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The Coaching at Work Survey

2002



Foreword

Workplace learning is developing dramatically. What was delivered in a classroom is now experienced online. What once took a day now only lasts an hour. Where managers and training departments sometimes existed in separate worlds, learning and development are increasingly being seen as a source of competitive advantage and, therefore, everyone's responsibility.

Coaching has been growing considerably as a key element of workforce development. Whether it is part of an ongoing programme of continuous improvement or used specifically to support an individual through a period of change, it can be extremely helpful.

The findings in this survey are unequivocal.

Managers value coaching and are not getting enough of it. Managers recognise that what is good for them is good for everyone.

In today's fast moving business environment there is a strong case now for coaching to be made available to *all* employees. Everyone needs a critical friend at work to support their own growth. Organisations which recognise the importance of this kind of investment will increasingly be seen as the kind of employers people want to work for.



Bill Lucas,
Chief Executive, Campaign for Learning

At Lloyds TSB, we know that people are our primary differentiator in a highly competitive market and we are committed to providing them with excellent development opportunities.

Coaching forms the core of much of our learning activity and, since the launch of some major coaching initiatives, we have seen a significant improvement in our staff survey scores in this area.

We have integrated coaching into the design and delivery of training across all our distribution channels, from face-to-face through to online learning. Courses on coaching are easily accessible to all staff through a network of over 2,000 multimedia PCs or they can access learning online through the University for Lloyds TSB website on both the intranet and Internet. There are also 85 fully trained career coaches to help staff with their career decisions.

Coaching is a very cost-effective way of improving staff performance and the results of this research clearly show that people value this type of support.

This research confirms the benefits of making coaching as widely available as possible.

Dave Schofield
Centre for Leadership
Lloyds TSB

Background

The Chartered Management Institute and Campaign for Learning, supported by Lloyds TSB, have conducted a survey into learning at work, focusing on the informal learning method of coaching. This is to coincide with National Learning at Work Day, a day set aside to highlight the benefits of providing learning opportunities to all staff and making learning a part of everyday working life.

Coaching, as defined by Campaign for Learning, is a one-to-one approach to workforce development. It involves a team leader or manager helping people to develop greater self-awareness, to improve their skills and take on new responsibilities. Coaching is generally seen to be a helpful relationship where the coach provides tips, guidance and support.

Previous research conducted by the Chartered Management Institute such as *Achieving Management Excellence*, published in June 2000, has shown that coaching is increasing in popularity as a learning tool. While 41 per cent of small organisations undertook coaching activities in 1996, this increased to 74 per cent in 2000.

Self-completion questionnaires were sent in March 2002 to a nationally representative sample of 3,000 individual Institute members, drawn across all management levels, sectors and size of organisation. Two hundred and eighty replies were received, a response rate of nine per cent.

Key findings

Extent of coaching

- The majority of UK organisations have coaching programmes in place, whether through a formal coaching programme available to all employees (18 per cent), a formal programme for senior management only (five per cent), or coaching on an ad-hoc basis (44 per cent).

Base: 280 respondents	%
Have coached others	51
No set programme, but coaching on an ad-hoc basis	44
Personally experienced coaching	33
No coaching takes place in my organisation	21
Formal coaching programme for all employees	18
Formal coaching programme for senior management only	5
No programme, but plans to introduce one soon	4

Table 1 Existence of coaching in organisation

- There are many development opportunities experienced by managers that are not necessarily formal courses, programmes or seminars. Twenty per cent report more informal than formal training in their organisation and 38 per cent more formal than informal, while 34 per cent have an even mixture of both types of training.
- The survey finds that, perhaps not surprisingly, formal training programmes are more prevalent in larger organisations with 42 per cent of organisations with more than 100 employees citing more formal than informal training in their organisation. Conversely, just 26 per cent of those organisations with fewer than 100 employees have more formal than informal training. Thirty-four per cent have an even mixture of both types of training.

Reasons for coaching

- Just over a third of respondents cite that organisational change/restructuring was the trigger for a coaching programme to be introduced.

Base: 231	%
Structural change in organisation	34
Staff motivation	29
Demand from managers	22
Retention of staff	15

Table 2 Triggers for coaching

- Managers generally have to request their coaching sessions, although in 19 per cent of cases the Director or Line Manager initiates the coaching session.
- Generally, managers are coached by their line managers (16 per cent), although another 16 per cent coach themselves! Just 13 per cent have had an outside coach, and again outside coaches are more likely to be employed by larger organisations.
- Of those who have experienced coaching in their organisation, 59 per cent have had sessions during the past 12 months with 28 per cent of these having had three or more coaching sessions over the year.
- An overwhelming 80 per cent of managers believe that they would benefit from coaching/more coaching in their place of work – a clear indication that this is a learning and development method that appeals to most people, and should be carefully considered by organisations.

Base: 280	%
IT skills	37
Personal effectiveness	33
Emotional intelligence	26
Assertiveness	24
Task-specific skills	24
Time management	23
Communication skills	21
Listening skills	8
Learning skills	7
Other	5

Table 3 Managers' perceived skills needs

- As can be seen from Table 3 above, managers nowadays are keen to develop their IT skills, their personal effectiveness and their emotional intelligence. This reflects the growing reliance on technology in the workplace and the need to keep abreast of IT developments. Softer skills such as emotional intelligence and assertiveness continue to grow in importance reflecting the need for team working and good interpersonal skills.
- Just over half of managers (51 per cent) report that they have coached others. As one would expect, the percentage increases with seniority (43 per cent of junior managers have coached others, compared to 67 per cent of those at Managing Director level).

- It appears that the majority of respondents are satisfied with the ability of their coach, and similarly 46 per cent of all managers who have coaching in their organisation are happy in terms of the success of the session.
- However, a quarter feel that there is not enough time set aside for coaching and 21 per cent feel that they do not receive enough recognition for the effort they personally put into the sessions.

Successful coaching

- Although 14 per cent of organisations conduct executive coaching and five per cent of organisations solely have a coaching programme for senior management, an overwhelming 93 per cent of managers believe that coaching should be available to **all** employees regardless of seniority.
- As seen in Table 4, managers are even more adamant that for a coaching session to be successful, feedback is of great importance (96 per cent). They can also see the benefits that coaching has for enhancing team morale (85 per cent) and agree that objectives for the session must be agreed beforehand (83 per cent) if it is to be a success. The findings that around 80 per cent disagreed with the statements that '*coaching is just another fad*' and that '*coaching is too time-consuming*' suggest a widespread acceptance of the principles behind the method by managers.

Base: 280	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neither %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
Coaching should be available to all employees regardless of seniority	55	38	3	2	0
Coaching enhances team morale	42	43	13	1	0
Coaching can work in isolation from other learning activities	17	41	15	23	1
Coaching is an opportunity to monitor the individual	16	51	16	14	3
Coaching is good at generating responsibility on the part of the learner	20	60	15	3	0
Objectives must be agreed beforehand	33	50	11	5	0
Feedback is essential	56	40	2	1	0
Coaches must have training before they start to coach someone	42	38	14	5	0
Not everyone will make a good coach	39	42	7	7	4
Coaching is a waste of resources	1	2	8	47	40
Coaching is too time-consuming	0	3	16	45	33
Coaching is just another fad	1	4	16	42	35
There are more appropriate training methods	1	6	50	29	12
Coaching is something that can only be conducted by large organisations	1	4	11	50	28

Table 4 Agreement with workplace coaching statements

Types of coaching

- Eight out of ten managers have heard of mentoring and a similar number (79 per cent) have heard of personal coaching. Other coaching methods such as coaching via the Internet (32 per cent), executive coaching (31 per cent) and telephone coaching (25 per cent) are less well-known.

- Personal coaching (59 per cent) and mentoring (53 per cent) are the two most commonly used coaching techniques, although executive coaching (14 per cent) also takes place in a number of organisations.
- Coaching can take place outside of the workplace as well. For example, 28 per cent of managers have coached at a sports club or exercise group, 24 per cent have coached volunteers and 17 per cent have coached individuals at youth groups such as the Brownies, Cubs and Scouts.

Training in general

- Over half (59 per cent) of managers are satisfied with their individual training, and this figure increases to an encouraging 73 per cent regarding individual learning.
- A quarter of managers are unhappy with the overall amount of training received. Perhaps surprisingly, this is particularly true for those in organisations with more than 100 employees, maybe because managers in these organisations have higher expectations and are more ambitious.
- It would appear that managers are not particularly satisfied with the amount of career advice or counselling provided in their organisation although many people might argue that it is up to the individual to seek advice on such matters away from their place of work. Perhaps more worrying is the fact that nearly a third of managers (32 per cent) are dissatisfied with the support and interest shown in their development by their line managers, something which is undoubtedly needed in a learning organisation.

Personal development

- Almost half of those surveyed (48 per cent) would seek advice about their own personal development from their manager. Colleagues would be contacted in four out of ten cases, and friends outside work in 32 per cent of cases. A quarter would seek advice from their mentor or coach.
- The public figure that managers would most like to have as a personal development coach is Richard Branson (39 per cent) followed by the well-known management guru Charles Handy (19 per cent).

Base: 280	Would most like %
Richard Branson	39
Charles Handy	19
Tony Blair	9
Sven Goran Eriksson	6
Alex Ferguson	6
Sharon Davies	3
Lenny Henry	3
Trevor McDonald	3
Anita Roddick	3
Miriam Stoppard	2
Jonathan Cainer	1
Graham Norton	1

Table 5 Most popular public figures as coach

Conclusions

- Coaching as a method of learning already takes place in the majority of organisations. However, this is often on an ad-hoc basis. One in five report that there is no coaching programme in place at all.
- Coaching is especially effective as one of a range of learning activities and training processes, where an individual or learner has potential that can best be developed through a focused individual relationship with a more experienced and senior colleague.
- A significant minority of managers are not satisfied with their own learning opportunities.
- Managers are extremely positive about the benefits of coaching and agree that it helps to motivate employees, enhances team morale, generates responsibility on the part of the learner, and helps to retain staff.
- Managers also believe that coaching is a workplace technique that should be available to **all** employees regardless of seniority, and also suggest that this technique can be embraced by all organisations regardless of size.
- Four out of five managers think that they would benefit from coaching/more coaching.

Recommendations

- Coaching should be made more widely available to managers.
- Organisations should consider extending coaching to all employees, building on successful workplace initiatives already in existence.
- Giving and receiving feedback should be seen as a key responsibility of all managers as part of a ‘coaching culture’.
- The approach to the coaching session and the detailed steps and actions within them work best when they are discussed and agreed with the learner beforehand.
- Remember that the successful coach relies on a range of other skills, especially the communication skills of questioning, listening and giving constructive feedback: it isn’t all instruction. It is important to accept the learner’s mistakes when tackling new tasks – learning by doing means working out why something may not have worked, and planning better ways next time.

Chartered Management Institute

As the champion of management, the Institute shapes and supports the managers of tomorrow helping them deliver results in a dynamic world. It helps set and raise standards in management, encouraging development to improve performance. Moreover with in-depth research and regular policy surveys of its 91,000 individual members and 520 corporate members, the Institute has a deep understanding of the key issues.

The Chartered Management Institute came into being on 1 April 2002, as a result of the Institute of Management being granted a Royal Charter.

Contact details:

The Public Affairs Department, Chartered Management Institute
2 Savoy Court, Strand, London WC2R 0EZ

Tel: 020 7421 2704 Fax: 020 7497 0463

email: research@managers.org.uk website: www.managers.org.uk

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Campaign for Learning

Founded in 1997, the Campaign for Learning is an independent charity working to create an appetite in individuals that will sustain them for life. The campaign aims to achieve this through a combination of public awareness campaigns, publications, research, grant giving demonstration projects, pilot schemes, policy events, and regional support programmes and initiatives. It focuses on the three broad areas: learning at work, family learning and learning how to learn more effectively.

The Campaign for Learning has co-ordinated Learning at Work Day for the past four years as part of Adult Learners Week. The aim of the day is to make learning a part of everyday working life and highlight the benefits of providing learning opportunities to all staff.

In 2001 Learning at Work Day involved an estimated 2,500 employers. These included Centrica, Unilever, British Gas, National Grid, Esso, Lloyds TSB as well as numerous local authorities, colleges and small businesses. Approximately 500,000 employees were given the opportunity to participate in learning activities ranging from juggling and hat making to job swapping and French lessons. The Campaign estimates a doubling of take up for 2002.

Learning at Work Day is supported by the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Trade and Industry. For regular updates on Learning at Work Day – Tel: 0117 966 7755

Contact details:

email: campaign@cflearning.org.uk website www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk

Registered charity number: 1064113 Company Ltd by guarantee number 3380789

London – 19 Buckingham Street, London WC1N 6EF
Tel: 020 7930 1111 Fax: 020 7930 1551

Southern Region – Tel: 01823 660040 Fax: 01823 666694

Midland Region – Tel/Fax: 0121 6430774

Northern Region – Tel/Fax: 01925 419013

