

# THRIVING COMPANIES

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HOW HR PROFESSIONALS ARE USING COACHING  
SKILLS TO TRANSFORM OFFICE CULTURE



# How HR Managers Like You Are Using Coaching Skills to Improve Their Organizations

Behind any thriving business, you'll find Human Resource professionals working tirelessly to cross I's, dot T's, and keep their companies moving forward.

HR professionals can subtly change an organization's culture in ways that increase employee satisfaction and further the growth goals of the company. Because of their interdepartmental nature, a highly-skilled HR manager is critical to the continued growth and success of any organization. Often, however, the perception among employees is that HR's influence is limited to hiring, firing, annual evaluations, and salary negotiation. **It's time to change that perception.**

The iPEC® Coach Training Program has proved to be highly advantageous for individuals working in Human Resources. We've heard from our graduates that coaching approaches and skills have drastically changed not only their approach to their jobs but the overall feel of the environments they work in.

**Here are the areas where graduates claim to see the most significant impact:**

## Breaking Down Silos

Information and resource hoarding, or a silo mentality, is often seen as a natural growing pain endemic to workplaces but it is actually a result of misaligned goals, poor leadership, and ineffective communication between departments and employees. Instead of offering one-size-fits-all solutions, our coaching graduates are able to ask empowering questions—leading department and company management to access their innate knowledge and develop solutions on a highly individual basis. When the problem is approached in this way, individuals are empowered to solve the problem and become invested in the outcome.

## Coaching within the Workplace

In short, coach-trained HR professionals are able to provide more than a quick “go to” answer when a problem arises. They apply coaching skills and tools to help managers, team leaders, and staff so they can attain their goals, manage and train their teams, resolve conflicts quickly and effectively, and influence workplace culture. The accredited iPEC Coach Training Program teaches practical and effective techniques. Our graduates stand out as individuals who encourage real improvement and empowerment in others.

## Workforce & Leadership Development

More than 87% of employees are disconnected emotionally from their work and workplace.<sup>1</sup> They're stressed, tired, and unfulfilled by the work that they do. Team leaders often dismiss this as typical employee behavior but our iPEC graduates have found that connecting with these individuals and coaching them on a professional and personal level re-engages them. Once reconnected, these employees step into their role and take the lead on projects both within their departments and the company as a whole. Their energy and enthusiasm is contagious and contributes to a more engaged, positive working environment.

## Culture Transformation

Even small workplaces run the risk of their workplace cultures falling into behavioral traps: cliques among employees, a generalized feeling that work is a "drag," or a perception that everyone is out for themselves instead of acting as team players. With coach training, HR employees are better equipped to guide department and business leaders so they can foster deeper and more meaningful relationships between management, teams, and staff.

***We equip our coaching graduates with the skillsets, tools, and techniques needed to guide others toward better decision making, more effective communication, and empowered leadership.***

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<sup>1</sup> State of the Global Workplace. Report. 2014.  
<http://www.gallup.com/services/178517/state-global-workplace.aspx>.





# Asking Instead of Answering:

## Empowering Staff to Make Decisions

*John, a people manager for a large advertising firm, approached HR for advice on dealing with an employee who was no longer fully engaged in her work. Ashley, a talented recent graduate, joined the company a year ago and had all the signs of being a high performer. She quickly learned the ins and outs of her studio designer position but her work output and enthusiasm had been gradually declining. John was growing increasingly frustrated with Ashley, feeling as though she was deliberately not doing her best work and making his department look bad. Ashley's annual employee evaluation was quickly approaching and John wanted suggestions on correcting the problem.*

*The HR manager emailed John a PDF of "by the book" answers, suggesting that he sit down with Ashley to set clear expectations on her responsibilities, meeting deadlines, and improving her attitude. John dutifully carried out his instructions, giving Ashley an outline of management's goals for the "bigger picture" while requesting her signature on a Performance Improvement Plan.*

*For a while, the strategy seemed to work. Ashley took more interest in her tasks, produced stellar work, and met each deadline. Her contributions improved the reputation of the department and John believed his difficulties with her were resolved. After six months, however, Ashley gave her notice to pursue a "new and exciting opportunity" running the social media presence of a start-up company. The loss of her skills left the department in a lurch until they were able to fill the open position and train the new person.*

# What went wrong?

Sadly, stories like this are not uncommon. Many Human Resource personnel are approached for “one size fits all” solutions to issues like workplace disengagement. While this may treat the symptoms, it usually doesn’t get to the root cause of the “problem”.

Let’s rewind the story and see how an HR manager trained in coaching practices could change this narrative.

*John approached HR for ideas on re-engaging Ashley. The HR manager, who had been trained with iPEC coaching techniques, first listened to John’s frustrations about Ashley’s work. Together, they were able to identify why John felt personally affronted by Ashley’s lack of enthusiasm. They were also able to raise his energy levels from a place of anger and victimization to a level of compassion and reconciliation. The HR manager coached John on how to ask Ashley open-ended questions during her evaluation and on how to listen and respond without judgement.*

*During their discussion, John learned that, while Ashley was willing to design projects, she was ready for a fresh challenge. Lately she had been much more interested in creating and managing social media ad campaigns. John set his expectations for timeliness and quality and as that improved, he incorporated more opportunities for Ashley to explore her interests, even arranging for her to mentor alongside a peer. Within six months, Ashley transitioned into a position creating social media campaigns for some of the company’s small business accounts. She flourished in this new position, becoming a valuable team player and earning additional business from her clients.*

# What changed?

In the second scenario, the HR manager used iPEC techniques to listen and explore the situation with John, helping him work through his feelings of frustration and identifying how he could be a more effective leader. By opening the lines of communication, John was able to establish why Ashley was so unhappy and remedy the situation—resulting in a win-win situation for everyone involved.

Clear, non-judgemental communication is an important component of workplace culture that is often neglected in favor of template forms and compliance. Actively listening to someone talk can illuminate aspects of the situation that might not have been discovered otherwise. It gives them space to come up with solutions and ideas on their own and empowers them to do the same thing the next time.



# Developing Future Leaders:

## How Coaching Fits into the Puzzle

*Jennifer recently advanced to a team management position, a promotion that both excited and scared her. Although she'd spent many years in the field already, the new work of managing multiple people's time and projects was overwhelming. She was beginning to doubt her ability to keep her team on task, produce results, and train new hires. She started spending long hours at the office in an attempt to keep up with her own tasks and manage others' too. As a result, her health and personal life were beginning to suffer.*

*Sylvia, the HR manager and an iPEC graduate, saw that Jennifer was struggling and invited her to her office for a coffee. Using active listening and open-ended questions, Sylvia learned that Jennifer had great ideas and goals for her team but she was struggling with acute self-doubt and imposter syndrome—not unusual for someone new to a leadership position.*

*Sylvia started meeting with Jennifer weekly. They began with an exercise to evaluate exactly how Jennifer was spending her time. This helped Jennifer identify the tasks that she could delegate, prioritize, or eliminate entirely, helping to bring her work and personal life back into balance. Sylvia also coached Jennifer on active listening skills, empowering her to feel more confident when employees came to her with troubles. Gradually, Jennifer grew into her role and became a strong and respected team manager known for giving her employees the space to creatively brainstorm solutions to problems.*

Human Resource professionals often find themselves in the position of helping a new leader develop effective leadership and management skills. This may seem daunting but good leadership skills are built on the same foundation as coaching skills—open-ended questioning, active listening, and the ability to help employees realize their full potential.

Unlike mentoring, where the mentee attempts to follow in the mentor's footsteps and emulate their decisions and style, coaching techniques are designed to help new leaders discover their own strengths, skills, and blind spots. The coaching modality also provides accountability, allowing individuals to practice their skills and then explore what worked and what didn't work. Working on these all-around skills improves not only the individual's effectiveness but they also tend to pass on what they've learned—creating a more positive, empowered workplace and atmosphere.





With traditional coaching methods, coaches help individuals, couples, groups, or organizations clarify their goals, determine action plans, and then hold them accountable to the plan. While this is excellent at getting the ball rolling, this approach often results in short-term benefits since it doesn't seek to identify or solve the underlying causes and roadblocks. Without recognizing and resolving those conflicts, the client will likely fall back into the same patterns of behavior, destined to repeat their unwanted behaviors and beliefs over and over again.

The iPEC Coach Training Program goes beyond the traditional coaching techniques with our unique Core Energy Coaching™ process. This holistic strategy helps our coaches guide individuals to the results they're looking for in a gentle, empowering way. Our graduates are equipped with tools and techniques to dig deep for the underlying causes to their client's challenges. As a result, they are able to forge lasting, sustainable change with their clients who ultimately feel more connected to their inner purpose and passion.

## iPEC Overview

iPEC's coaching methodologies have been extensively field-tested and are based on 30 years of research. We offer a unique training structure—a combination of 3-day live classroom intensives, webinars, one-on-one mentor coaching, and supervised coaching experiences with peers. This combination of live and distance training allows our students to learn quickly and practice their skills extensively, meaning that you'll be ready to start implementing your skills even before you graduate from our program.

While our accredited program is intensive and thorough, more than 90% of our students are working full time as they complete it. That means that you will be able to complete your training in addition to managing full-time employment—without compromising your family life.

Our program is also approved for continuing education credits with both the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI).

Learn more at [www.ipeccoaching.com](http://www.ipeccoaching.com). To request your one-on-one appointment with an Admissions Coach, call **866.72COACH** (866.722.6224) or email [admissions@ipeccoaching.com](mailto:admissions@ipeccoaching.com).



***You can earn up to 70.5 general credit hours with HRCI and 27 PDCs with SHRM.***

# What HR Graduates are saying about iPEC and coaching skills:

"I thought I had been coaching my entire career, but it's much different now that I've learned the difference between coaching, managing and consulting.

At the law school, we believe that coaching is another way to develop our managers so they can do their jobs more effectively, skillfully work with direct reports, and develop high performers at all levels without sending them to a training session. **It makes a huge difference for the whole organization when managers feel empowered in this way."**

Kimberly J. Harris, SPHR, SHRM-SCP  
Associate Director, Human Resources at  
Harvard Law School\*

"One of our smartest high potential employees confided in me that she was looking to leave the organization. She wasn't doing the work she wanted to do and wasn't getting along with her colleagues either.

We coached together for about 9 months and the transformation was almost surreal. We just celebrated her promotion within the company, and she's now doing the exact type of work she's dreamed of since grad school.

**Through coaching, we have been able to keep incredibly talented people on our team instead of with one of our many competitors."**

Markis Nicholson  
2015 iPEC Graduate  
Senior Manager,  
Human Capital Talent Strategy at PwC

**"There was a woman on my team who would roll her eyes at coaching.** She was struggling as a manager and leader, and she was getting that feedback from various places. We worked together for a while, slowly changing her perspective on coaching. She came to be inspired from our sessions... to see and feel positive differences in herself. Even better, she heard the same feedback from her team. It's a big win to know that she's leading from a much different perspective now with the help of iPEC's techniques."

Kelly Poulson  
2016 iPEC Graduate  
Vice President, Coaching & Development at  
Allen & Gerritsen

**"Coaching has made a positive impact, even in a BANK!**

The finance department was having some difficulties with engagement and our CFO approached me for ideas. I invited him take iPEC's proprietary Energy Leadership Index (ELI) assessment, and he fell in love with it. I've since done the ELI with nearly 100 support staff members on our finance and audit teams—from new college grads to the executive suite.

Almost immediately, we have seen positive shifts in individuals and in the overall awareness and mindset of the teams. A new language around energy has taken hold around the office. Not only are people noticing their energy levels, but they're talking about it, and they're seeking solutions on how to raise themselves to an even more positive, energetic place. The principles taught by iPEC have enhanced our Change Management programs and have also drastically shifted the culture and engagement in our support departments."

Pasquale Ferrara, Jr.  
2016 iPEC Graduate  
Executive Director Human Resources at Rabobank