

Coaching Themes for Leaders and Sectors Within and Across the Health Ecosystem

TLD Group Leadership Team: Lisa Clarke, Karen Curley, MA, Rebecca Duberman, Tracy Duberman, Ph.D., Kristin Luce, MA, Tara Satlow, Ph.D.,

INTRODUCTION

We believe health ecosystem leaders face unique challenges in navigating complex stakeholder relationships, regulatory environments, and rapid technological advancements. As a leadership development firm specializing in coaching senior leaders within the various sectors of the health ecosystem, we are uniquely positioned to capture and explore themes of coaching goals across different leadership levels and sectors.

This exploratory study examines the most frequently cited coaching goals of health ecosystem leaders within two of the main sectors of the health ecosystem, namely the provider and pharmaceutical sectors, and between four leadership roles, namely C-suite, VP, Director, and Physician Leaders. We examine patterns and trends that may inform targeted coaching interventions.

Research Questions:

1. What are the most frequently cited coaching goals across all leaders within the provider and pharmaceutical sectors of the health ecosystem?
2. What are the most frequently cited coaching goals by leadership level across the health ecosystem?
3. Are there differences in coaching development goals by sector and leadership level?
4. Are there insights we can glean to inform targeted development strategies to enhance leadership capabilities to drive high performance within organizations.

METHOD

This poster shares insights from our 2023 database of coaching development goals across roles and sectors in the health ecosystem. The findings are derived from 13 unique organizations and 85 unique coaching engagements. Roles included C-Level (N=13), VP (N=22), Director (N=21), and Physician Leader (N=29). Sectors included 11 provider organizations and 2 pharmaceutical organizations.

Our coaching development goal tracking system (CoachTrax) was utilized to monitor and manage coaching goals. The goal tracking system aligned to a generic library of 75 coaching goals. In their work with their coachees, TLD Group coaches selected up to 3 development goals that aligned with their client's individual development action plan. We provide a frequency analysis of the top coaching goals selected by leaders by sector and role.

ANALYSES & RESULTS

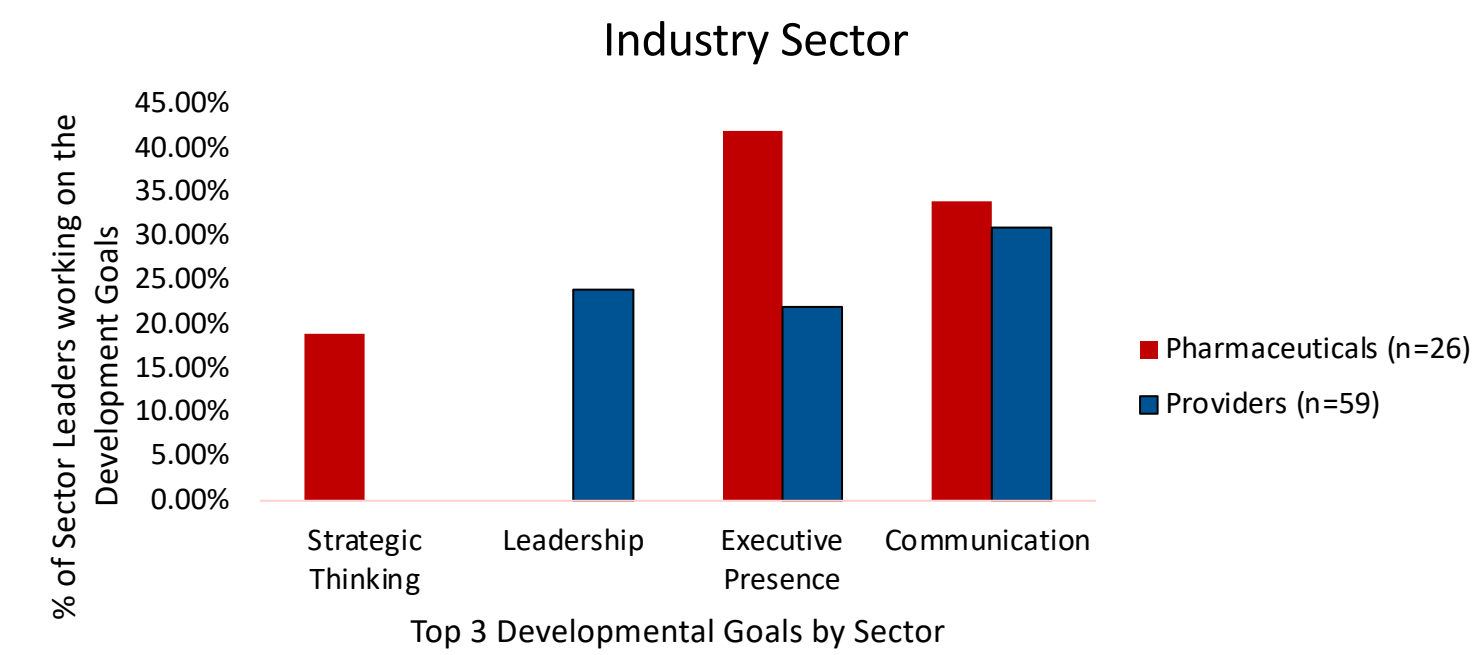


Figure One above depicts the most frequently cited coaching goals among all 85 leaders in our study by sector of the health ecosystem. Across both sectors, communication and executive presence emerge as key coaching focus areas. The research suggests some universal leadership competencies (communication and executive presence) are important across sectors, but the specific priorities evolve from basic leadership in the provider sector to strategy in the pharmaceutical sector.

Sector-Specific Coaching Priorities:

- In the **Provider** sector, organizations emphasize communication, executive presence, and leadership, likely reflecting the need to lead diverse teams and stakeholders in a complex, highly-regulated environment.
- The **Pharmaceutical** sector places a notable emphasis on strategic thinking alongside common goals like communication, leadership, and executive presence, indicating a need for navigating complex industry dynamics and innovation.



Figure Two above depicts the most frequently cited coaching goals among the 85 leaders in our study by leadership level. Across all leadership levels, communication, executive presence, building high-performance teams, strategic thinking, leadership, and relationships emerge as key coaching focus areas. The research suggests some universal leadership competencies are important across levels, but the specific priorities evolve from interpersonal skills at lower levels to more strategic and visionary competencies at higher levels.

Role-Specific Coaching Priorities:

- **C-suite leaders** prioritize executive presence, team building and relationship-building, highlighting the importance of projecting confidence, aligning team performance, and fostering collaborative relationships at the highest organizational levels.
- **VPs** focus on executive presence, communication skills and strategic thinking, emphasizing the need for effective communication and the ability to formulate and execute strategic plans.
- **Directors** prioritize communication, team building, and leadership development, indicating the importance of clear communication, building high-performing teams, and effective leadership capabilities at middle management levels.
- **Physician Leaders** prioritize communication, executive presence and leadership, underscoring the unique challenges they face in healthcare settings, including effectively communicating with stakeholders and providing leadership in clinical environments.

DISCUSSION

Based on the outcomes of this study and recognizing that coaching strategies should be tailored to each leader's specific priorities, we draw some *preliminary* insights for coaches working with leaders across the health ecosystem.

Sector-Specific Tailoring: Coaches may want to be mindful of the differences in coaching priorities between sectors within the health ecosystem. For example, in the Provider sector, where leading diverse teams and stakeholders in a complex, regulated environment is crucial, coaching may heavily emphasize communication, executive presence, and leadership skills. Meanwhile, in the Pharmaceutical sector, where navigating complex industry dynamics and fostering innovation is paramount, coaching should include a notable emphasis on strategic thinking alongside common focus areas like communication and leadership.

Universal Leadership Competencies: While sector-specific nuances exist, coaches should also acknowledge the universal leadership competencies that remain important across all sectors within the health ecosystem. These include communication, executive presence, team building, and relationship-building. Understanding these universal competencies enables coaches to provide foundational support while tailoring coaching interventions to meet sector-specific needs.

Evolution of Priorities Across Levels: Coaches should be mindful of the evolution of coaching priorities as leaders progress through different levels within the health ecosystem. Starting from basic leadership skills, such as interpersonal communication, coaching should gradually transition towards more strategic and visionary competencies as leaders ascend to higher levels. This progression ensures that leaders are equipped with the necessary skills to meet the increasing demands of their roles.

Role-Specific Coaching Strategies: Coaches should tailor their coaching strategies to align with the specific priorities of leaders at different levels within the health ecosystem. For example, while C-suite leaders may benefit from coaching that enhances their executive presence and focuses on aligning team performance, VPs may require coaching that hones their strategic thinking abilities alongside effective communication skills. Similarly, directors may need coaching that emphasizes clear communication and building high-performing teams.

Understanding Physician Leader Challenges: Coaches working with physician leaders should have a deep understanding of the unique challenges they face in healthcare settings. This includes effectively communicating with diverse stakeholders, providing leadership in clinical environments, and navigating the intricate dynamics of healthcare systems and pharmaceutical R&D. Coaching interventions should be tailored to address these specific challenges and support physician leaders in achieving their goals effectively.

Limitations of this study include a relatively small sample size, which prevents drawing statistically significant insights. More data is needed to analyze coaching priorities by specific role within each industry sector and draw significant conclusions on coaching strategies.

REFERENCES

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Detailed Analysis

Accountability: Being accountable and passing on accountability for one's own actions and those of colleagues and the organization
Adaptability: Remaining fully functional while adapting to changing circumstances (environment, responsibilities, procedures, people, etc.)
Adjust leadership to changed circumstances: Change is a situational even, transition is the adjustment you go through to adapt to the change. Letting go of the prior state, inventing the new, and then creating momentum into the new
Alignment: Acting to align own unit's goals and the strategic direction of the organization; ensures that people in a unit understand how their work relates to the organizations mission
Ambition: The drive to pursue goals and strive for success
Analytical Thinking: Accurately defines situations or problems into smaller parts, and understand the interplay between components
Assertiveness: The ability to voice one's views without damaging the relationship with the other party
Attention to Detail: The ability to process detailed information effectively and consistently
Building a high-performance team: Calibrate the team's current state of performance. Engage in a process to realign the team on goals, roles, business results, priorities, norms for working together, what they can expect
Building Relationships: Develops strong and meaningful relationships
Building Trust: Developing, maintaining, and strengthening partnerships with others by demonstrating honesty, honoring commitments, and behaving in a consistent manner
Business Acumen: Displaying good judgement in a business decision making; understanding market risks and opportunities and making decisions in a timely and effective manner
Change Management: Initiating, sponsoring, and implementing organizational change; accepting the ambiguity that comes with change
Coaching: Leveraging on-the-job activities and experiences as a way to develop employees; providing guidance, feedback, and support
Collaboration: Ability to work cooperate and engage with others productively and efficiently in order to achieve the required outputs
Communication: Ensuring that important information is shared with appropriate employees and across department and functional areas
Conflict Management: Recognizing differences of opinion and diplomatically helps resolve them; deals effectively with others in an antagonistic situation
Continuous Learning: Displaying the desire and drive to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to perform effectively across time
Creative / Innovative Thinking: The ability to direct one's inquisitive mind toward initiating new strategies, products, services and markets
Credibility: Is perceived as trustworthy; displays a high level of expertise in a particular are of knowledge
Customer Focus: Develops and maintains strong relationships with customers; makes customers and their needs a primary focus
Customer Orientation: The ability and willingness to find out what the customer wants and needs and to act accordingle, taking the organization's costs and benefits into account
Decision Making: Identifying and understanding issues, problems and opportunities in an efficient manner; committing oneself and make active decisions or express one's viewpoint
Delegating: Assigning decision making and work functions to toehrs, taking their interests, ambitions, development into action. Following up on delegated tasks
Developing Others: Reviewing and analyzing performance to distinguish strengths and weaknesses, followed by appropriate actions to ensure they are enhanced
Discipline: Adjusting to existing rules, procedures and policy. Finding reinforcement from the right authority when in doubt
Diversity and Inclusion: Actively seeking out different viewpoints and leverages the benefits of different perspectives; shows respect for people regardless of race, gender, disability, or lifestyle
Emotional Intelligence: Sensitivity to ones own emotions and those of others. Skillful expression of one's emotions and an ability to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathically
Empowering Others: Gives people latitude to make decisions based on their level and area of responsibility and level of knowledge and skills
Entrepreneurship: Actively seeking out and identifying opportunities to develop and offer new products and services; Initiating actions that may involve deliberate risk to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage
Executive Presence: Developing one's own leadership style, substance and character. Making a good impresion and sustaining it over time
Facilitation: Using group skills to lead groups to consensus, effectively solve problems, and accomplish tasks
Flexibility: Adjusting personal, interpersonal, and professional behavior quickly based on the demands of the project, customer, or solution
Getting Results: Continues to work toward achievement of goals in the face of obstacles. Shows a significant level of effort, persistence, and time commitment to achieve goals
Global Perspective: Understanding and appreciating the importance and impact of culture and the interplay amongst different cultures in a globalized world
Influence: The ability to share a vision and move people into action toward achieving a shared goal using verbal and nonverbal behaviors that inspire, influence, and drive results
Initiative: The ability to identify and create opportunities and take action accordingly, rather than waiting passively for assignments
Innovation: Is receptive to new ideas and adapts to new situations; combines ideas in unique ways y making connections etween disparate concepts
Integrity: Habitually maintaining confidentiality regardless of pressure from others, admitting mistakes and taking a stand based on principles and values in spite of the potential for negative consequences
Interpersonal Skills: The ability to listen, understand, and empathize with others. Sensitivity to the attitudes, feelings or circumstances of others and awareness of the influence and impact of one's own behavior
Leadership: The ability to provide leadership, guidance and facilitate alignment and cooperation among different people and teams in order to achieve a common goal

Description of Figure One and Figure Two

FIGURE 1:

Out of a total of 58 leaders in the Provider sector (n=27 organizations):

- 31% of the leaders chose Communication as a development goal - Enhancing the ability to share important information across departments and functional areas to facilitate alignment and cooperation.
- 24% of the leaders chose Leadership as a development goal - Developing leadership skills to guide teams, align them towards common goals, and facilitate cooperation to achieve objectives.
- 22% of the leaders chose Executive presence as a development goal- Cultivating a leadership style, substance and character that makes a strong, lasting impression and commands respect.

Out of a total of 27 leaders in the Pharmaceutical sector (n= 2 organizations):

- 40% of the leaders chose Executive presence as a development goal- Enhancing one's leadership style, substance and character to make a strong, lasting impression, command respect, and influence stakeholders.
- 33% of the leaders chose Communication as a development goal- Ensuring that important information is shared with appropriate employees and across department and functional areas.
- 19% of the leaders chose Strategic Thinking as a development goal- Developing the ability to create a strategic plan involving complex operational patterns, activity, and decision-making to gain a competitive edge.

FIGURE 2:

Out of a total of 13 C-suite level coachees across 9 organizations:

- 46% chose Executive Presence as a development goal - Developing one's leadership style, substance and ability to make a strong, lasting impression is critical for executives.
- 38% chose Building a High-Performance Team as a development goal - Aligning and optimizing team performance is a key responsibility for C-level leaders.
- 38% chose Building Relationships as a development goal was also cited 26% of the time - Building strong relationships and providing effective leadership guidance are also important focus areas.

Out of a total of 22 VP-level coachees across 8 organizations:

- 45% chose Communications as a development goal- Effectively expressing ideas and tailoring messages is a key VP competency.
- 41% chose Executive Presence as a development goal- As with C-suite leaders, projecting confidence and leadership is critical for VPs.
- 23% chose Strategic Thinking as a development goal- VPs need to cultivate meaningful plans to involving complex patterns, activities, and decision-making.

Out of a total of 21 Director-level coachees across 5 organizations:

- 24% chose Communications, Building a High-Performance Team, and Leadership as a development goal- Directors need strong communication skills, the ability to build aligned, high-performing teams, and effective leadership capabilities.

Out of a total of 29 Physician Leader coachees across 4 organizations:

- 38% chose Communications as a development goal- Effectively communicating with patients, staff and colleagues is critical for physician leaders.
- 31% chose Leadership as a development goal- Providing leadership in clinical settings is a key responsibility for physician leaders.
- 14% chose Executive Presence as a development goal - Projecting leadership presence is an important competencies for physician leaders.

Learning Agility: Is willing and able to learn from experience, adapt and apply the knowledge to new situations
Managing Conflict: Recognizes differences of opinion and looks for win-win solutions through dialogue; deals effectively with others in an antagonistic situation
Managing Performance: Working with others to set and communicate specific and measurable goals; providing timely and accurate feedback and support to achieve goals
Managing Risk: Balances opportunity and risk; is comfortable indealing with uncertainty
Meeting Ethical Standards: When confronted with ethical dilemmas, acts in a way that is consistent with the law, policy and procedures, organizational and personal values
Mindfulness: Developing and sustaining a calm yet aware mental state, achieved nu focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while simultaneously acknowledging and accepting one's feelings
Motivating Others: Is able to share a vision and move people to action
Negotiation: Achieving win-win outcomes by identifying common interests, clarifying differences, and achieving consensus or compromise
Networking: Building and maintaining relations, alliances and coalitions within and outside the organization and to use them in order to obtain information, support, and cooperation.
Oral Communication: Expresses concepts and ideas clearly; tailors the message to the audience
Organizational Communications: Ensures that important information is shared with appropriate employees and across departments and functional areas
Perseverance: Sustaining energy and focus on the task(s) at hand; followinf through on tasks and responsibilities to completion in a timely and satisfactory manner
Personal Brand: Marketing oneself and ones career/services as a brand; establishing a prescribed image or impression of oneself in the mind of others
Planning: The ability to set goals and turn them into tasks and schedules to achieve goal completion
Political Savvy: The ambition and ability to generate support by understanding the objectives of others and influencing them to act in ways that support one's personal or organizational objectives
Political Skill: Ability to understand others at work and use their knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal or organizational objectives
Presenting: The ability to present ideas and plans clearly and communicate effectively in front of individuals and groups
Problem Solving: Approaching a situation or problem by defining the problem or issue, breaking it into smaller parts when needed and using logic and intuition to achieve the desired outcome
Process Management: The ability to effectively assess, design, execute, measure, monitor, and control business processes
Project Management: Using resources efficiently and manages the budget; monitoring projecy process and evaluates performance
Providing Direction: Defining clear and actionable goals, monitoring and providing feedback on progress
Quality Control: Monitoring operations to ensure that they meet production standards. Involces recommending adjustments to the assembly or production process, indpecting, testing, or measuring the product
Relationships: Wealth is not just monetary and is about fulfilling relationships with those around you. Who are the important people in your life and how do you want to work with them along this
Resiliency: Displaying the ability to spring back from and successfully adapt from adversity
Results Orientation: Continuing to work toward achievement of goals in the face of obstacles; shows a significant level of effort, persistence, and time commitment to achieve goals
Risk Management: Ability to recognize opportunities, assess and minimize risk, and maintain the courage to deal with uncertainty and take the appropriate course of action
Self-Awareness: Is aware of impact of one's behavior, decisions and actions on others and the organization at large; has an accurate understanding of one's own strengths and weaknesses
Self-Development: The ability to gain insight in one's identity, values, strenghts and weaknesses, interests and ambitions and to take action in order to enhance one's competencies where and when possible
Strategic Thinking: Ability to produce a campaign plan, which may involve complex operational patterns, activity, and decision-making
Stress Management: The ability to perform under pressure and in adversity
Systems Thinking: Understanding a system or organization by examining the connections and interactions between the components that comprise the whole
Tactical Thinking: Translating strategic vision into real outcomes via the implementation of processes and procedures. Understands and appropriately applies procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies
Technical Credibility: Understands and appropriately applies procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise
Technology Use: Is proficient at using technology
Time Management: Planning and exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency, or productivity
Valuing and Leveraging Diversity: Actively seeks out different viewpoints and leverages the benefits of different perspectives; shows resprct for people regardless of race, fender, disability, or lifestyle
Verbal Expression: Communicates thoughts in a clear, organized manner for the intended audience
Vision: Has the ability to create a common vision and share it with others; understanding of where the organization will be in 3, 5, or 10 years
Work-Life Balance: Balances work with personal life to reduce stress and improve the quality of life in ways that enhance personal and professional success
Workmanship: Independently carrying out one's work in accordance with professionl standards of one's profession. Developing oneself in one's professional field. Having a thorough knowledge of one's profession
Written Communication: Writes in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience