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The growth of L&D coaching:  
The impact of online and AI  
platforms

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# Welcome



## The Growth of L&D Coaching: The impact of Online and AI platforms

### Introduction

As seasoned recruiters in Learning and Talent Development (L&D) for over 20 years, we have seen an increase in the demand for coaching skills as a component of the L&D function and of L&D roles. We have also witnessed an increase in the number of L&D professionals acquiring Coaching Qualifications for career development and potentially to establish a future career as a coach.

This article explores the impact of Online Coaching platforms, AI tools and some of the key applications and qualifications driving an increased demand for coaching in L&D.

We hope you enjoy it,

Nick Jones,  
Director

# Growth in demand for coaching skills

The coaching industry is experiencing significant growth, with the number of coach practitioners increasing by 54% from 2019 to 2022, according to the 2023 International Coaching Federation (ICF) Global Coaching Study.

This demand is driven by organisations potentially recognising the value of coaching in enhancing employee development and retention.

Allied Market Research projects the global coaching market to grow at a 14% compound annual growth rate (CAGR), further emphasising the increasing importance of coaching in corporate settings.

It is also worth noting that digital and AI platforms provide a new way for qualified coaches to monetise their skills as associate coaches. Historically individual coaches need to build personal brand and their business's to support client acquisition. Online platforms at scale can provide opportunities to coach without the cost of acquiring the clients.

Examples of online coaching tools currently using AI to assist in coach matching, scaling and analysis of data include.

[www.betterup.com](http://www.betterup.com)

[www.torch.io](http://www.torch.io)

[www.helloezra.com](http://www.helloezra.com)

[www.coachhub.com](http://www.coachhub.com)

[www.coaching.com](http://www.coaching.com)

LinkedIn's 2024 workplace Learning report highlights an increased demand for coaching as individuals prioritise career development and internal mobility, suggesting an increased focus on personalised learning experiences.

As we enter a new era of AI and our chosen copilots we may see an increased focus on productivity improvements, presenting more time for employees to innovate in their roles and develop their careers, potentially enabled by personalised learning such as coaching or mentoring.



# Data impact

Generative AI tools can help to provide valuable data-driven insights that help L&D professionals make informed decisions.

AI can process vast amounts of data to offer analytics on learning trends, the effectiveness of coaching interventions, and areas needing attention. Predictive analytics can foresee future learning needs, allowing organizations to proactively address skill gaps.

These insights are crucial for tailoring coaching programs and ensuring their effectiveness.

Josh Bersin points out in his article "AI-Enabled coaching is hot" that AI can match individuals with the right coaches efficiently, leveraging skills taxonomies, online video, and social networks. This approach reduces costs and enhances the effectiveness of coaching programs. For example, BetterUp, a leader in this space, uses AI to offer "precision development at scale," integrating coaching into leadership development, sales training, and well-being programs.

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# Cost effectiveness and efficiency

Qualified coaches who have the time to engage consistently are often sourced externally at a significant cost. Online virtual coaching platforms can significantly reduce costs associated with traditional face-to-face coaching, such as travel expenses and time constraints.

AI-driven tools which are integrated in many online platforms can automate routine administrative tasks, freeing up human coaches to focus on more complex and personalised interactions with learners. This potentially makes high-quality coaching more accessible to smaller organisations with limited budgets, or offer coaching at scale at a lower cost for large dispersed populations, enhancing overall efficiency.



# Scalability

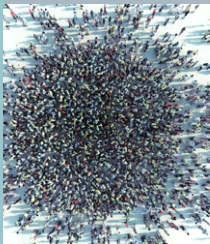
Coaching platforms, and AI integrations help to break down geographical barriers, enabling access to high-quality coaching for a global audience.

This scalability allows organisations to extend coaching services to a larger number of employees without being limited by the availability of human coaches.

AI tools can facilitate virtual coaching sessions, aligning with the trend of remote and hybrid work environments, thereby enhancing the reach and impact of coaching programs.

Coaching Platforms are increasingly designed to accommodate larger groups and geographies and incorporate features such as calendar integrations and time zone scheduling tools, combined with features such as in-app messaging and record-playback features.

Typically these features collectively enhance the scalability and effectiveness of coaching.



# Coaching: Qualifications

Regardless of the quality of a platform or the extent of AI-driven insights, the role of the human coach is indispensable. Only a human coach can truly grasp the nuances of individual goals, behaviors, and motivations. Below is a summary of key coaching qualifications, frequently requested by recruiters. While these are not exhaustive, they serve as valuable indicators of a coach's expertise. The ICF Global Coaching Study 2023 suggest 86% of coach practitioners hold a certification.

## **Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM)**

Level 5 Certificate in Coaching and Mentoring: Focuses on developing coaching and mentoring skills for managers.  
Level 7 Certificate and Diploma for Executive and Senior Level Coaches and Mentors: Aimed at senior professionals.

## **International Coaching Federation (ICF)**

ACC, PCC, and MCC Certifications: Recognised globally, focusing on various levels of coaching expertise.

## **Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)**

Certificate in Coaching and Mentoring: Widely recognised within HR and L&D sectors.

## **European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC)**

Foundation, Practitioner, Senior Practitioner, and Master Practitioner Levels: These cater to different experience levels and coaching expertise.

## **Coaching and Mentoring International (CMI)**

Accredited Coaching Practitioner, Senior Practitioner, Master Practitioner: Focuses on practical application and professional development in coaching.

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# Coaching: Using AI as your assistant

The AI tools that we now have available to us can greatly assist the coaching experience. Using CoPilot, Chat GPT or Gemini to create roadmaps, refine techniques or test alternative approaches can be very valuable.

In order to make the most of your Generative AI tools, you will need to understand the principles of prompt engineering, this additional article may assist [HERE](#).

## Using Generative AI to test questions

Identifying different ways to pose questions and examples are easily generated using Gen AI tools.

## Coaching Role plays

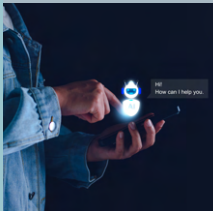
Generative AI can use scenarios to help generate and simulate dialogue and predictive answers.

## Feedback loops

Simulated conversations can be analysed immediately giving real time feedback on impact.

## Creating customised plans

Creating plans for growth and development can be time consuming. Generative AI can greatly assist in producing outputs for coachees.





# Get your reading glasses on

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Sources to follow, recommendations and further reading

**Sara Canaday, Leadership Development Expert**

Enhancing human Coaching with AI - [LinkedIn Learning](#)

**James Kerr - Management Consultant**

"Will AI change the face of the Coaching profession"  
[www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog)

**Josh Bersin - Learning Thought Leader**

[www.joshbersin.com](http://www.joshbersin.com) "Online Coaching is so hot its now disrupting Leadership Development"

**World Economic Forum**

"[How could AI Shape the future of career coaching?](#)"

**Robin Waite, Business Coach**

[www.robinwaite.com/coaching-industry-report](http://www.robinwaite.com/coaching-industry-report)

**Institute of coaching**

[www.instituteofcoaching.org/blogs/predicted-trends-coaching-2024-and-beyond](http://www.instituteofcoaching.org/blogs/predicted-trends-coaching-2024-and-beyond)

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01527 579 647



[info@blueeskimo.com](mailto:info@blueeskimo.com)



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