaders saw increases ([GLF 2025](#)). This growing disconnect puts organizations at risk, especially when alignment and decisive action matter most.

Companies that invest in coaching and leadership development are 12X more likely to see high leadership quality ratings ([GLF 2025](#)). Without it, the gap between leadership levels widens, leading to disengagement, misalignment, and stalled progress.

The question isn't *whether* to invest in leadership coaching—**it's whether your organization can afford to wait**. Prepare for the common "Why now?" objection with compelling answers:



“Why now?” objection

Frame the urgency:

- Each month we wait represents another month our **leaders face unprecedented challenges without the support they need**.
- **The leadership gap isn't static**—it's widening as challenges become more complex.
- A recent survey shows that **frontline leaders' sense of purpose has declined** by 20% since 2020, while C-suite purpose continues to rise—this widening disconnect threatens to derail our organizational mission.



"We already have training programs" objection

- Traditional training provides information, but **coaching builds execution muscle**—the critical capacity leaders need to translate knowledge into business outcomes.
- While training teaches concepts, **coaching accelerates application** needed to drive immediate business results—especially valuable during transformative periods like market shifts or AI integration.
- Training addresses known challenges, but **coaching equips leaders to handle the unexpected**—a necessity for navigating constant market changes and competitive threats.

"The ROI isn't clear enough" objection:

- Unlike some investments with abstract returns, **coaching directly improves execution on business priorities**. Organizations that invest in sustained coaching see measurable gains in goal attainment, strategic alignment, and execution quality—all critical to hitting OKRs and long-term growth targets.
- With A/B testing, coaching's impact on execution can be tracked against non-coached groups, proving its **value beyond individual development**.
- And financially, the cost of replacing just one senior leader (150–200% of salary) often exceeds the investment needed to coach multiple leaders—making **coaching a smart, strategic choice**.

Quantify the delay

- Calculate the cost of unwanted turnover for key leaders (50-200% of annual salary per departure)
- Show the impact of leadership burnout on innovation and performance (40% of stressed leaders have considered leaving-[GLF 2025](#))
- Highlight how competitors investing in leadership now are gaining advantage in talent attraction and retention

Offer strategic starting points

- High-impact leadership transitions
- Critical teams navigating significant change
- Leaders with substantial organizational influence
- Areas experiencing engagement or retention challenges

When framing the urgency, **connect it to specific business initiatives or challenges your organization is currently facing**—whether that's AI transformation, market shifts, or cultural evolution.



5. Design a strategic implementation plan

Only 20% of HR leaders feel confident in their leadership pipeline—yet organizations with strong leadership benches are 2.8X more likely to outperform industry peers financially ([GLF 2025](#)). **Coaching isn't just a development tool**—it's a strategic investment in your company's future.


Shift the conversation from cost to impact by building an implementation strategy that resonates with key stakeholders and secures the right investment:

Funding approach options:

- **Centralized Model:** Core investment from L&D/HR budget aligned with people strategy
- **Shared Investment:** Costs distributed across benefiting departments based on participation
- **Graduated Expansion:** Start with high-impact groups and expand based on demonstrated results
- **Blended Funding:** Combine dedicated coaching budget with individual development allowances

“ I've become more intentional about how I communicate, ensuring that I'm actively listening, showing empathy, and understanding different perspectives. This has led to stronger collaboration and a more supportive work environment.

-AZAM M, Business Leader



Based on Torch's experience with diverse organizations:

- **Enterprise organizations (5,000+ employees)** typically find greatest success with Centralized Models that allow for strategic alignment across the organization. The scale and existing L&D infrastructure make this approach most administratively efficient.
- **Mid-size companies (500-5,000 employees)** often benefit from Shared Investment approaches where coaching becomes integrated into departmental responsibilities, creating stronger ownership while maintaining program cohesion.
- **Growth companies (under 500 employees)** typically see highest adoption with Graduated Expansion models that allow for visible success with high-impact leaders before scaling, addressing both budget constraints and the need to prove value quickly.
- **Organizations undergoing transformation (regardless of size)** find Blended Funding particularly effective, as it combines organizational priorities with individual development needs during periods of significant change.





Implementation timeline:

Phase 1: Partner & plan (0-1 month)

- Torch partners with you to assess leadership strengths and business needs
- Define key success metrics aligned with organizational goals
- Select and match coaches based on specific development needs

Phase 2: Start coaching & collect insights (2-4 months)

- Launch coaching engagements with a focus on real-world challenges
- Identify leadership patterns through regular dynamic feedback loop
- Provide targeted resources to amplify the coaching impact

Phase 3: Leverage insights & integrate (6-12 months)

- Connect coaching insights to organizational initiatives
- Measure initial impact on individual and team performance
- Make adjustments based on leader feedback and business needs

Phase 4: Scale & sustain (12+ months)

- Expand coaching to a broader leader population
- Embed coaching into leadership development pathways
- Document ROI and success stories to support continued investment



The Torch advantage:

Torch's flexible platform allows organizations to start where they are and scale systematically. Our contextual coaching approach ensures every dollar invested creates maximum impact by aligning with your specific organizational needs and challenges.



The Torch difference

Torch's unique approach doesn't just develop individual leaders—it creates a continuous feedback loop that connects leadership growth to organizational transformation:

1. **A true partnership approach:** More than coaching—we take the time to truly understand your world. Integrating deeply with your goals, we connect every coaching conversation to the real challenges your business faces.
2. **Exceptional coaches who get it:** Our coaches blend real leadership experience with coaching excellence to help your leaders adapt and inspire. They've navigated complex changes themselves and know how to guide others through transformation.
3. **Leadership capacities built to last:** We go beyond skill building to develop lasting capacities—like seeing the big picture and navigating uncertainty—so your leaders take charge of change instead of just reacting to it.
4. **Contextual coaching feedback loop:** We create a living connection between coaching conversations and organizational growth. Through an ongoing feedback loop, coaches capture emerging patterns and insights (while keeping sessions private) to help you see what's really happening.
5. **We practice what we coach:** At Torch, we walk the talk. Coaching isn't just what we do—it's how we grow. By learning alongside you, we keep our approach real, relevant, and impactful.

Your path forward

Leadership coaching isn't just another development program—it's a fundamental shift in how organizations build the capacities needed to thrive in today's complex environment.

By following these five strategies, you're not just making a case for budget approval. You're advocating for a new approach to leadership development that connects individual growth to organizational transformation.

Organizations that invest in developing their leaders' fundamental capacities don't just perform better today—they build the resilience, adaptability, and human connection that create sustainable success.

We know this journey requires commitment and vision. That's why we're here to help you every step of the way.

Looking for a thought partner?


We'd love to talk through your specific challenges and opportunities. Let's explore how Torch can help you create the leadership your organization needs—not just for today, but for **the future you're building.**



STAKEHOLDER BUY-IN WORKSHEET

STEP 1: QUANTIFY THE BUSINESS IMPACT OF INACTION

- What leadership execution gaps are directly affecting business performance?
- Where is leadership turnover or team disengagement impacting revenue or customer outcomes?
- How are decision delays or execution problems affecting market responsiveness?
- What happens to quarterly performance if leadership effectiveness remains unchanged?

 *Use actual business examples and financial implications to make the stakes compelling.*

STEP 2: MAP KEY APPROVERS AND CHAMPIONS

- Who controls the budget allocation for this investment? (Executive, Finance, HR)
- Who faces the most direct business impact from improved leadership?
- What specific objections will each stakeholder likely raise?

 *Engage decision-makers early by connecting coaching to urgent business objectives.*

STEP 3: DEFINE SPECIFIC BUSINESS OUTCOMES

What are the top 2-3 business priorities that coaching will directly impact?


- Faster strategic execution and decision velocity
- Improved cross-functional collaboration

- Increased revenue performance and market responsiveness
- Enhanced talent retention and succession readiness
- Other: _____

 *Frame coaching as a direct solution to high-priority business challenges.*


STEP 4: 90-DAY SHIFT - IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

- Which leaders will deliver the highest business impact if coached? (Consider strategic position, team size, performance leverage)
- What specific performance metrics will demonstrate early business impact?
- Who will own implementation and accountability for results?

 *Torch helps you launch a high-impact program that clarifies your leadership landscape and builds a roadmap for transformation.*

STEP 5: ANTICIPATE & ADDRESS OBJECTIONS

- What business case elements will each stakeholder need to see?
- What competitor benchmarks or industry comparisons strengthen your case?
- How will coaching results be communicated to leadership?

 *Use specific outcomes, economic data, and business impact examples to neutralize potential objections.*