

2025

Leadership Coaching Effectiveness



Annual Research Study on the Impact of
Leadership Coaching



DION LEADERSHIP

A Gallagher Company



INTRODUCTION

In 2025, leadership development continued to be a strategic imperative for Chief Learning Officers (CLOs) and Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs). Organizations operated in an environment defined by accelerated digital transformation, heightened employee expectations, and persistent economic uncertainty. Leaders were tasked with balancing innovation and resilience while fostering inclusive cultures in increasingly hybrid and globally distributed workplaces.

These dynamics amplified the demand for leadership coaching as a critical lever for organizational success. Coaching engagements were no longer viewed as remedial but as essential for equipping leaders to navigate complexity, drive engagement, and sustain performance. Our sixth annual Leadership Coaching Effectiveness Study reflects this shift, with record-breaking participation and deeper insights into how coaching impacts leadership effectiveness and organizational outcomes.

Leadership coaching has become a critical lever for equipping leaders to navigate organizational complexity, employee engagement, and performance.

About Dion Leadership and This Study

Dion Leadership is recognized as a trusted partner in developing leaders and building high-performing teams through coaching, assessments, and leadership development programs.

In 2025, Dion Leadership was acquired by Gallagher, strengthening our combined ability to deliver innovative leadership solutions on a global scale. As part of Gallagher's People Development & Insights practice, Dion Leadership continues its commitment to advancing leadership effectiveness and will proudly carry forward this annual Leadership Coaching Effectiveness Study, providing organizations with actionable insights to navigate today's dynamic workplace.



STUDY DETAILS

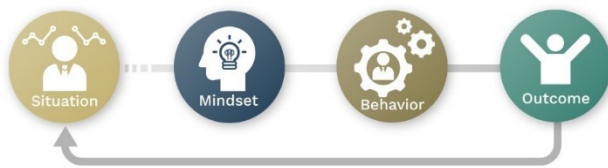


- We contacted 160 leaders who completed coaching engagements after January 2024. We received responses from 109 leaders—a 68% response rate.
- Leaders surveyed typically hold the title of manager, director, vice president, or C-level executive.
- Participants represent multiple industries and hold a variety of jobs.
- Participants received between 4 and 25 individual coaching sessions that spanned in length from 3 to 12 months, either as a stand-alone program or as part of a comprehensive leadership development cohort program.

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What Is Leadership Coaching?

Leadership coaching is a targeted leadership development process designed to meet the unique needs of the individual leader. A leadership coach is a “thinking partner” whose specific purpose is to support the development of an individual’s personal and professional potential.



To create sustainable change, we follow a cognitive behavioral learning approach to coaching. This proven method helps a coachee explore situations with a new perspective, understand themselves in new ways, create new mindsets for approaching situations, and build new, more productive habits.

Our leadership coaches are typically previous executive-level leaders themselves. They have honed their leadership skills by leading others for decades before receiving a coaching education and certification. We select coaches who have strong emotional intelligence skills as a complement to their business and leadership aptitude and experience.

A key element that makes our coaching engagements successful is our coach match process. We encourage all coachees to conduct “chemistry calls” before selecting the coach who best meets their needs. Additionally, our coaches use a proven coaching process.



The Results ...

Coaching Consistently Improves Performance

Nearly all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements.

Leadership coaching provided me insights that helped me perform better in my role.

2025	96%
2024	95%
2023	95%
2022	95%
2021	97%
2020	83%

Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree with statement

As a result of my leadership coaching, I am better equipped to utilize new behaviors required of me at work.

2025	93%
2024	93%
2023	93%
2022	95%
2021	97%
2020	93%

Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree with statement

While the outcomes may fluctuate by a point or two annually, coachees consistently indicate that coaching offered them valuable insights and new behaviors to improve their work performance.



Overall Satisfaction

64
NPS

Customer satisfaction remains a critical measure for all businesses, and the **Net Promoter Score (NPS)** continues to be a leading standard. We strive for raving fans of coaching—not only for our business but for the organizations that trust us to develop their most valuable leaders.

Our calculated NPS score for the question “How likely are you to recommend leadership coaching to others?” is +64, up from +62 in 2024. How does this compare? NPS scores range from –100 to +100. According to SurveyMonkey’s 2024 global benchmark data, the average NPS across all industries was +32, and for professional services, the average was +43. While updated 2025 benchmarks are still emerging, our score positions us well above industry norms and near the top quartile for professional services organizations.

Leader Confidence

Confidence is the cornerstone of courageous leadership. Leaders’ ability to face adversity, actively lead during contentious times, and do so without increasing their stress level creates healthy leaders that deliver strong outcomes.

92%

Most coachees surveyed (92%) said that coaching improved their confidence. The confidence score improved by 5 percentage points this year, up from 87% agreement in 2024.

My overall confidence as a leader has improved because of leadership coaching.

2025	92%
2024	87%
2023	84%
2022	94%
2021	90%

Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree with statement

66% report improved well-being

My overall well-being (stress, health, focus, burnout) has improved because of leadership coaching.

Well-being remains a critical employee imperative in 2025, yet stress and burnout continue to challenge organizations. Two-thirds of employers (67%) report concern about the impact of these issues on engagement and retention.¹ External pressures like inflation and sociopolitical uncertainty, combined with internal factors such as rapid AI adoption and heavier workloads, are fueling this strain. While turnover has stabilized compared to prior years, disengagement persists, and many employees describe their work as transactional.

Employers are responding with well-being initiatives—97% of employers offer at least one emotional well-being program, and 95% provide career well-being support.¹ Still, gaps remain in manager training and proactive stress management. Leadership coaching plays a vital role in addressing these challenges: **two out of three coachees (66%) report improvements in their well-being as a direct result of coaching, marking a 1-point increase from 2024.** Coaching equips leaders to model resilience, foster connection, and create environments where employees can thrive.



These are two of the most important findings in our data, proving a significant return on investment for coaching programs.

Improving leader well-being and keeping just one key leader from leaving the organization can create a positive ROI for your entire leadership development budget.

75% say coaching increases desire to stay

Leadership coaching positively impacted my desire to stay with the organization.

Retention remained a top HR priority in 2025, with 59% of organizations ranking it as their number-one people strategy.¹ Our coaching data supports this important imperative: 75% of coachees report that leadership coaching positively impacted their desire to stay with their organization, up four points from 71% in 2024. Even participants with as few as four coaching sessions expressed this sentiment, underscoring the powerful link between development investment and retention.

The participants in this study are manager, director, vice president, or C-level executive level. The organizational impact of losing someone at this level is even greater. Impacting the intent to stay for three out of four coachees creates a strong ROI for this leadership development investment.

¹ [Gallagher's 2025 U.S. Workforce Trends Report: Talent Benchmarks](#)

Coaching for a Stronger Talent Pipeline

For the third year in a row, we studied coaching's impact on an organization's talent pipeline. It's important to note that this data is impacted by overall movement in the labor market. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. quit rates have steadily declined since the peak of the Great Resignation in 2022, signaling a cooling labor market. Fewer employees leaving companies means fewer opportunities for promotion. While this year's data shows fewer coachees reporting promotions, it is balanced by a significant increase in coachees assuming greater responsibility—a strong indicator.



	2023	2024	2025
I have increased responsibilities.	21%	28%	35%
There has been no change in my role.	21%	37%	32%
I have been promoted.	24%	18%	17%
I have been able to change aspects of my job to better fit my interests.	33%	16%	14%

This study does not continue to follow the career path of these coachees. We hypothesize that it might take more than a year for promotions to take place, especially with fewer jobs in these more senior levels of the organization.

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The Power of Extraordinary Coaches

We asked respondents to provide any additional feedback on their specific coaches. The comments on this page illustrate the deep connection, admiration, and impact the coaches had on coachees.

MaryAnn's coaching style was perfect for me! I would categorize it as an adaptive coaching style. She first took the time to get to know me, to understand my needs, my goals, my personality, and my experience level. She allowed me to share situational examples and adjust the coaching as necessary but always kept me in contact with how those examples were related to what I want to change or improve.

Lucy was exceptional at quickly understanding the situations & challenges I described, which drove deeper & longer discussions about potential solutions to attempt.

Kevin was great. He helped me review the 360 degree survey and personal inventory to identify blind spots and help me work through them. He helped me to think deeply about my weak areas and develop action plans to improve them. He was always ready with specific examples and additional resources to help in my journey.

La Wanda was great! She seemed to have a good sense of when to push me and in what ways to reach some of my goals.

Carol was a competent and collaborative coaching partner. She followed a structured approach and held me accountable for each step along the way. She was very effective and had a very approachable style.

I often felt that **Amy** was like a business “therapist” in some cases. She was always willing to discuss the day-to-day and help me improve my overall views on the problem at hand and develop solutions.

Stan is incredibly good at his job. I'm very thankful that I got to work with him.

Michael was wonderful. He actively listened, followed up with additional resources based on our discussion, and recapped our previous meetings, making me feel like less of just another client, and more like his only client, which I appreciated.

Gale was great at digging in, not letting me off the hook, and helping me work on things I can change.

Jennifer was an excellent coach who truly helped me evaluate my schedule and implement measures to be more engaged and involved in discussions. She assisted with a significant number of personal and management issues. She was an exceptional listener with deep insight—recognizing that personal challenges could impact my ability to lead and manage effectively.

Jim listened and provided insight and guidance. His ability to take in our discussions and provide perspective was a great resource in my growth plan.

A Customized Approach

We offer a variety of coaching packages designed to fit each learner's unique needs and their organization's budget. The leaders included in this study participated in one of three distinct coaching approaches:

- 1. Comprehensive Leadership Coaching Program**—A coach works with their coachee over a year through a series of approximately 25 coaching sessions.
- 2. Targeted Leadership Coaching Program**—Shorter engagements are offered for more targeted coaching needs. These programs last between four and six months.
- 3. Leadership Development Program Enhancement**—The four-to-eight sessions coaching programs are paired with a set of leadership workshops. It appears that the combination of training classes with coaching provided a similar impact as providing a longer coaching program. The chart shows the notable difference.

When measuring coaching effectiveness, we found that those who received full leadership coaching and no group leadership workshops reported much stronger coaching results in personal leadership development matters, including well-being, and slightly lower changes in utilizing new behaviors. This is consistent with the design and approach for each program. The data seems to show that additional group training courses and self-assessments are equally effective in helping coachees improve in behaviors required for their role. A full leadership coaching program appears to be the best option to truly impact a leader's well-being.

Full versus Truncated Coaching Programs			
	Coaching Only 15–25 Sessions	Coaching as part of a leadership training program 4–8 Sessions	Difference
Meaningful Insights	96%	96%	0%
Utilize New Behaviors	91%	94%	-3%
Well-Being	71%	62%	9%
Confidence	91%	92%	-1%

Coaching Action Plans Provide Focus

Coaching success depends on the coachee's commitment to making specific changes. Identifying barriers to performance and creating a clear action plan—guided by self-assessment and multi-rater feedback—is essential for effective coaching. Leaning into those areas that are not natural for them, and accepting responsibility for change, is paramount to achieving successful coaching outcomes.

Respondents' top development priorities, confirmed through formal action planning, remained consistent year over year. Communication skills again led the list at 40% in 2025, down slightly from 44% in 2024. Strategic thinking also declined from 39% to 34%, suggesting a subtle shift in focus. Noteworthy changes emerged elsewhere: managing up rose to 38% from 36%, surpassing emotional intelligence, which dropped sharply from 36% to 27%. Time management and execution increased from 18% to 25%, indicating growing pressure on leaders to deliver results efficiently despite relatively stable overall leadership gaps.



The data shows a notable trend this year. Coachees' interest in **effectively managing time and consistently executing work** increased, while focus on **emotional intelligence** declined.

This suggests that leaders may be placing **greater emphasis on task execution and operational demands** rather than on relationship-oriented skills.

Given the importance of balancing the two, this emerging trend raises important questions about the pressures leaders are experiencing—questions that warrant deeper exploration in next year's study.

	2024	2025
Improving my ability to communicate/listen	44%	40%
Effectively leading and managing others	37%	38%
Managing up/executive presence	36%	38%
Thinking strategically/long-term planning	39%	34%
Building relationships/interpersonal effectiveness	31%	30%
Increasing my emotional intelligence	36%	27%
Effectively managing my time/consistently execute work	18%	25%
Managing conflict	21%	21%
Managing change	17%	19%

Ways Leaders Are More Effective

For the second year we asked participants to identify the areas where they believe they have become more effective as a result of their coaching experience. While influencing up remains the strongest outcome by a wide margin (steady at 70% in both 2024 and 2025), the year-over-year shifts in other categories offer meaningful insight into how leaders perceive their own growth.

	2024	2025
More effectively influence and contribute up (with boss and senior leadership)	70%	70%
Manage/coach my direct reports	51%	57%
Lead my team	49%	54%
Work with peers and across other functions	58%	49%
Have more capacity to take on additional/value-added work	18%	23%
Get more/higher-quality work done	16%	19%

One of the most notable changes is the rise in participants reporting greater **capacity to take on additional or value-added work**—up from 18% to 23%. This increase aligns closely with the jump we observed in the action-plan focus area **“effectively managing my time / consistently executing work.”** Together, these findings suggest that leaders are placing renewed emphasis on operational efficiency and task execution, perhaps in response to heightened workload demands or organizational complexity.

At the same time, **leading my team** increased five points (49% to 54%), indicating growing confidence in core people-management capabilities. However, this was accompanied by a seven-point decline in **working with peers and across other functions** (58% to 49%). This shift suggests a narrowed focus—leaders may be concentrating more on supporting their immediate teams and their own role effectiveness, while placing less emphasis on cross-functional collaboration. Understanding what is driving this pattern will be an important area of inquiry for next year’s study.

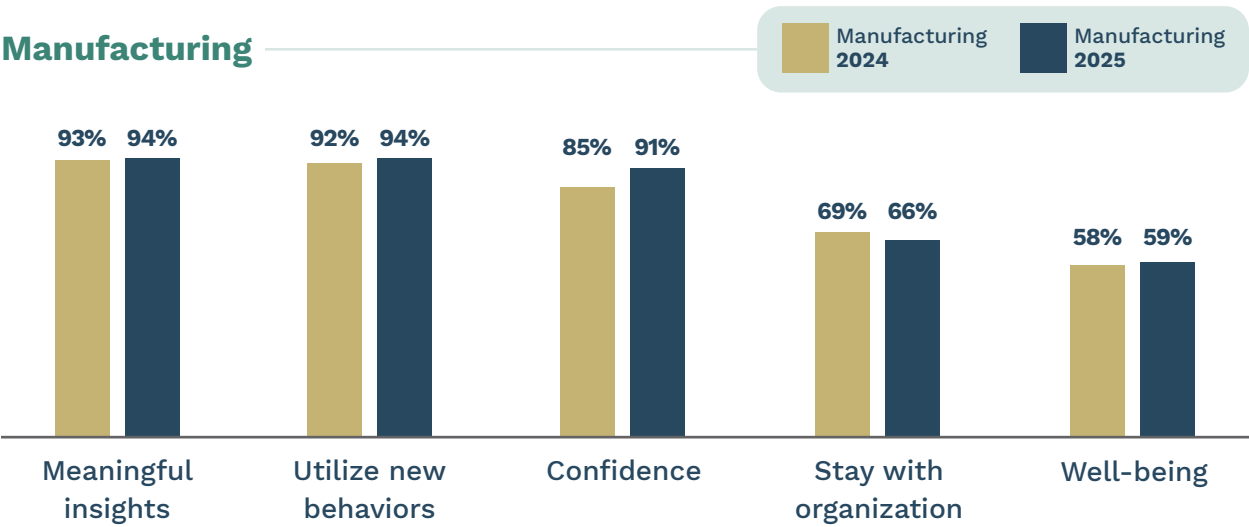
These findings are supported by established research on leadership self-awareness.² Studies show that when leaders self-report their competence, and do so with modesty and accuracy, their assessments often mirror how others perceive effectiveness. The shifts in this year’s data may therefore reflect a genuine recalibration of leaders’ strengths, pressures, and focus areas within their current organizational contexts.

2. [“The Relationship of Self-Awareness to Leadership Effectiveness for Experienced Leaders” by Patricia Sullivan Sullivan \(usf.edu\)](#)

Does Coaching Vary by Industry?

With the number of organizations represented in this study, we were able to analyze coaching outcomes for two industries: **manufacturing** and **healthcare**. This year’s data set was reviewed to determine whether coaching focus areas, processes, results, and participant feedback varied by industry.

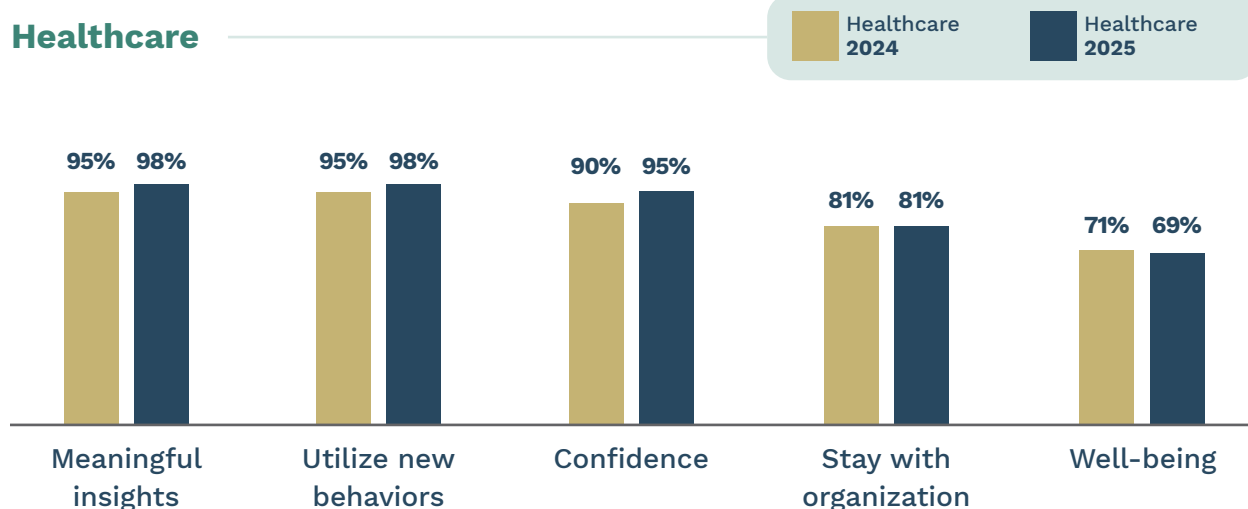
Across both sectors, coachees reported consistently strong outcomes in two areas—gaining meaningful insights and applying new behaviors—with more than 90% of respondents affirming these benefits. This reinforces a common theme: despite differences in work environments, leadership shares similar development needs. Whether managing a clinical team in a hospital or overseeing operations in a manufacturing plant, leaders face comparable challenges and growth opportunities.



For **manufacturing leaders**, coaching continues to deliver positive results with some notable shifts. **Confidence** improved significantly year over year, rising from 85% in 2024 to 91% in 2025, closing the gap with other industries that previously led in this category. Similarly, the ability to **utilize new behaviors** and **gain meaningful insights** remained exceptionally high, increasing slightly to 94% each.



Healthcare



Healthcare leaders also demonstrated strong coaching outcomes, with incremental gains in several areas. Both **meaningful insights** and the **ability to apply new behaviors** remain exceptionally high, climbing from 95% in 2024 to 98% in 2025. These results suggest that coaching is deeply resonating with healthcare professionals and driving actionable change. **Confidence** also strengthened, rising from 90% to 95%, reinforcing the role of coaching in building leadership reassurance.



“Being able to communicate more effectively, and with impact, has boosted my confidence and has increased the trust and confidence others have in me.”

—Coachee

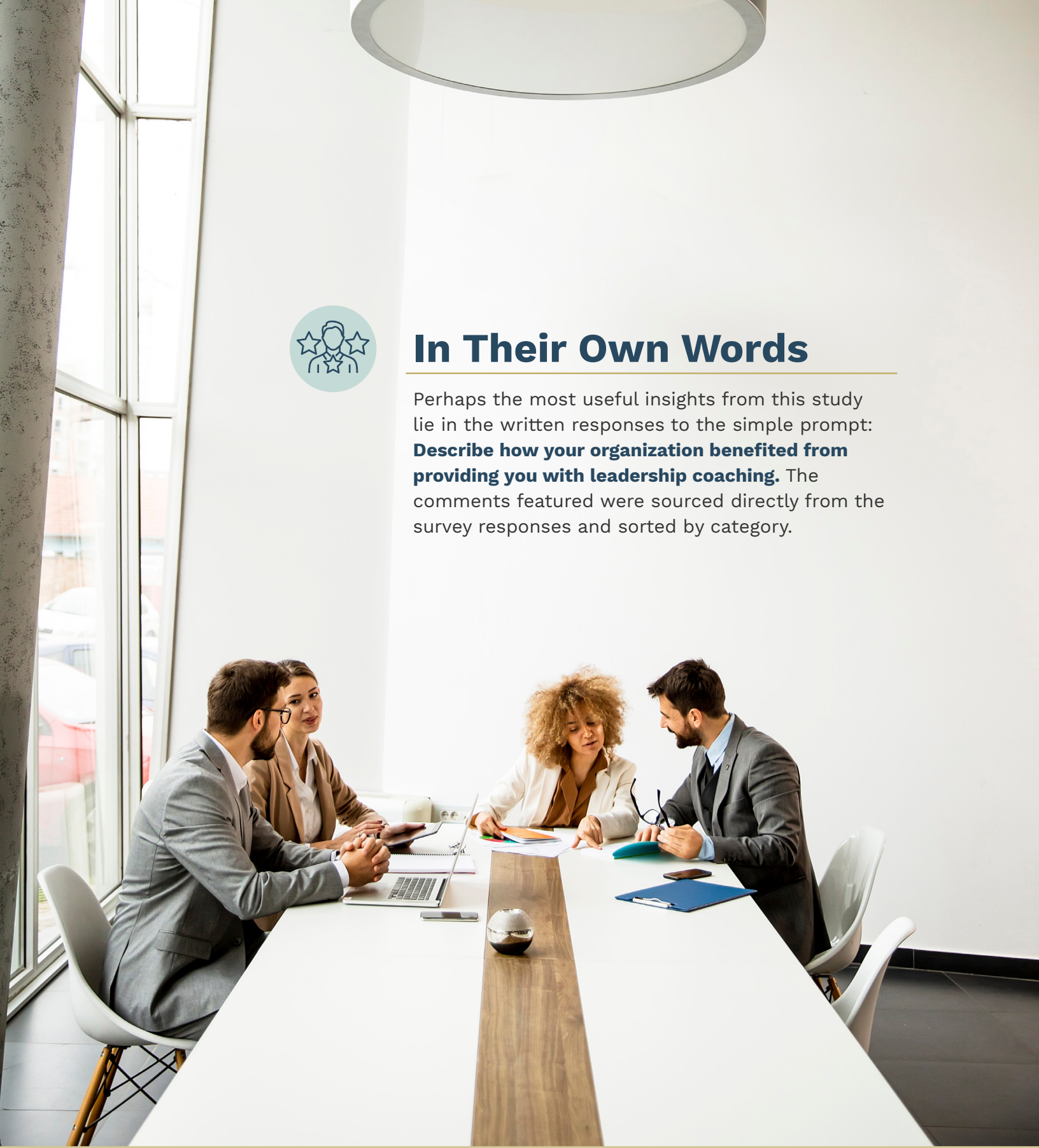
“Coaching has had a meaningful impact on how I lead and collaborate. It helped me become more self-aware, communicate with greater clarity, and navigate complex situations with confidence.”

—Coachee



In Their Own Words

Perhaps the most useful insights from this study lie in the written responses to the simple prompt: **Describe how your organization benefited from providing you with leadership coaching.** The comments featured were sourced directly from the survey responses and sorted by category.



Management

Coaching helped me become a **more effective leader**, improving delegation, strategic thinking, and decision-making.

I gained confidence in guiding my team, aligning priorities, and **motivating others** to achieve business objectives.

I have been able to utilize new tools to challenge underperformers and **create a more cohesive team**.

It's allowed me to show up as a stronger leader by **strengthening my ability to navigate change** and uncertainty. I experienced a tremendous amount of organizational change since I've been in my role. Because of the coaching I received, I've been able to use the tools to focus in on the signal, and not pay as much attention to the noise.

Communication & Influence

I have improved my ability to manage conflict and **lead through influence** rather than authority.

Coaching has helped me with enhanced communication skills, including **knowing when to speak and when to listen**, resulting in more impactful contributions.

I've learned to use my voice confidently in meetings, which **accelerates decision-making** and builds team confidence.

The training gave me the opportunity to look at myself from a different perspective. I realized that I need to be **very precise when communicating with my teammates** and also that, in an international setting, the challenges in communication and precision are even greater.

I've **strengthened my ability to influence**, fostering productive partnerships across departments.

I've gained the **confidence to advocate** for organizational priorities at higher levels.



Collaboration & Relationship Building

I've **built stronger relationships** with peers and executives, accelerating my own integration into the organization.

My approach, based on fairness and respect, has empowered many young team members. My efforts to empathize and connect have helped me influence teams beyond my own. The emotional intelligence I gained has given me the capacity to control my emotional responses and **understand the perspectives of others**.

I was able to establish trust within my team, reducing silos and **promoting a positive culture**.

Career Development

Coaching has provided me with **clarity on my short- and long-term career goals** and has helped me map a trajectory for success.

Strengthened personal brand and accountability, ensuring alignment with leadership expectations.

I've gained the tools to **effectively manage my career transitions** and undefined roles with confidence.

Work-Life Balance & Personal Growth

I am now able to strike a better work-life balance through **improved boundary setting**.

I was able to channel my energy and uncertainty into action plans—allowing me to work better and **focus on what matters** most.

Through coaching, I've gained **deeper self-awareness**, improved my ability to lead and influence cross-functional teams, and become more intentional in how I communicate.

Organizational Impact

I can lead and **coach my own team more effectively**. With reductions in headcount I am using that skill to work with my team to get more done with fewer resources.

Increased client referrals and **new business opportunities** through better delegation and communication.

I've already established notable outputs through **strengthened cultural alignment** and governance, driving operational excellence.

Leadership training has impacted my **ability to influence and lead others towards our strategic objectives** throughout the organization. One area that specifically translates to our business's bottom line is in the reduction of warranty claim costs. Through ongoing and extensive facilitation of best practice sharing and root cause analysis/corrective action planning and execution, the broader network has seen a significant impact and reduction in warranty claim costs.

Last Words

This coaching and leadership program were **invaluable to my overall growth** ... revealed strategies I never would have thought of without the training.

My coach **motivated me** and offered a new perspective in areas of my leadership where I felt stuck ... very beneficial.

I really **enjoyed my time** in the program.

Overall, my coaching experience was impactful. **I'm a better leader because of it**, and I've been able to pass down some of the learnings to my team.

This was an experience that really helped me not only in my professional development but also in my personal life. **The behavior changes were organic and sustainable.**

I have **gained a lot of insight** into what it means to be an effective people leader.

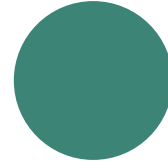
I would **highly recommend** this process to any aspiring leaders or high potential individual contributors.

Summing It Up

With six consecutive years of data, the evidence is clear: leadership coaching consistently delivers meaningful impact for individuals and organizations. Coachees report transformative gains in confidence, communication, and strategic thinking—skills essential in today’s complex business environment. This year’s results reaffirm that coaching is more than a development tool; it’s a driver of engagement, growth, and organizational resilience.

The value of coaching extends beyond individual growth. It strengthens leadership pipelines, improves alignment with organizational goals, and fosters cultures of collaboration and adaptability. Retention remains a standout outcome, with many coachees reporting coaching influenced their desire to stay—a critical metric in today’s talent market.

Is coaching worth the investment? Absolutely. The ROI is evident in stronger leadership effectiveness, improved team performance, and enhanced organizational agility. High-performing organizations know that developing leaders is essential for sustaining success in an era of rapid change.



Watch **The Power of Coaching** Video



dionleadership.com/the-power-of-coaching/

If you would you like to learn more about creating or modifying a coaching program that supports your leaders and generates the benefits shown in this study, **please reach out to us.** Our experienced team of executive leadership coaches can help.

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