



Transforming Together: How to Leverage Group Coaching for Business Impact

Introduction



Organizations today are on the lookout for ways to boost growth, connection, and belonging among their employees. This is no surprise, considering that companies with high employee engagement are 23% more profitable than those with low engagement.

There are a multitude of ways to support employees — from virtual training, to in-person sessions, to learning courses. However, there's a component missing in all of these options: **learning through connection.**

For instance, training programs are good for delivering information, but they are often lacking when it comes to sustainable behavior change, which is crucial for driving employee satisfaction, increasing retention, and boosting organizational ROI. In-person training offers peer connection, but again, doesn't always drive lasting change. 1-on-1 coaching is ideal for providing individualized support in developing skills, but is also... individual.

So, what brings it all together? What supports and sustains the learning of individual coaching while adding the richness of peer interaction? **Answer: group coaching.**

This e-book dives into what group coaching is, when it should be used, how to structure a successful group coaching program, and what to look at when measuring impact.

What is group coaching?



Group coaching leverages the **collective knowledge and wisdom** of a group of individuals who share common problems or identities. In this setting, a qualified coach works with all members of a group, guiding them as they share — and work through — goals or challenges.

It's important to note that the focus of group coaching is not to improve the dynamics of existing teams. Instead, it's to **facilitate discussions and peer learning** to help participants build critical skills while working through real-life scenarios.

Benefits of group coaching

Group coaching provides the connection and accountability participants need to grow, all while accelerating growth by learning from their peers. Here are **four main reasons why HR leaders choose to incorporate group coaching** into their L&D programs:



PEER LEARNING

Group coaching enables participants to solve problems and gain skills by sharing their own experiences and learning from others. At Torch, our group coaching is structured so participants spend the majority of sessions engaging in discussions, rather than consuming content in a workshop-style environment.



CONNECTION & BELONGING

Employees often work with a relatively small percentage of people within their organization, especially at enterprise companies. Group coaching gives participants an opportunity to branch out beyond their teams and network with cross-functional colleagues that expand their professional support networks.



ORGANIZATIONAL ALIGNMENT

With group coaching, it's easy to align employees around organizational objectives, and to help participants focus on building skills that help them succeed within your organization.

For example, organizations running a new manager L&D program may want managers to develop skills related to a specific set of values. Torch's group coaching programs ensure that participants receive the same coaching experience, with shared alignment around organizational goals.



COMPLEMENTS 1:1 COACHING

Group coaching enhances the 1:1 coaching experience by adding peer support and shared learning. Group coaching is a powerful complement to 1:1 coaching in the majority of coaching use-cases, and can take place alongside, before, or after 1:1 coaching sessions.

When to use group coaching



Group coaching thrives in environments where there's a need for collective growth. It's most impactful for groups of employees who, regardless of what they are working on professionally, **share a similar experience or identity** — such as being a new manager, leading through a restructure, or becoming a parent.

Other scenarios where group coaching is powerful include:

- Employees are underperforming or missing key relational skills
- Identifying and preparing employees for promotion
- Managing low engagement and/or retention in underrepresented groups
- Aligning newly hired leaders with organizational culture and standards

Six Use Cases for Group Coaching

One of the core benefits of group coaching is that it can effectively tackle **shared business priorities**. These six use cases – while common to many organizations – each take on their own flavor due to every company’s unique culture.

Think about how these use cases would apply in your workplace and how group coaching could play a role.

1

NEW MANAGERS

Group coaching provides new leaders with the necessary skills to navigate the transition from IC to manager by providing camaraderie and support, exposure to new perspectives, and constructive feedback from peers.

2

MIDDLE MANAGERS

Middle managers play a pivotal role in translating organizational strategies into actionable plans. Group coaching programs help them drive organizational success through shared learning and access to new insights and best practices.

3

LEADING THROUGH CHANGE

In today’s volatile business environment, leaders must navigate uncertainty and change with resilience. Group coaching can equip leaders with the mindset and strategies to lead through turbulent times while maintaining team morale and performance.

4

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the cornerstone of successful leadership and team collaboration. Group coaching focused on effective communication equips participants with tools to enhance clarity, empathy, and understanding in their interactions.

5

UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS

For employees of underrepresented groups, feeling a sense of belonging and confidence in their identity is vital to their satisfaction and impact at work. Group coaching provides individuals with a support group of individuals with shared backgrounds, while increasing retention for employers.

6

BECOMING A MORE EFFECTIVE LEADER

For leaders, developing coaching skills is integral to fostering a culture of empowerment and continuous improvement within teams. Group coaching programs help leaders cultivate a coaching mindset to build stronger teams.

Key elements that make or break a group coaching program



Before launching a group coaching program, there are a number of important elements that contribute to program success.

1 Participant selection

Participant selection can significantly impact **program engagement**, which is a key factor in the program's success. Groups are more effective when members **share challenges, skill gaps, or social identities** — for example, aspiring women leaders or first-time managers.

Here are **three important questions** to consider before selecting participants for a group coaching program:

1. Are any potential group members close colleagues or members of the same team?

Too much familiarity within a group can make establishing rapport among all members more challenging. On top of that, having members of the same team in a group can skew discussions towards team-specific issues.

2. Are potential group members interested & committed to learning new skills, and willing to support their colleagues in learning new skills?

It is critical to choose participants who are excited to learn in this context, support their peers, and commit to attending the majority of group coaching sessions.

3. Do group members have similar job levels?

Selecting group members with similar job levels eliminates power dynamics that could negatively impact coaching outcomes. It also increases the likelihood that group members view the group as a safe space where they can be honest and vulnerable.

2

Scheduling, consistency and engagement

Scheduling

Attendance and availability are a must when it comes to creating a successful group experience. Specifically, ensure that all participants can attend the first meeting, which is crucial for developing rapport.

Coach Consistency

Assign the same coach to all groups within a program. This provides consistency within different cohorts, and ensures that participants are growing in alignment with each other and the organization.

Engagement

Successful group coaching programs are only possible if group members are engaged. Remove any obstacles to participation – for example, ensure managers are on board with employees attending sessions.

At Torch, we also help sustain engagement by giving participants additional resources to support their growth via the Torch platform.

Measuring the impact of your group coaching program



As with any investment, demonstrating the effectiveness of group coaching is crucial. So, how can organizations measure the true impact of their group coaching program?

The good news: it's totally possible. By developing and incorporating a thoughtful measurement strategy at the start of the program, organizations can unveil the program's effectiveness and make a compelling case for its continued success.

Build your measurement strategy using the four pillars outlined on the next page.

Four pillars to successfully measure program impact



1

ESTABLISH PROGRAM GOALS

The first step is to **clearly define program goals and connect them to broader business objectives**. For instance, you might aim to cultivate stronger communication skills in managers, or help leaders stay resilient through periods of change.

2

COMBINE QUANTITATIVE & QUALITATIVE DATA

The beauty of group coaching lies in its ability to address individual needs within a collaborative setting. Based on that, a successful measurement strategy should incorporate a mix of quantitative and qualitative data:

Quantitative Data: Surveys and assessments before, during, and after group coaching to gauge progress in specific skill areas relevant to program goals. Additional metrics, like engagement or participant satisfaction rates, can also be tracked over time to identify program impact.

Qualitative Data: Focus groups, testimonials, and open-ended survey questions can provide rich insights into participant experiences and the program's overall impact and paint a more vivid and human picture of the program's impact.

3

CAPTURE DATA AT MULTIPLE POINTS THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM

Creating a meaningful measurement strategy hinges on creating a base of data from which you can compare ongoing results. It's important to collect data before, during, and after the program.

- **Pre-coaching surveys** are essential because they help establish a baseline for the rest of the program.
- **Mid-point surveys** help track progress, as well as identify areas for potential mid-course adjustments.
- **Post-coaching surveys** measure final participant growth and provide a look back at overall program effectiveness.

4

TIE RESULTS TO BUSINESS METRICS

For any program, showcasing ROI is paramount to its longevity. For instance, did coaching lead to increased productivity, decreased employee turnover, or improved customer satisfaction? By **connecting program goals to quantifiable business metrics**, HR leaders can demonstrate the program's positive impact on the bottom line.

Measurement isn't just about the past; it's about shaping the future. Companies can improve future iterations of their group coaching programs by leveraging the data they receive from previous programs, and create even more effective growth opportunities for their people.

Why measure group coaching?



Measurement is about more than demonstrating the return on investment to your organization's leaders and decision-makers. It's first and foremost about ensuring the program is delivering the intended results for participants. It answers the question: Did this program achieve the outcomes expected and needed by the participants?

Effective measurement allows businesses to understand what's working and not working to continuously refine and improve their programs, maximizing impact for both participants and the organization.

Wrapping Up



This e-book has explored the various facets of group coaching, from its core principles and benefits to its practical application and measurement strategies. We've seen how **group coaching fosters peer learning, organizational alignment, and connection & belonging.**

We've also explored key considerations for designing and implementing a successful group coaching program, including participant selection, scheduling, coach consistency, and engagement strategies. Finally, we emphasized the importance of measuring program impact and highlighted the value of combining quantitative and qualitative data to **demonstrate the program's effectiveness and ROI.**

Group coaching offers a compelling solution for organizations seeking to invest in the growth and development of their workforce. By fostering a collaborative learning environment and capitalizing on the power of collective intelligence, group coaching empowers employees to achieve their full potential and **contribute to the organization's success.**

To learn more about how you can offer group coaching at your organization and what it looks like in other organizations, [check out the recording](#) of our conversation with **Samera Edwards, Program Manager, Equity, Inclusion & Diversity at Waymo**, or [schedule a call with us here.](#)