

Research Report Summary: The State of Coaching & Mentoring 2020

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ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)

Coaching and mentoring have been among the most used and, at times, misused talent management practices for decades. At their best, these practices help individuals realize their potential and propel their careers.

FULL TEXT

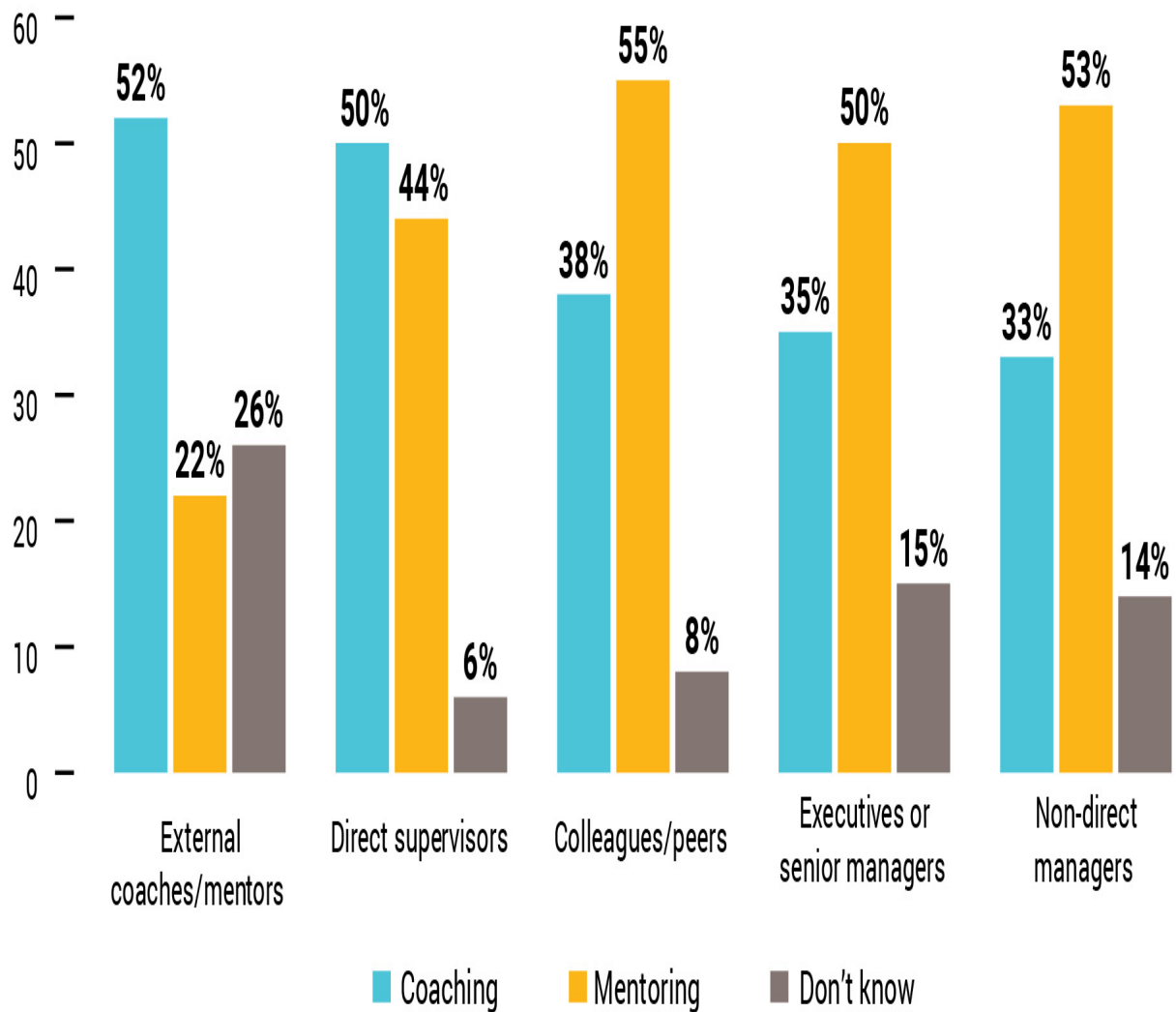
Survey Question: Of the list below, which three will be the top reasons for using coaching/mentoring programs in your organization in the future? (select up to three)



Only 28% believe that one of the top reasons for using coaching/mentoring programs is to provide career guidance

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Survey Question: Who does the coaching and mentoring in your organization? (select all that apply)



Half of organizations say external coaches and direct supervisors conduct coaching

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State of the Industry Research

The State of Coaching & Mentoring 2020

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Coaching and mentoring have been among the most used and, at times, misused talent management practices for

decades. At their best, these practices help individuals realize their potential and propel their careers. For organizations, they can expedite the building of a strong talent pipeline, foster a culture of collaboration and innovation, and enhance performance. Yet, despite the enormous potential of effective coaching and mentoring, many organizations fail to get it right. Such failures can lead to disengaged employees, turnover, and unrealized potential.

To better understand potential best practices and what the future holds, HR.com's HR Research Institute conducted an extensive study of human resources (HR) professionals and developed a full report, ***The State of Coaching & Mentoring 2020.***

This research was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, so responses reflect the views of HR professionals fully aware of related problems and uncertainties.

Key Findings

- * Coaching and mentoring will increase in importance over the next two years
- * Despite the importance of coaching and mentoring, few organizations say that more than half of their coaches or mentors are highly effective
- * The pandemic will fuel an increase in technology to bolster the effectiveness and reach of coaching
- * There are some key differences in who does coaching versus mentoring
- * Among organizations with coaches, about half do not provide formal training in coaching skills
- * Coaching and mentoring have a positive impact on both individual development and organizational performance

How Critical is Coaching and Mentoring?

Among those with knowledge of their programs, 74% of respondents indicate that their organizations have coaching programs and 77% indicate they have mentoring programs.¹ Among those with a coaching program, 56% say they have had such a program for four years or less, and only a quarter say their organizations have had their programs for more than ten years. Among those with a mentoring program, 47% say they have had such a program for four years or less, and 24% say their organizations have had their programs for more than ten years.

Larger and smaller organizations are similar in the length of time they have had coaching programs in place. However, there are considerable differences when it comes to mentoring. Larger organizations are far more likely to have a mentoring program in place for a longer period. Twenty-nine percent of the smaller company respondents have had a mentoring program in place for five years or more, compared to 49% for larger companies. Fifty-six percent either agree or strongly agree that coaching is currently an important practice. However, only half feel the same way about mentoring.

Forty-seven percent plan on placing a greater emphasis on coaching over the next two years. Forty-nine percent will do the same for mentoring. These findings could be driven by the need for coaching in the younger and less experienced workforce, the increasing pace of change, and currently, the need for more encouragement and support during the massive uncertainty associates are facing in light of the recent pandemic and economic downturn.

What Are the Top Reasons for Using Coaching and Mentoring Programs?

When asked to indicate the top three reasons for using coaching and mentoring in the future, most respondents (58%) cited "providing guidance to help others realize their potential." The second and third most widely cited reasons are tied: "preparing a pool of talent to fill future roles" and "preparing people for new roles and assignments," each chosen by 49% of respondents.

These are all positive, forward-looking applications for coaching and mentoring that should lead to increased employee engagement and organizational future readiness.

Are Organizations Instilling a Coaching Culture?

A coaching culture is one where coaching and mentoring happen frequently and freely throughout the organization. It becomes a core value, and it is characterized by a high degree of trust and honest communication. The research explored eight factors related to a strong coaching culture. On a positive note, 68% of HR professionals agree or strongly agree "that their organizations encourage employees to be mentored," and 63% say

the same about encouraging employees to be coached.

Two-thirds agree or strongly agree that “employees are offered a range of L&D activities,” one key to employee development cultures. High ratings also go to “managers help others to grow professionally.”

What Are the Most Prevalent Barriers to Effective Coaching and Mentoring?

Seventy-three percent indicate that there is not enough time to coach or mentor due to other priorities. Closely related to insufficient time is the notion that coaching and mentoring sessions occur too infrequently, cited as a barrier by 49%. Another widely-cited hindrance (59%) is that “managers avoid holding difficult and truthful conversations.” Forty-three percent cite low skill levels of managers as a barrier to effective coaching.

Respondents from larger organizations are more likely than those from smaller ones to report that insufficient time for coaching/mentoring is a barrier (79% vs. 71%). They also report greater concerns about devoting too much time to poor performers (39% vs. 31%) and about lack of rewards and/or recognitions for those who excel at coaching/mentoring (38% vs. 27%).

Who Actually Does Coaching and Mentoring In Organizations?

External coaches (52%) and direct supervisors (50%) are the most commonly cited sources for coaching. Direct managers, in contrast, are largely accountable for team performance and have a direct line of sight to their team members. Colleagues/peers, non-direct managers and executives/senior leaders are most likely to serve as mentors. Mentors are relatively unlikely to come from outside the organization. Just 22% of organizations say external personnel serve as mentors.

How Effective Are Coaches and Mentors?

The most critical ingredient of any coaching and mentoring initiatives is the effectiveness of those doing it. Yet, among organizations that have coaching roles, only 34% say that more than half of their coaches are highly effective, and just 16% say more than three-quarters of their coaches are highly effective. Among those with mentoring roles, only 39% say that more than half of their mentors are highly effective, and just 12% say more than three quarters of their mentors are highly effective.

Only a slim minority of HR professionals feel their coaches and mentors excel in seven key areas. In fact, no more than 34% of HR professionals believe that coaches or mentors are very effective in any of these areas.

Overall, coaches are better than mentors at skills such as asking questions to generate insights (33% versus 24%), holding difficult conversations (22% versus 12%), and helping others to develop strategies to meet their goals (31% versus 25%).

How Is Workforce Technology Impacting Coaching and Mentoring?

Seventy-one percent of organizations are, to some extent or a large extent, relying on remote/virtual coaching and mentoring in light of the current coronavirus pandemic. It is likely some of these solutions were in place before the crisis but are becoming more prevalent as many organizations have embraced remote work to keep employees safe from contagion.

Only 9% of organizations are currently using an AI-based tool to enhance their coaching efforts, and most (64%) have no intention of doing so. However, more than a quarter (27%) intend to adopt such a tool over the next two years.

Does Coaching and Mentoring Bolster Performance?

Seventy-one percent agree/strongly agree that coaching leads to improved individual development; 70% feel the same about mentoring.

Similarly, 67% agree/strongly agree that coaching leads to improved organizational performance, with the same percentage feeling the same way about mentoring. These findings support the proposition that coaching and mentoring play a central role in effective talent development.

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