



Housing LIN

*Connecting people, ideas and resources*

## Viewpoint 97

# Coaching for managerial success – what's in it for housing with care organisations?

**OCTOBER 2019**

Written for the Housing Learning and Improvement Network by **Dr Katey Twyford**, Housing LIN Associate and co-lead for housing with care for people affected by dementia



# Summary

This viewpoint offers a personal perspective on the potential for coaching to enhance the managerial role and performance outcomes within the housing sector. It starts with a brief review of coaching and mentoring before considering the benefits of having a coaching culture as part of an organisation's management development strategy. It concludes that there is currently no single 'go to place' for Housing LIN members to get support and advice on developing coaching and mentoring opportunities within their organisations.

The Viewpoint suggests that there is a role for the Housing LIN to support its individual members and member organisations with effective learning about the practice and benefits of coaching through its highly valued national and regional networking activities.



Image copyright Katey Twyford and Pete Hiett

# Introduction

Housing with care is central to meeting the needs of the increasing number of older people in the UK – coaching and mentoring can support individuals to create insights for their organisation leading to better decisions and more effective leadership. Using coaching and mentoring to help navigate change, improve productivity, and continue to learn will enable housing with care organisations to collaborate confidently across the wide range of agencies involved in delivering housing with care.

## A personal view

With over 35 years of experience across public and private sectors I have seen many different approaches to coaching and mentoring. From the early days of ‘sitting next to Nellie’ where you learned from an experienced member of staff how to do a job, through to today’s induction, foundation, qualifying and post qualifying training complemented with individually tailored support from an increasingly professionalised coaching and mentoring industry.

My own particular housing with care career has been enhanced by receiving both formal and informal mentoring and coaching; sometimes the ad hoc coaching conversations with key people had more impact on me than the formal programmes I had the benefit of being part of. This is particularly the case with housing with care: it’s not housing, it’s not care. What’s unique to our sector is that it falls between the two without any accredited housing and care programmes of their own. The willingness of influential leaders therefore to engage in informal coaching conversations reminds me of the quote by author Brian Tracy who said:

*“Successful people are always looking for opportunities to help others.  
Unsuccessful people are always asking, ‘what’s in it for me?’”*

I’d like to broaden the ‘what’s in it for me?’ question to ‘what’s in it for us?’. Business or organisational coaching is more often a partnership between the coach, the coachee and the organisation. Coaching and mentoring can provide different things for different people across the organisation, and is typically targeted at four levels:

- *Very senior management* (such as executive or strategic decision-makers). Coaching and mentoring will help senior managers develop new skills, improve performance, overcome barriers and prepare for progression inside or outside the organisation. This may include legacy coaching if the leader is due to retire from a key role;
- *Middle management* (these can be managers who implement policy and make tactical decisions). Coaching and mentoring will help clarify the manager’s key responsibilities, the way they lead individuals and teams to deliver tasks, and the way they can integrate the team into the organisation to achieve its business goals or objectives;

- *First level supervisors or functional service team leaders* (these are operational staff making on the spot decisions). Coaching and mentoring can be used to help an individual or group of managers to better understand the requirements of their jobs, help them to identify how to address any gaps in performance or optimise any opportunities to meet organisational goals or objectives.
- *Other employees* (for example, those that 'do the job'). Coaching and mentoring can help them achieve personal or organisational goals, overcome obstacles and make changes or shifts to improve performance and meet business objectives.

## How can coaching and mentoring best be used?

To explore how coaching and mentoring can be best used by your organisation it is helpful to understand the context of management, coaching and mentoring in strategic business environments. The managerial role is a critical component in business strategies designed to deliver high quality housing and care services and meet organisational goals - and yet, we all know that management education and training in itself does not result in well-developed managers.

A range of organisational development tools and techniques can be used to expose managers to new experiences and new responsibilities. Coaching and mentoring are part of the toolbox and can add value to staff development strategies encouraging managers to take advantage of their talents in innovative and self-directive ways to help them increase their performance outcomes.



Figure 1: Coaching as a learning opportunity

The management development strategy of any housing organisation will be influenced by internal factors such as their culture, structure and strategic goals and required pace of change (see Figure 2). The choice and effectiveness of the organisation's management development strategy and the outcomes achieved will also be influenced by external factors such as emerging technology, market forces, government policy and social change.

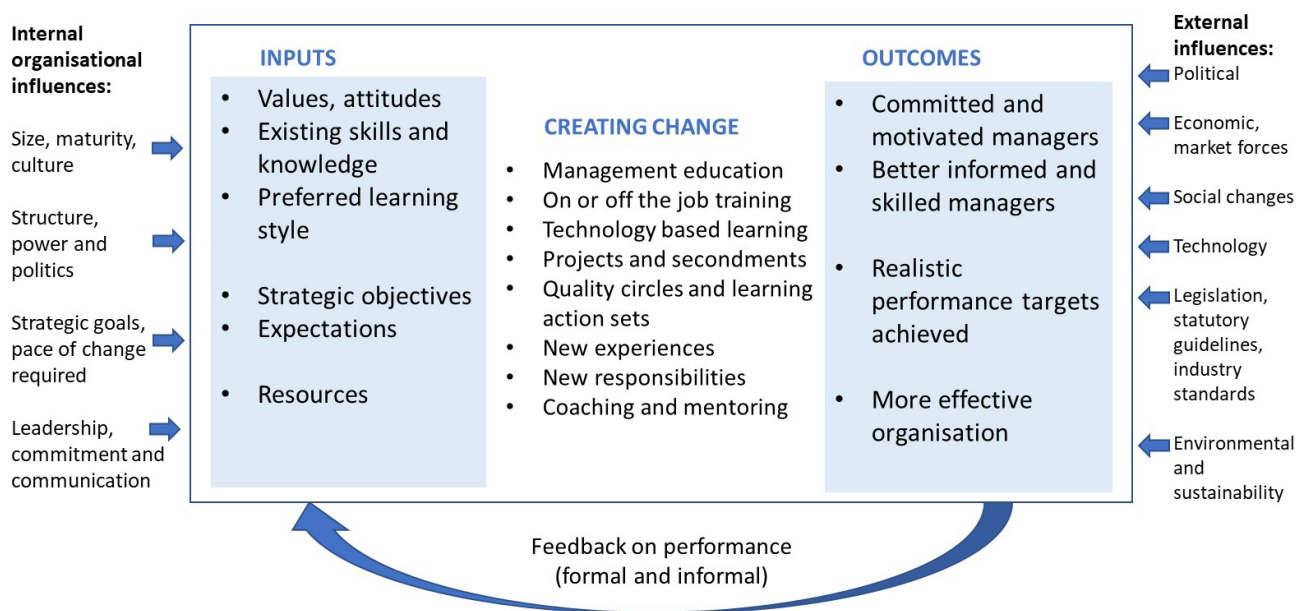


Figure 2: Aligning management development to strategy

Coaching is not an objective science, and the effectiveness of a coaching programme will depend upon the fit between organisational need, type of coaching, and the ability of the coaches to develop a relationship of trust with both the organisation and individual managers within it. Studies conducted on the effects of individual coaching and mentoring behaviours indicate that individual behaviours have a positive impact on satisfaction and an indirect positive impact on commitment and job performance (Ellinger, et al., 2003) (Rowold, 2008) (Kim, et al., 2013). Kim et al's study within public sector organisations is of relevance to the Housing LIN and its members. *Led by prior empirical studies, they confirmed that managerial coaching led to role clarity and satisfaction with work, which then impacted on career commitment, organisation commitment and job performance.*

## A culture of learning through coaching and mentoring

The culture within an organisation will affect how coaching and mentoring is integrated at a senior, strategic and organisational level. Rafique's (2017) review of coaching culture, which was specific to the UK housing association sector, concluded that coaching plays an important role in coping with organisational changes related to dynamic developments in the housing association sector. Hawkins (2012) emphasised that developing a strong foundation for coaching will include working collaboratively with managers to ground coaching in the organisation's strategy and to align it to

the wider organisational culture. Organisations without a culture of coaching may initially buy in external coaching to help develop their manager and leaders. Over time, coaching may then become an in-house activity as part of the overall organisational development strategy.

Typical stages in developing a coaching culture are set out in Figure 3 below.

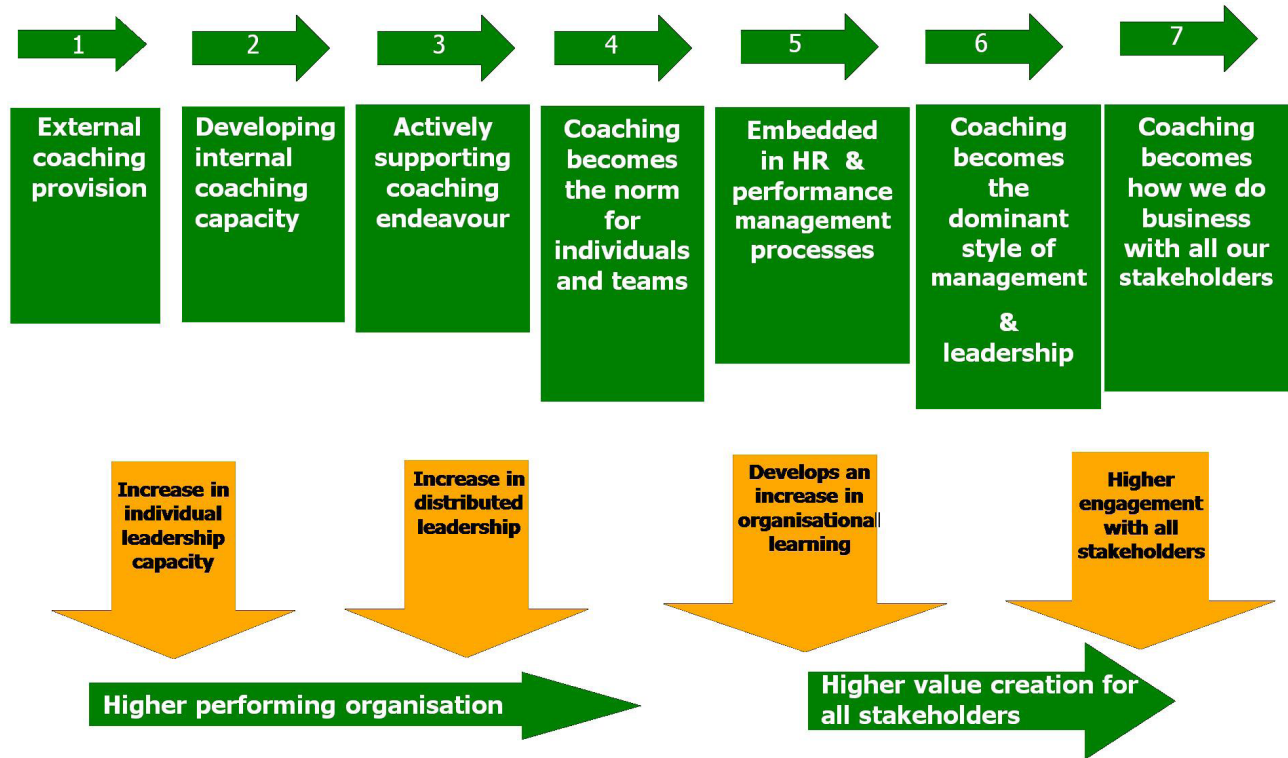


Figure 3: Typical stages in developing a coaching culture (Hawkins, P)

Hawkins (2009) asserted that an organisation can be helped to move through the stages of developing a coaching culture by integrating coaching across the organisation as part of its organisational strategy. First, identify the organisational outcomes the business is trying to achieve to which coaching can contribute; second, gather the right mix of internal and external resources to provide the coaching; third, use coaching as part of how things are done throughout the organisation; and finally, capture and process the learning from the coaching conversations that take place.

Culture can both inhibit and support change and a coaching programme is likely to be more effective when senior managers and leaders throughout the organisation demonstrate their commitment to it. One of the complexities of housing with care is that service provision may be a partnership between different housing and care organisations, each with different managers, and each with their own people development plans. Research into managing the practicalities and possibilities of people living with dementia in housing with care (Twyford, 2018) recommended extra care housing partnerships should:

*Provide strong leadership, develop joint teams as far as possible by reducing boundaries between staff groups and maximise opportunities for shared development.*

Coaching and mentoring across partner organisations can provide the means by which to encourage the development of strong leadership, shared learning, and fewer boundaries leading to better performance outcomes for residents or tenants.

Staff are one of the biggest assets of many organisations – they come with different values, attitudes and learning styles. These will all influence which methods and tools are chosen as part of a management development or improvement programme. A management development programme will also be determined by whether the required knowledge and skills are available within or outside the housing organisation. Just under 50% of respondents to a survey of Housing Learning and Improvement Network members (Twyford, 2018) reported that they had individual staff members with unique roles for whom they found it difficult to find the ‘right’ training opportunities. When asked how and where do people learn best, Housing LIN members reported that classroom and workshops were most popular, followed closely by coaching and mentoring. A majority of respondents said people learn best in their own workplace.

## There is no one-size fits all, so how do we choose?

Literature on leadership development provides widespread support for experiential interventions to improve organisational effectiveness, including for example 360-degree feedback, networking, job assignments and action learning in addition to coaching and mentoring (Day, 2000). It is essential that housing organisations analyse and understand their own position before choosing the most appropriate development options, which could include coaching and mentoring.

The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) (2018) define coaching and mentoring as:

*‘a professionally guided process that inspires clients to maximise their personal and professional potential. It is a structured, purposeful and transformational process, helping clients to see and test alternative ways for improvement of competence, decision making and enhancement of quality of life. Coach and mentor and client work together in a partnering relationship on strictly confidential terms. In this relationship, clients are experts on the content and decision making level; the coach and mentor is an expert in professionally guiding the process.’*

In this definition the EMCC does not distinguish between coaching and mentoring. Common to both is that they offer an opportunity for analysis, reflection and action to help the client achieve success in specific areas. Both coaching and mentoring are contextually situated and can include business, executive, performance, skill, and personal coaching. As there is growing distinction between different types of professional coaching there is also greater consistency about what coaching is not: it is not technical guidance, counselling, therapy, consultancy or training. There is more ambiguity about the relationship between coaching and mentoring. It is acknowledged that the two are different, but for lay purposes some, such as Megginson and Clutterbuck (2007), argue that it can be an artificial divide.

Figure 4 contrasts coaching and mentoring to set out some of the main differences including level of formality, form of contract, focus of activity or attention, level of sector knowledge required and background or training of the coach or mentor.

	<b>Coaching</b>	<b>Mentoring</b>
<b>Level of formality</b>	<b>More formal:</b> Contract or ground rules set, often involving a third party client	<b>Less formal:</b> agreement, most typically between two parties
<b>Length of contract</b>	<b>Shorter term:</b> typically between 4 and 12 meetings agreed over 2 to 12 months	<b>Longer term:</b> typically unspecified number of meetings with relationships often running over 3 – 5 years
<b>Focus of activity</b>	<b>More performance focused:</b> typically a greater focus on the short-term skills and job performance	<b>More career-focussed:</b> typically a concern with longer-term career issues, obtaining the right experience and longer-term thinking
<b>Level of sector knowledge</b>	<b>More generalist:</b> typically coaches have limited sector knowledge	<b>More sector knowledge:</b> typically mentors have knowledge of organisation or business sector
<b>Training</b>	<b>More relationship training:</b> sometimes coaches have a background in psychology, psychotherapy or HR	<b>More management training:</b> typically mentors have a background in senior management
<b>Focus of attention</b>	<b>Dual focus:</b> more typically a dual focus on the needs of the individual and the needs of the organisation	<b>Single focus:</b> more typically a single focus on the needs of the individual

Figure 4: *Contrasting coaching and mentoring (Synergia Ltd, 2018)*



Although mentoring is more likely than coaching to draw on specialist knowledge of the work area it can be helpful for the coach/mentor to be able to move between the two. Leadership coaching for managers can include skills coaching, business or executive coaching, and performance coaching. It is:

- usually designed to meet organisational needs
- often constrained by the business or organisation that is 'sponsoring' it
- usually focused upon the individual or group's performance
- deployed variously for different stages of a manager's career; e.g. new into leadership, high performance and developmental, succession planning and legacy planning
- sometimes specific to different functions or activities such as sales coaching.

Coaching on personal effectiveness and relationship management can take place at all levels of an organisation from very senior management through to front line staff. Internal coaching may make it easier for coach and coachee to meet, the coach will know the organisation and understand the politics, but boundaries may be more difficult and sessions may be more likely to be interrupted. External coaching can be perceived as being more time intensive and costly, but may be more objective than internal coaching, may encourage the coachee to prepare more carefully, and can open up other networks to the coachee. The type of coaching required and the maturity of coaching within the organisation will determine whether coaching is provided internally or obtained externally.

## So how does this work for Housing with care?

There are examples of Housing LIN members who have used external coaches on an ad-hoc basis, whilst others have integrated coaching and mentoring within their people development strategy.

Comments from a senior manager in one housing provider included:

*"Using a coaching model has brought about a culture change in our organisation... we have built up a pool of coaches which provided a bonding experience for the team".*

*"Coaching is not about propping up the line manager. The line manager is part of the triad coaching relationship where there is confidence between the coach, the line manager and the coachee. At the end of the coaching the baton is passed back to the managers."*

And when asked about the benefits of coaching one internal coach from a housing provider said:

*"it is good, it keeps you on your toes. It provides two-way learning [between the coach and coachee]. It gives you time out to self-reflect".*

A mix and match approach will be appropriate for some organisations. For example, internal provision for the majority of staff, with some external provision for discrete or unique posts such as a chief executive or trustee. Currently there is no single 'go to place' for Housing LIN members to get support and advice on developing coaching and mentoring opportunities within their organisations.

This Viewpoint suggests that there is a role for the Housing LIN to provide its members with an opportunity for effective learning about coaching through its national and regional networking activities. To this end, the Housing LIN has recently started an exciting Future Leaders programme with a first cohort of early career members. It will be interesting to see how they each are able to use formal or informal coaching and mentoring to enhance their leadership skills and to help develop those they are leading within their employing housing organisations.

## Let the conversation begin!

For more details about how you can tap into the Housing LIN's coaching and mentoring opportunities, check out the 'People and organisational development' pages on our website at: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/consultancy/people-and-organisational-development/>

## References

- Day, D., 2000. Leadership development: a review in context. *Leadership quarterly*, 11(4), pp. 581-613.
- Ellinger, A. D., Ellinger, A. E. & Keller, S. B., 2003. Supervisory coaching behaviour, employee satisfaction, and warehouse employee performance: A dyadic perspective in the distribution industry. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, Volume 14, pp. 435-458.
- EMCC International, 2018. *EMCC Competence Framework Glossary V2*, s.l.: European Mentoring and Coaching Council.
- Hawkins, P., 2009. Developing an effective coaching strategy. *Global Focus: The EFMD Business Magazine Supplement*, Volume 3, pp. 15-19.
- Hawkins, P., 2012. *Creating a coaching culture*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Kim, S., Egan, T. M., Kim, W. & Kim, J., 2013. The impact of management coaching behavior on employee work-related actions. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, Volume 28, pp. 315-330.
- Meggison, D. & Clutterbuck, D., 2007. *Techniques of Coaching and Mentoring*. 3rd ed. London: Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann.
- Rafique, M. T., 2017. Review of Coaching Culture in the Times of Change in the UK Housing Associations Sector. *International Journal of Management and Applied Research*, 4(3), pp. 130-145.
- Rowold, J., 2008. Multiple effects of human resource development interventions. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 32(1), pp. 32-44.

Synergia Ltd, 2018. *ILM 7 Coaching and Leadership Course Handbook*. Stafford: Synergia Ltd.

Twyford, K., 2018. *Housing LIN Training Survey Results October 2018*, s.l.: Unpublished.

Twyford, K., 2018. *People with dementia living in extra care housing: an exploration of the practicalities and possibilities*. Sheffield: White Rose E-thesis.

## About the author

Dr Katey Twyford is a Housing LIN Associate, researcher, business consultant and coach. She is the Housing LIN's co-lead for housing with care for people affected by dementia.

## Note

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Housing Learning and Improvement Network.

## About the Housing LIN

The Housing LIN is a sophisticated network bringing together over 25,000 housing, health and social care professionals in England, Wales and Scotland to exemplify innovative housing solutions for an ageing population.

Recognised by government and industry as a leading 'knowledge hub' on specialist housing, our online and regional networked activities:

- connect people, ideas and resources to inform and improve the range of housing choices that enable older and disabled people to live independently
- provide intelligence on latest funding, research, policy and practice developments, and
- raise the profile of specialist housing with developers, commissioners and providers to plan, design and deliver aspirational housing for an ageing population.

## Published by

Housing Learning and Improvement Network

c/o PRP, The Ideas Store

10 Lindsey Street, Clerkenwell

London EC1A 9HP

Email: [info@housinglin.org.uk](mailto:info@housinglin.org.uk)

Web: [www.housinglin.org.uk](http://www.housinglin.org.uk)

Twitter: [@HousingLIN](https://twitter.com/HousingLIN) & [@HousingLINNews](https://twitter.com/HousingLINNews) & [@HLINConsult](https://twitter.com/HLINConsult)