

Unlocking the potential of our people

Our award-winning coaching strategy helps employees learn, adapt and grow.



Our transformational path towards performance development

In May 2020, a survey of 82,000 employees showed that the existing performance management approach at AstraZeneca was no longer fit for purpose: backward-facing, bureaucratic and too focused on outputs. At the same time, the company strategy was rooted in the need for innovation, learning for life and unlocking individual potential.

Our global Talent & Development team responded by creating a new vision in 2020 where coaching capability is at the heart of a high quality, consistent, real-time, conversation-based performance development approach, and is designed to enable individuals and teams to perform at their very best and maximise their contribution to the business.

The vision was backed up with an investment in coaching capabilities and professional coaching support to maximise individual and collective potential. A major transformation effort to move from a performance management process to a performance development culture – one in which all employees have more regular opportunities to discuss their development and performance throughout the year.

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Paving the way for a new coaching paradigm

We have moved away from ‘backward looking’ annual reviews and 1-5 performance ratings and replaced them with a new framework focused on real-time coaching conversations and performance insights, with regular ‘check-ins’ between managers and their team members.

The first step was to define what we mean by coaching, and make sure all managers had the skills to build a sense of belonging where employees can show up as their whole selves. By allowing employees a chance to regularly connect with their managers, it provides opportunities to have more productive conversations that focus on strengths and look to the future.

Interventions included a complete portfolio of development opportunities, such as ‘Manager as Coach’ and ‘Leader as Coach’ programmes, workshops and masterclasses, peer coaching forums, AI Feedforward simulations and professional coaching support.

We have transformed performance development into the norm – showing how each individual has a role to play in the success of our business. By deliberately shifting our strategy, coaching became accessible, inclusive and an intrinsic part of daily work conversations. Our global organisation is made of thousands of two-way conversations, both internally and externally, that help us to pursue innovation, create partnerships, explore ideas, and embrace diversity. With this in mind, our mantra was “when conversations flow, so do the possibilities”.

Prioritising our people

Since updating our strategy, we have been recognised by the International Coaching Federation (ICF) as winners at the prestigious Coaching Impact Awards 2023* – a celebration of the investment we make in our people and the culture of coaching we have built over recent years, where employees prioritise their development journey while feeling safe to be themselves and explore new possibilities.

Our latest employee surveys have shown that investing in coaching has helped employees to embrace a culture of coaching, showing a 45% shift in positive mindset towards performance development, and managers reporting a 70% increase in confidence around holding meaningful coaching conversations. Thousands of employees received 1:1 coaching for their personal development and around 13,000 managers attended a virtual practice workshop. Managers and leaders saw a 12% increase in core coaching capabilities (as measured by their own team members and peers) and all parties recorded significant increases in insights from quarterly check-ins.



For more information, scan the QR code or click [here](#).

*<https://www.lhh.com/uk/en/insights/lhh-wins-prestigious-icf-coaching-impact-award/>