



unleashing worklife possibilities:  
the worklife coaching report 2022

retention

through  
coaching.



randstad  
risesmart

human forward.



# foreword.

For organizations the world over, the past two years have required adaptation and flexibility. As we enter the second half of 2022, the chaos of the previous 24 months has quelled for much of the world. Now, what we can learn from this experience is being asked. With many wondering if the desire to return to 'business as usual' will mean precisely that, or if organizations will evolve their processes, approaches and redefine work.

The turbulence of the talent market dubbed The Great Resignation continues and has created a hyper-competitive job market. Job postings outweigh the number of job seekers, and attrition continues to be the statistic of concern for HR professionals and business leaders. But, at some point, we have to draw a line. Employers have to stop reacting. Instead, they must be proactive in their approach to dealing with this. It's no longer a new trend; it's a full-blown transition in market dynamics.

To not get left behind and to limit the loss of talent, organizations need to get ahead of this. That means rethinking HR strategy at every level, so the organization, its image and culture, and its employee experience is appealing to both new and current employees. Understanding how to do this means changing the approach to talent radically and quickly, retaining existing staff, nurturing skills and development, opening up mobility inside the business, and driving business growth. To go from 'The Great Resignation' to 'The Great Retention', if you will.

Understanding these pressures and the need for forward momentum with a multi-generational workforce is the context that this report delivers on. Based on global research carried out at the start of 2022, and the observations drawn from our experience in helping businesses across the world with workforce matters, our research provides crucial insights into what HR teams need to know about coaching from both decision-makers and people leaders, along with the employees.

Among the findings you'll learn in this year's report:

- how coaching is critical to making change happen
- why the generational differences of a workforce need to be acknowledged
- how leadership needs to adjust its approach to workforce matters based on gender needs

- what the current perceptions of the benefits of coaching are, as seen by both employers and employees
- what are the challenges that get in the way of coaching and
- how to overcome them with practical recommendations

In the Randstad 2022 Workmonitor research, 88% of workers surveyed around the world would be interested in learning and development opportunities if their employer offered it, and 84% of people would be interested in speaking to a professional career coach if offered the chance. Furthermore, half of those surveyed said they would rank talking to a work coach about finding a better balance between their work and personal lives as a top-three benefit an employer could offer. In fact, it was the top choice.

Randstad RiseSmart's report goes one step further, though. It shows big disconnects between employees and organizations, which are continuing to fuel resignations, costing businesses millions of dollars in lost productivity and talent. Randstad RiseSmart has observed these challenges and has recently delivered a modern approach to tackling these matters with our latest solution, worklife coaching. We believe what organizations need to offer is employee-centric coaching that focuses on providing employees a confidential space in which to discuss issues and drive improvements to their life at work. Not to be confused with a work-life balance discussion, this approach focuses on how an employee feels about their work and their relationship with their employer. It is more than just the job itself, it's the overall experience they have of work.

The past two years have taught us that no matter how much adversity we face, organizations can evolve positively by listening to their employees and making changes to deliver a more enjoyable worklife. I hope you find this report informative and that it gives you insight into just how remarkable coaching can be for an organization. I believe it provides the clarity needed to proactively move forward and build an HR or people function that has learned from the chaos and challenges of the past two years.



**Dan Davenport**  
Randstad RiseSmart CEO  
and Co-Founder



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# introduction.

Right now, in businesses across the world, talent retention is **everything**. Organizations need to understand how best to motivate, develop, and, above all, keep their best people. The key to mobility, retention and development is 'engagement'. If employees are engaged they are less likely to leave. But how do you build engagement in a hybrid work environment, and after a challenging few years? Understanding what everyone requires is important, understanding these requirements can vary is vital.

For many employers, however, there is a chasm of disconnect between what employers want and what employees now expect. The latter no longer see themselves as part of a business's transformation journey. Rather, the employer is part of their career journey. The tables have turned, with employees in control.

Businesses need to respond and find new ways forward – quickly. Our research, conducted among hundreds of organizations and talent across the world, shows that almost half of all employees are actively looking for a new job – or plan to be looking very soon. Our report provides fresh new insights into the key role that coaching can play for employers to stay ahead of the competition in this, the biggest talent crisis for many years.

Coaching has long been seen by employers as the exclusive domain of the business leaders of today and tomorrow, a clique of a business' top performers. Those who provide it, know its value in unlocking the potential of both the organization and the individual. At Randstad RiseSmart, our aim is to democratize coaching, ensuring an organization can offer it to every member of staff as the key approach to securing retention, increasing engagement and enabling talent mobility.

There are challenges, however. Current coaching packages and pricing models fail businesses. They are forced to subscribe to restrictive packages that are not fully utilized, with pricing packages geared to top performers and lacking any scalability. At Randstad RiseSmart, we want to enable customers to unleash new possibilities for all their employees.

It is clear from the research and from our market understanding that in 2022, organizations need a new coaching solution. One that is agile, scalable, and cost-effective, to allow coaching to be truly offered to every level of employee in an organization.

To retain employees, HR decision-makers and people, leaders must now align with employees' desires to work for a business with a clear vision and purpose, a good level of employee engagement, and the opportunity for internal mobility within the business. There are reasons for hope – our research shows that most staff turnover is preventable. The small minority of organizations attracting and retaining employees successfully, use coaching to focus intently on retention.

While the factors that influence retention are many and varied, this report shows how this can be achieved through deploying a coaching-centric approach to all manner of HR priorities that ultimately contribute to whether an employee wishes to stay or leave your organization.

As we stated, engagement, is critical in a modern workforce. However, our research demonstrates the central impact that coaching can and must have on those major HR priorities; retention, mobility, career development, and inclusion, in the post-pandemic era.



# setting the scene.

Talent is now the driver. HR needs to get smarter and adapt.

## our research – who we spoke to:

We conducted quantitative research among employers and employees from across the world and verified results with senior HR leaders to gain additional insights that feature in the report.



**Employers** – we interviewed 262 HR decision-makers and people leaders across seven countries: the US, the UK, France, Germany, India, Singapore, and Australia.

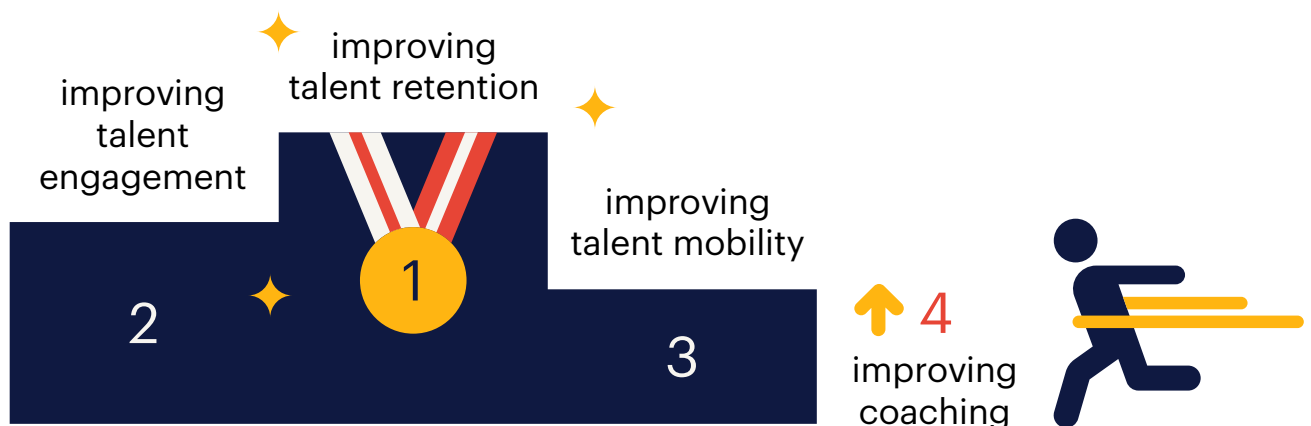


**Employees** – we spoke to 508 workers across the same seven countries either in full-time employment in organizations with annual revenue of over \$10 million and 100 employees, or actively seeking new roles.

Our research is very clear. Talent retention, engagement, and mobility are the top talent priorities for businesses globally in 2022.

Retention tops every business segment size as the priority. Still, talent mobility, which appears third on the average across sectors, is second most important for large-scale enterprise organizations of more than 5,000 employees.

But, the real story here is that the results of our research clearly show that coaching is already a top priority for nearly three in ten (29%) organizations surveyed, with its value set to rise further if employers can work out how to make it central to achieving the stated three business priorities.







# the case

# for action.



We've been in firefighting mode for too long. Someone leaves the business and we automatically look externally to fill a role. We aren't looking at why they are leaving? We are just focused on the backfill. Our churn rate has gone up drastically since 2019 and we can't seem to get ahead of it.

— CHRO, global transportation company

According to a Human Capital Institute (HCI) and International Coach Federation (ICF) study, 54% of companies that are classified as 'high-performing' have a strong coaching culture. This figure drops to only 29% among organizations without one.

Coaching can be the enabler of the conversations that inspire and support the ongoing development, satisfaction, engagement, and performance of individual employees' careers in all facets. The right coaching solution not only empowers an organization's employees to consider staying, but it enables an HR department to proactively affect an array of other workforce deliverables such as career development, talent mobility, onboarding effectiveness, and supporting a more inclusive workplace.

There is hope for HR who can forge an all-pervasive culture of coaching. Employees who want to move to another organization, our Randstad RiseSmart research shows, are also likely to be open to another position internally. Nearly half (45%) of the employees surveyed say they will "definitely" or "probably" move to another organization, but 4 in 5 of these (36% of our total respondents) say they are also open to an internal move, which offers hope if you can make your organization a compelling and attractive place to stay.

The case for action is strengthened in other ways. Nearly all employees (87%) who want to change roles would prefer to do so in their current organization. While they don't want to leave their own organization, they **do** want to feel a sense of progress, and will leave when they see no possibility for this.

Nearly all employees (87%) who want to change roles would prefer to do so in their current organization.

Internal applicants are typically highly engaged, and losing an employee of this nature has dramatic effects on companies' productivity and financial performance.

Talent needs to be taken care of across its lifecycle. High-performing organizations already know this; they need to focus on retention, drive engagement, build a compelling career development program, and enable mobility within their organization.



# the cost

# of doing nothing.



Isn't coaching really expensive? We can't afford to provide it to everyone, despite us seeing the benefit of coaching with our leadership team.

— VP of HR, global retail company

Until now, coaching has been reserved in many organizations for current or future leaders, or to develop specific skills for promotion. It's not been explicitly linked to retention, engagement, or career mobility objectives across all employees. Previously, it has been about high-level coaches working with these select individuals, helping them develop, but it has been cost-prohibitive for it to be rolled out beyond specific groups deemed worthy of investment.

Can businesses afford to do nothing about their approach to coaching? Definitely not.

The cost of replacing an employee can be anywhere from 50% to 200% of their salary. Using 100% as a benchmark, an organization with an average salary of \$50,000 potentially faces that amount for employees who leave. Whether your turnover rate is 3% or 20%, that's the kind of cost that an organization cannot sustain.

What else are we missing by not stopping to re-evaluate? Well, our research clearly shows a high price of inaction in three respects:

- Nearly all of the employees we surveyed (93%) feel open and receptive to new job opportunities. The restless search for something new holds true across generations, gender, and geography.

- Almost half (45%) are considering a move to another organization in the next 12 months. Here, there are discrepancies between the generations. Explicitly there is a desire for moving on which is most evident among Older Millennials.
- There is a high expectation (58%) among employees for internal mobility to be facilitated by an employer, so they can switch to another role within the same organization.

In many organizations, these employee expectations are likely to not be met. But now more than ever, employees are looking to develop within for their current role as well as new skills for the future. This puts employees and employers on a collision course.

There is further trouble ahead when you look at coaching needs and wants. It's a recipe for disaster.

First, consider that most organizations use external certified coaches for wellbeing and not for development. Add into the mix the current outdated perspectives on coaching, plus the lack of understanding about how its application to wider groups of employees can benefit an organization. Finish things off with low employee engagement. Finally, you get the reality that the cost of not introducing coaching, along with career development and mobility, is very significant for an organization looking to retain employees in 2022.

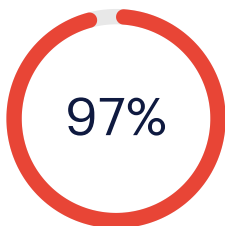
the

good news.

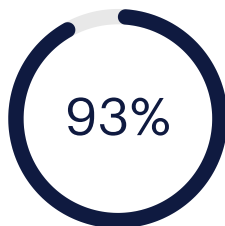
## (nearly) everyone sees coaching as valuable.

There is little doubt that both employers and employees understand there are clear benefits to be gained from coaching. Appreciation of the value of coaching is already well understood in most leading organizations and becoming more widely understood elsewhere.

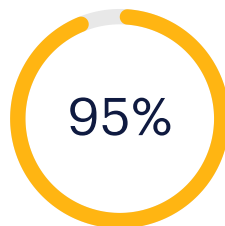
### among employees:



are somewhat or very satisfied with their coaching

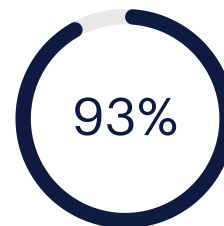


find participation in programs very or extremely valuable



will probably or will definitely seek to continue with their coaching

### among employers:



see coaching as very or extremely valuable



see it as having a positive or very positive impact on the wider business

Employees who are engaging with coaching appreciate the opportunity, view it as valuable and hope to continue. Even those not currently engaged with a coaching program clearly want to do so. Therefore, it is clear that coaching can be an attraction tool for new hires or a retention tool for existing employees.

Of those not currently being coached, 90% say they would engage with an employer's coaching program if offered the opportunity to do so. And expectations are running high; three-quarters (75%) of those without a coach, would expect to find it a very or extremely valuable experience if they did.

It is also an accepted fact that coaching has wider benefits related to life as well as work.

It supports an employee's well-being at work and their commitment to their own career development. And it allows them to set and achieve goals to improve their life at work and, at its best, provides a confidential safe space to step back, think, and reframe.

The evidence shows that when employees are empowered to thrive, organizations thrive with them. So, what is getting in the way of an accelerated commitment to coaching for all, to serve the obvious talent needs of every business?

There are several challenges to the wider adoption of coaching. All of them are solvable but need to be acknowledged first before being remedied.



7

challenges

to wide  
adoption of  
democratized  
coaching.

4  
3  
2  
1  
0

# 1 coaching seen as focused on the privileged few.



Until recently, we had a strong culture around development at a senior level. So, when we thought about coaching, we only thought about it for a specialist or a leadership role.

— VP of culture and engagement, global media company

Coaching in the workplace is valuable and has a very positive impact on business performance and employee engagement. This is also supported by employers that don't have coaching available currently.

The value of coaching transverses the talent lifecycle but is viewed as most effective when considered as a driver for career development. However, it also significantly supports inclusion, engagement, mobility, acquisition and retention.

The first challenge we encounter is around perceptions of what organizations offer. What is clear from our research is that employees are unaware of what is available to them. Employers claim to have coaching programs at levels higher than employees are experiencing.

- Almost two-thirds of employers (64%) claim to have coaching in place at all levels of the organization. Singapore, US and UK are at the highest levels of coaching availability, with France and Australia at the lowest levels.
- Less than 30% of the employees interviewed are part of a coaching program themselves, and just 20% believe coaching is available to all in their organization.

The second challenge with coaching in modern business is that employees view it as being typically limited to the future leaders, new managers, and those in high-growth teams or roles. Unfortunately, this lack of inclusivity leaves others feeling left out.

When asked to rank the availability of coaching in their organization, 38% of employees believe it is for those identified as future leaders, 33% for those in high-growth teams or roles, and 30% for new managers. For employers that eliminated an established coaching program, there was understandable negativity. Over a third of respondents would view this action as putting profit over people, with some 41% saying it would make them feel they alone were responsible for their career development.

Our research clarifies that there are many other challenges and barriers with coaching. Some of these relate to inclusion challenges such as gender and generational differences, which we will explore in the following two sections.

only **27%** of coached employees believe it is a service available to all employees.

and

**38%**

believe it is for those who are identified as future leaders.

**33%**

believe it is for those who are working in growth areas or growth teams.

**27%**

believe it is only for executives or senior leaders.



# 2 the generational challenge.



I worry about expectations – I think one thing is that people are going to expect coaching as part of their career development. Employees need to realize that they have to take on the responsibility for themselves as well.

— head of career development, CPG company

One of the most startling findings of our global research has been some clear difference in the experience of and perceptions of coaching across the generations.

For the purposes of this research, we defined age ranges as follows:



Gen Z  
(18-24 years of age)



Younger Millennials  
(25-32)



Older Millennials  
(33-40)



Gen X  
(41-56)



Boomers  
(57-64)

Expectations are high. Across all the employees we surveyed there are clearly widespread hopes that coaching becomes a benefit provided via their employers. But here there are clear differences between the generations.

- There is clearly significant enthusiasm for employer-sponsored coaching among Generation Z (48% of respondents), Young Millennials (41%), and Older Millennials (50%).
- This enthusiasm drops off among Generation X (38%) and Boomers (35%).

Why the sharp drop in expectation among older sections of the workforce? This becomes easier to understand when workforce towards coaching is easier when looking at the hopes and expectations for career mobility.

Expectations of a potential move – and progress – within the current organization diminish through the generations.

- While 75% of Generation Z see such a move as at least probable, this figure falls sharply to 56% among Older Millennials and 50% for Generation X and as low as 40% for Baby Boomers.



% of employees who hope an employer will offer coaching in the future

35%

boomers

\*lowest level

50%

older millennials

\*highest level

likelihood to move to new role at current organization

58%

total

75%

generation z

\*highest level

value perceptions of coaching for those without a coach

78%

total

83%

older millennials

\*highest level

likelihood to move to another organization

45%

total

51%

older millennials

\*highest level

Businesses may assume that it is inevitable that experienced staff will have fewer opportunities or wish to pursue less career mobility as they get older. This is a dangerous assumption. Older segments of the workforce are more loyal, but our research shows they are not wholly prepared to settle for career inertia and are open to a coaching intervention.

- More than half of Older Millennials (54%) and Generation X (51%) are considering a move to another organization in the next 12 months.
- This is a significantly higher proportion than those usually depicted as more “restless” in their search for career development – Generation Z (32%) and Younger Millennials (46%).

Older Millennials and Generation X are rich in experience, and their desire for future development remains considerable. No organization can afford for these generations to not have their appetite for career development met, and to risk them becoming frustrated and disenfranchised.

There is hope, however, for the re-engagement and rescue of these sections of the workforce among enlightened employers through coaching interventions.

Our employee research shows that among those without a coach, Older Millennials have the strongest positive take on what a coach could bring to their career.

- Five in six (83%) of Older Millennials say it will be very or extremely valuable for them.
- This compares favorably with three-quarters (75%) for the sample as a whole, with approval ratings remarkably consistent among Generation X, Younger Millennials and Generation Z.

In other words, the “democratization” of coaching across the generations will help all – and may help those at greatest risk of departure to stay.

Organizations need to find an inclusive approach to coaching to retain and engage experienced employees and give them the hope of further career mobility, not the prospect of stagnation and decay. And employees need to realize the responsibility that coaching places on them for their own career development.

There are other inclusionary challenges to the wider development of coaching as well.

# 3 the gender challenge.



I've had a coach for the first time recently, it was game changing. Before that, I thought coaching was more likely to be given to the [male] C-suite.

— an employee

Our research reveals another concern inhibiting the wider development of coaching for all. There are stark differences between the perceived benefits of coaching between genders – and doubts over whether leaders are “looking out for” the development of men and women in an equitable manner.

There are differences across genders over the benefits of coaching. Confidence is consistently seen as a top benefit for both men and women **with** coaches BUT there are some large perception gaps in other ways:

- Men with coaches feel more prepared for their next role (47% vs 33% women), whereas
- Women with coaches see being a good people leader as a core benefit (47% vs 43% men).

Men are marginally (7%) more likely to either move to another organization entirely or to a new role within their current organization. Women are marginally more likely to pursue internal mobility routes but are more likely than men to stay put in their current organization and their current role.

For those **without** coaches, there are more marked differences in perceptions across gender around what coaching could bring. Women see the top 3 benefits as feeling more:

- Confident in their work (59% women vs 49% men),
- Engaged (51% women vs 42% men), and
- More prepared for the next position/role/opportunity internally (47% women vs 35% men).

Men with coaches view feeling prepared for the next role as a top benefit, whereas women with coaches are more likely to see being a good people leader as a top benefit. Therefore you can say men are viewing coaching as a way to help them move forward in their role to a much greater extent than women – coaching is not yet the career catalyst for women that it is for men.



Under current coaching models, the research shows that more men than women feel supported by leadership in their organization when it comes to their career progression and performance.

Men feel that their leadership:

- Care about their career development (33% men vs 24% women).
- Care about their daily performance in the job (29% v 22%).
- Care about their personal well-being (27% vs 19%).
- Helps them with interpersonal relationships at work (25% vs 19%).
- Ensures they are focusing on skills which will help them in their careers (33% vs 21%).

While the level of engagement with a coach is at similar levels across genders in terms of levels of satisfaction and perceived value, the intention to persist with coaching in the long term does differ. Men are more committed to coaching (64% definitely want to continue) than women (44% want the same).

The way in which employers communicate the benefits of coaching must be tailored to encourage uptake and persistence with coaching among genders.

Finally, all employees, regardless of gender, clearly want their current organization to provide them with the next step in their careers, rather than having to look outside and start again at another organization.

- 88% of men who want to change roles want to do so at their current organization.
- 85% of women feel the same way.

These three inclusionary challenges around the perception of access, the career mobility of Older Millennials and the attitudes of women to coaching are all problems that can be solved by placing coaching at the center of any talent strategy.

Organizations have the chance to empower talent of all levels, ages, and gender, to make their life and work enjoyable and engaging. Coaching will play an increasingly crucial role in making this happen.



A top benefit of coaching is 'feeling prepared for the next role internally.'

47%  
of men agree

33%  
of women agree



Is there a strong likelihood you will continue with coaching?

64%  
of men say yes

44%  
of women say yes



Do you hope to have coaching offered to you by your employer?

42%  
of men say yes

33%  
of women say yes



# 4 the uptake challenge.



Under old models, if the take-up wasn't there, that would be several thousand dollars down the drain.

— VP of HR, financial technology company

There are other challenges to a greater spread of coaching. HR leaders say about 75% of employees are taking the opportunity to participate in a coaching program when offered. Therefore 25% do not.

Of the employees not taking part in a coaching program, a quarter also say that they have been coached in the past but have not continued, while almost as many (24%) seem unclear as to what is currently on offer. The lack of clarity is resolvable with better communications but is clearly a missed opportunity in communicating the benefits and value of coaching.

The take-up challenge is costly for business.

There must also be radical reform of the flexibility of coaching packages in 2022 and beyond if it is to be overcome. Old coaching models fail many employers, with most forced to subscribe to packages that are very costly if not fully utilized. Fears around take up are understandable and are part of the reason for our next challenge.

employer perspective.

employee perspective.

only

60%

of employees are eligible to participate in coaching.

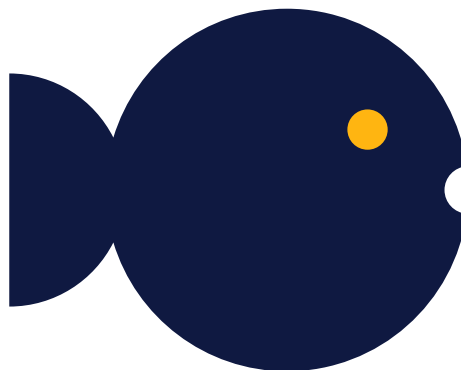
and

25%

of eligible employees do not take the opportunity.

24%

of employees surveyed are unsure if coaching is even offered.



# 5 the funding challenge.



With other models we were spending a lot per coaching engagement. It's not scalable. You'll struggle to get the budget for more, unless something changes.

— head of people, global airline organization

Funding is a challenge to the expansion of coaching, among employees as well as employers.

Our research among employers certainly shows that funding to coaching is the barrier to a broader reach. **They say that almost all of them would offer coaching to every employee if costs were not an issue.**

The problem is that costs are an issue...

Among the employees we surveyed self-funding, in the absence of employer funding, was also an issue.

Across different levels of talent:

- Only 20% said that they're working with a coach that is funded by their employer.
- Another 9% are self-funding a coach, with Gen Z and Young Millennials more likely (19%) to pay their own way.

employer perspective.

## 93%

of employers surveyed would offer **coaching to ALL** if money or resources were not part of the consideration.

If there were ways to make the funding of coaching more achievable and affordable, whoever is providing the funding, coaching would spread and its benefits would be wider. A concerning statistic is just how many people are self-funding coaching because of a negative experience when requesting coaching from an employer.

- Over three-quarters (78%) of those who paid for coaching themselves had either been refused outright (45%) or had felt either ignored or dismissed by their employer.

Finally, those self-funding a coach feel as though they have been left on their own in terms of career progress.

A more positive attitude to such requests to fund coaching will be crucial in the future. Especially when you factor in the costs stated earlier in the report for re-hiring and replacing employees, and the significant time consideration and loss of productivity.

employee perspective.

only

## 20%

of employees surveyed are working with a coach provided by their employer.

another

## 9%

of employees surveyed are self-funding a coach on their own.

# 6 the ROI challenge.



HR always is going to think of how it sells the ROI to others. These are complex purchases. Pilot projects, with no upfront cost, can really make sense.

— sr. director of procurement, leading automotive company

The value of coaching is widely acknowledged by employers and employees surveyed in our research. But how does this return on investment show itself? There are certainly differences in the perception between those employers and employees who do and don't have coaching programs.

The benefits seen are broadly similar among those who do have a coaching program, regardless of if you're an employer or employee.

Among those businesses that already have a coaching program, the benefits of coaching are perceived to be widespread.

- 1st – Increasing engagement
- 2nd – Building confidence for employees
- 3rd – Promotes talent mobility

## top 3 reasons employers have not implemented a coaching program.

- #1 We couldn't clearly define what we need.
- #2 Our employees did not see the benefit.
- #3 We didn't have bandwidth to implement and manage it properly.

And employees see the most important benefits as those that expand competency and develop them:

- 1st – Building Confidence
- 2nd – Growing their potential to be a good manager or leader
- 3rd – Improved communications within their team

Among those without a coaching program in place, there are challenges, though all of them are solvable.

Top 3 reasons for not having a coaching program are that:

- 38% can't define what they need in terms of learning and development – which suggests

that the market needs further education on the needs for and value of coaching for it to be more widely understood and implemented.

- 36% think that it is their employees that can't see the benefit of coaching. We see this as a misplaced view, given all the evidence contained in this report, and it alludes to internal communication challenges within a business and not engaging the workforce in the benefits of a coaching program.
- 36% say they have no bandwidth to lead or manage a coaching program.

While this last point is understandable it raises the issue of internal versus external resourcing of coaching.



# the resourcing challenge (internal vs. external coaching).



From what I've seen of internal coaching, it never works well. I'm not sure that people want to go to others within the company to get coaching on their career or discuss challenges.

— business unit leader, global media company

Our employer research shows that of organizations with coaching programs already in place two-thirds (66%) claim to be using externally certified coaches to some degree. However there are variations depending on the size of the business, with organizations of 2,000-4,999 people typically more reliant on internal resources, such as in-house coaches and worryingly, 28% of talent surveyed said they had coaching from their direct line manager relationships.

Certified coaches are widely considered to do the best job, with external coaches that are certified achieving the highest overall score for their performance (100%). Enterprise level organizations consider internal coaching by direct line managers to be the least effective method, and smaller businesses (sub 1,000 employees) express great concern over internal leaders wishing to coach, validating the need for external certified coaching further.

employer perspective.

## 50%

of organizations rely on direct managers to coach.

Among those who were not engaged in a coaching program, a common reason given by employees was an ongoing stigma around coaching:

- Coaches are people within the company with whom they don't feel comfortable sharing their thoughts openly (21%).
- Feels like it means the employee is not doing well in their job, expressed by 28% of employees surveyed.

Even through no fault of their own, it may be that it is difficult for line managers to disentangle themselves from these perceptions. It may be time for a fresh perspective on the value of external resourcing.

employee perspective.

reasons for not participating  
in available coaching:

## #1

Coaches are people from within the company and I don't feel comfortable sharing openly with them.

# conclusion.



Democratizing coaching is so key. For the coaching itself, yes, but also for breaking down all those other challenges and barriers that exist for us at work.

— CHRO, global technology company



Our new report, we hope, helped readers to make some sense of the turbulence in the talent market.

At Randstad RiseSmart we prefer to see things differently. We believe in making work better for everyone. Bringing new talent into an organization of itself can be a good thing – it brings new ideas and experience to the fore. And at some point, businesses need to proactively get ahead of this transition and build a modern workforce. But how? Our research has drawn us to conclude that:

1. **Coaching is set to become the enabler of the “Great Retention.”** It can inspire and support the ongoing development, satisfaction, engagement, and performance of individual employees in every respect. Coaching is a conduit – it is not so much one of many potential tools to hand, but the very means through which many other people challenges can be tackled and solved.
2. **It will be critical to support the inclusionary agenda.** Coaching has been seen as focused on a privileged few, with only a quarter of employees believing that it is available to all. Older Millennials and Generation X are not settling for career inertia but are impatiently looking instead for new roles. And our research reveals the need for employers to communicate the benefits of coaching across genders.
3. **Affordable new models of coaching are emerging.** The challenges of cost, value, and ROI are surmountable if coaching can happen on a pay-as-you-go basis. Funding for coaching is the biggest barrier to its deployment more widely – 93% of organizations surveyed would roll it out across a business to all employees if this challenge could be overcome. Things are changing though, and with our own solution, HR teams can test the water with a low initial investment to encourage expansive use of the solution across different teams and departments. Thus enabling greater flexibility and deployment and wider employee usage.
4. **Among employees, the positive perceptions of “coaching for all” will far outweigh the negative.** The top 3 perceptions, according to our research, are:
  - 87% say it helps them overcome challenges.
  - 87% say it helps them move forward with their careers.
  - 85% say it shows them that their employer cares about them.
5. **The benefits of a new approach to coaching will prove far-reaching.** It has wider benefits related to improving life both at work and beyond. For employers, coaching enables the liberation of talent and the discussion and resolution of issues that may otherwise lead to a valued employee leaving the organization. For employees, it supports their well-being: it could assist them to return to work after a period of long-term sick leave, negotiate worklife challenges, and a better environment at work.
6. **Organizations need to do more to ensure employees are aware coaching is available to them,** and if moving from a traditional leadership/high potential offering to a more democratized approach, this is even more important. Across the board, 30% of those who are eligible for coaching are not participating, which doesn’t stack up when almost 100% of participants believe it is valuable.
7. **Driving coaching to focus on an employee’s worklife as a whole, not a specific HR-derived goal is more advantageous.** 89% of those surveyed considered this more motivating and 90% more valuable than a traditional development or leadership style approach.

The democratization of coaching is not only essential but eminently achievable for businesses. Because of these conclusions, Randstad RiseSmart, therefore, believes that career coaching should be sponsored by an employer at no cost to the employee. It should be led by an employee’s needs rather than those imposed by HR, and aim to empower employees, by helping them make their work and life more enjoyable and engaging, ensuring they make considered decisions about their time at work.

# recommendations: what HR needs to do next.

Talent retention is the top priority for HR over the next 12 months. Coaching, it is clear, has a direct impact on retention and improving engagement. Right now, there is a major challenge ahead for HR in delivering a more inclusive and affordable coaching culture. But it is achievable and it's also a challenge that, if met, could further elevate HR's position of influence within any business. Here are some key actions that the profession should be pursuing:

1. Many organizations are experiencing significantly more turnover than their pre-pandemic levels. The HR department must tackle "other" people challenges such as engagement, career development, and support a more inclusive workplace to reduce the attrition. It is the sum of these parts that make people want to stay and work to improve their worklife. **Making the case for an integral role for coaching will help them achieve this.**
2. For HR, arguing for a bigger coaching budget becomes achievable if coaching can be delivered with a more flexible and scalable model. **HR should argue for pilot project investment on this basis. This would encourage more expansive use and democratize coaching.**
3. **Certified coaches do the best job.** It's that simple. Using direct line managers or leaders informally stepping into the role of a coach can be effective but across the board, it is certified coaches that deliver the best results for the employee and ultimately the business.
4. Above all, there needs to be a change in the collective mindset around coaching. HR needs to show that a successful central role for coaching rests on three pillars. It must be:
  - **expert-led:** Certified coaches need to be able to deliver expertise to ensure that the experience is employee-centric.
  - **engaging:** There needs to be a single, integrated and engaging technology and human experience for employees. It's vital to combine technology-enabled 'nudging' of talent to build their positive habit formation, with the latest resources and knowledge.
  - **inclusive:** Too many traditional coaching models are cost-prohibitive. The best approaches enable every employee to have access to enhancing guidance around work-life issues to strengthen inclusivity.
5. Too many organizations are heavily reliant on engagement to measure the success of a coaching program. This approach is too broad. **Implementing a feedback loop for coaching that is more closely tied to wider HR metrics and priorities is helpful.** It not only highlights challenges and successes, but will also help justify further investments in coaching.

With this approach it is more than possible to achieve a successful, inclusive, and affordable talent retention strategy, with worklife coaching at its heart.





## about randstad risesmart.

Randstad RiseSmart is a leading specialist in worklife coaching and career transition solutions and an operating company of Randstad N.V.

Our purpose is to enable organizations to unleash possibilities throughout their working lives for their biggest asset, their people. We understand that a business thrives when its people do. Our coaching-centric approach is designed to support individuals throughout all stages of their employment, and to support businesses in onboarding, developing, mobilizing, engaging, retaining, and transitioning employees to have the best possible worklife experience in alignment with business needs.

We do this through our industry-leading combination of 'tech and touch' resources such as expert coaching, field expertise, industry insights, curated content, specialist platforms, and personalized action plans.

Visit us at: [www.randstadrisemart.com](https://www.randstadrisemart.com).



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