



INTEGRATING A
**COACHING
MINDSET FOR
GROWTH**

AT TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES



INTERNATIONAL
PRISM
AWARD *for Organizations*
INTERNATIONAL COACHING FEDERATION

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) prides itself on helping clients create the future they envision. With global operations, and a talent base of more than 528,748 associates representing 157 nationalities across 46 countries, Tata faces the unprecedented challenge of providing benefits that have value for people in hundreds of different cultures and lifestyles around the world.

TCS has been recognized as a Global Top Employer by the Top Employers Institute – one of eight companies worldwide to achieve this elite status. Specifically, TCS was rated as an exceptional performer across nine core human resources areas, including talent strategy, workforce planning, on-boarding, learning and development, performance management, leadership development, career and succession management, compensation and benefits, and company culture. These integral aspects of the business correlate directly to the value of making coaching a priority throughout the enterprise, something Tata has accomplished seamlessly.

In recognition of Tata's fully integrated coaching ecosystem, the International Coaching Federation (ICF) named TCS a winner of the 2021 International Coaching Federation's (ICF) International Prism Award, just a year after honoring the company as a **Prism Award Celebrated Nominee in 2020**. Tata was nominated by Rajat Garg, MCC, as a company effectively integrating coaching into their organization. ICF's Prism Award program honors businesses and organizations whose coaching programs meet rigorous professional standards, address key strategic goals, shape organizational culture, and yield discernible and measurable positive impacts. (Learn more at coachingfederation.org/prism-award.)

FROM ASPIRATIONAL TO INSPIRATIONAL

To introduce and test the value of coaching for the organization, Tata's initial pilot program focused on providing one-on-one coaching to the company's core leadership team. The Coaching Center of Excellence team recognized the need to integrate coaching from the top-down in order to create acceptance and a powerful ripple effect. Despite leaders initially opposing the idea of coaching, seemingly without a compelling cause, those who received coaching during the pilot effort quickly shared positive reports about their experiences. This resulted in these coachees becoming "sponsors" of the program as it grew throughout the organization.

Preeti Dmello, Global Head Diversity & Lead Academy developed the indigenous TCS Coaching model that aligns a strength based coaching approach to the business context. TCS has incorporated coaching at the very foundation of its worldwide operations. This buttressed recognition of the company as a global leader in IT services and digital and business solutions, partnering with clients to simplify, strengthen, and transform their businesses.

Through the positive reflections of the early coachees, individual business units began requesting that additional leaders receive coaching. Over time, as TCS executive leadership came to see the power coaching could have to transform and inspire others, the program quickly evolved to offer coaching to the entire global team. As the program expanded into all seven geographical regions of the company, the budget became integrated into the financial planning of each business unit or country, rather than remaining fully under the umbrella HR budget. This further fostered company-wide adoption.

In the years since its inception, Tata's coaching program has grown to include coaching availability for anyone in the TCS workforce, as well as group coaching for teams.

The initiative became inspirational soon after the COVID-19 pandemic began. Preeti shares, "It quickly became clear that employees were feeling the strains of the pandemic evidenced by an increased focus on the state of their well-being. TCS recognized that significant changes in the working and living

conditions of its employees required a reassessment of the company's approach to delivering coaching support. A new focus on the full individual became necessary. It was evident that employees now needed to feel that their company truly had their best interests at heart. As a result, the company shifted to offer more unconditional positive regard not only in its coaching program but throughout the company's internal culture." Through these shifts, TCS focused on the holistic health of employees, not just their professional development.

People increasingly expressed wanting to feel that the organization they dedicate their time and expertise to "has their back," according to Rupika Singh, Leadership & Diversity, Executive and Systemic Coaching Lead.

"Aligning our coaching program with the needs and diverse experiences of each and every one of our hundreds of thousands of employees is what made this program a success. Without this extra step, coaching remains surface level and does not reach its potential for impact."

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF EMPLOYEES

Beyond meeting the personal and professional needs that Tata's global team of employees faced during the pandemic, TCS also wanted to advance its cultural inclusivity by ensuring that the unique intersectional ties of employees were addressed. This included offering coaching to those who play a significant role in employee's lives, such as spouses and partners.

TCS also took steps to support diversity within the team, looking at various intersections that employees represent, such as the LGBTQIA+ community, the disability community, various language fluencies, and more. To ensure suitable and accurate coaching for these communities was offered, Tata consulted with coaches that also were members of these communities. To adequately pair coaches with employees in specific communities,



coaches were given the opportunity to provide identifiers in their profiles, including LGBTQIA+, disabilities, language capabilities, and time zones, among others. Coaches were then able to find clients, and vice versa, within the organization that would benefit most from their personal insights. As the success of this outreach spread throughout the organization, Tata experienced a surge of requests from members of other communities of employees who themselves had specific coaching requests.

Mindful of the unique challenges people all over the world were facing as they stayed home during the pandemic, TCS began offering relationship coaching, looking closely at how various employee relationships, both internally and externally, were impacting individual well-being and the organization as a whole. By avoiding pigeonholing the program into professional development coaching and emphasizing this whole-person approach, TCS was able to meaningfully serve individuals and entire sectors of the company during the pandemic.

To further the success of the program's capacity to meet employee needs, TCS used a polarity lens to establish a relevant and useful coaching philosophy for the business. A polarity lens focuses on how one leverages a common paradox when faced with a challenging business situation. An example may be feeling newly empowered to express personal views freely, but also needing to ensure an environment in which others can equally express themselves. By conducting impact analysis through the polarity lens, TCS was able to decipher whether someone is over- or under-leveraging a strength in business that they may not be consciously aware of. TCS found that the polarity lens is particularly helpful in analyzing managerial success and aptitude. The value of the polarity lens was abundantly evident in testimonials shared to achieve better conversational success with new and existing clients.

BUILDING A COACHING COMMUNITY COMMITTED TO QUALITY

As demand for coaching grew within TCS, the company developed an internal coach training program to offer employees who demonstrated an interest in developing their coaching skills. The training program currently is under review for accreditation by ICF.

The initial program is broken into two phases: **fundamentals** and **intensive**. Any prospective coach must complete the fundamental modules before they become eligible to move on to the intensive program. One is only able to graduate the program when all required criteria following strict guidelines are met.

"Everything associated with our coaching program has skyrocketed," said Singh. "More and more people are wanting to become coaches for the organization, including some who previously felt they did not have time for this added responsibility. In the last month alone, there were 111 employees credentialed as internal coaches, and there are another 160 scheduled to graduate in January."

Singh also shared that employees based in the U.S. have requested coach training programs

dedicated specifically to meeting North American employee development. Having developed its coaching program to emphasize quality over quantity, the Tata program's focus is on coach development rather than on the number of credentialed coaches produced through its training initiative. TCS believes this keeps the program global ensuring an attentive offering to every employee in every cohort. Coaching has now become fully integrated into TCS' company culture, but still is only just scratching the surface of its growth potential.

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF COACHING IN A GLOBAL ORGANIZATION

The ultimate measure of success for any business is ROI, or return on investment. TCS has adopted a new direction: return on expectation (ROE). By utilizing pre- and post-coaching surveys based on self-awareness, both individual coaches and TCS generally have been able to connect the dots between coaching and measurable business successes. Testimonials, surveys, psychometric assessments, and self-awareness discussions all work to give leaders a tangible knowledge of the success of the program. Marissa Fernandes who runs the document, impact, and analysis for the coaching program says, "We have in the last seven years consolidated the impact of Coaching and the emerging themes which have been a valuable asset to the organizational intelligence. The data has been used to better learning program and even policies within the company."

The initiative resulted in more than 15% of all global employees receiving training in coaching skills. Along with this reach, the organization increased levels of workplace engagement and well-being, including decreased stress, increased resilience, and goal achievement.

Due to an ongoing shift to a more realistic view of where things stand across the enterprise, budget for coaching is no longer managed at the top of the organization. Rather, each individual cohort leading a coaching program at TCS creates its own coaching budget. This ground-level agency can be attributed directly to the program's success. The impact of the

program carries its reputation forward, both internally and externally, rather than as a mandate from HR.

“In several cohorts, the leader and leadership team have received coaching, through one-on-one and group sessions, focused on action learning projects that are needed in that sector of the business,” said Monicashree Dsouza, Program Architect, Coaching Leadership Team.

“The leader is then able to co-lead the program with the coach, by blending a coach approach with the business implementation lens. This results in the leader, and leadership team, feeling well-equipped to conduct impactful client-facing conversations, that result in new business for TCS as a whole.”

One example of this success has been seen in integrating a “diversity of mind” aspect into new-client presentations, a perspective that now is embedded across diverse client segments and cultural boundaries within the organization. In doing so, TCS representatives have been able to lead more meaningful conversations with clients, ultimately making a huge impact

in business success. It even is credited for numerous business acquisitions and contract wins. This is done through asking relevant questions and building spaces of mindfulness. Client conversations have gone so far as to now happen even without a prepared deck, evidence of how confident TCS representatives feel in their conversational abilities.

Today, TCS has more than 6,000 employees in its coaching program. Looking to the future, the organization has its sights set on offering coaching as a consulting service for clients. Coaching has equipped the organization so effectively, that it has the potential to become an aspect of the company’s external business offerings, empowering Tata to leverage coaching to leave an even greater positive impact in the world beyond its own team.

ICF’s Prism Award recognizes that TCS acted quickly and turned to coaching to bring unprecedented levels of support to employees all over the world. At a time when many organizations struggled to get by, the strength of TCS’s team, fostered by its growing coaching culture, garnered incredible results for its team members and organizational performance. The Prism Award acknowledges this success.

The International Coaching Federation (ICF) is the world’s largest organization leading the global advancement of the coaching profession and fostering coaching’s role as an integral part of a thriving society. Founded in 1995, its 50,000-plus members located in more than 140 countries and territories work toward common goals of enhancing awareness of coaching and upholding the integrity of the profession through lifelong learning and upholding the highest ethical standards. Through the work of its six unique family organizations, ICF empowers professional coaches, coaching clients, organizations, communities and the world through coaching. Visit coachingfederation.org for more information.