

Team Coaching as a Catalyst for Change and Transformation

(Final Draft – December 2025)(Michelle Chambers)

Overview

In today's fast-paced and increasingly complex business environment, organizations must constantly evolve to remain competitive and relevant. However, the road from change to true transformation is fraught with challenges. Resistance to change, misalignment within teams, and the pressures of constant adaptation often hinder the ability to achieve lasting success. How can organizations move beyond surface-level changes and realize deep, sustainable transformation? The answer lies in team coaching.

We will explore the powerful role team coaching plays in driving organizational change, aligning teams, developing shared goals, improving communication and fostering accountability, and unlocking the full potential of transformation efforts. Team coaching should be considered for project teams driving the change; steering committees overseeing the change and teams most highly impacted by the change. Team coaching can serve as a catalyst that accelerates transformation by:

- **Enhancing Alignment:** One of the key challenges in change initiatives is aligning team members around a common vision. Team coaching helps clarify roles, responsibilities, and objectives, ensuring that everyone is working toward the same outcome.
- **Building Resilience:** Change often triggers uncertainty and stress within teams. A coaching approach equips team members with the emotional resilience to navigate ambiguity, manage stress, and remain agile during the change process.
- **Improving Collaboration:** Effective change requires cross-functional collaboration. Team coaching helps break down silos and encourages collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving across different departments and teams.
- **Ensuring Accountability:** Through team coaching, teams develop a culture of accountability, where members hold each other responsible for their contributions to the change effort. This level of accountability ensures that change initiatives are executed successfully and with collective ownership.

For true transformation to occur, organizations need high-performing teams that are agile, collaborative, and adaptable. Team coaching is a strategic enabler of this by:

- **Fostering a Growth Mindset:** Successful transformation requires a shift in mindset, where team members embrace learning, experimentation, and innovation. Team coaching cultivates a growth mindset, encouraging teams to adopt new ways of thinking, working, and problem-solving.
- **Facilitating Cultural Shifts:** Every transformation is rooted in cultural change. Team coaching helps teams understand and embrace the cultural shifts necessary to support transformation. It encourages behaviors that align with new organizational values and ways of working.
- **Accelerating Learning and Development:** Transformation often requires teams to acquire new skills and capabilities. Through coaching, teams can identify gaps in their knowledge and actively work on closing those gaps, ensuring that they have the capabilities needed to succeed in the new organizational landscape.
- **Empowering Teams to Lead Change:** One of the greatest benefits of team coaching is that it empowers teams to take ownership of the change process. Rather than being passive recipients of change directives, coached teams become active change agents who can lead transformation from within.

Yet research consistently shows that **two-thirds of change initiatives underperform or fail outright** (Kotter, 1996; Prosci, 2022). Why? Because while strategies and plans are robust, the human and team dimensions of transformation remain under-attended.

This paper positions team coaching as the catalyst that makes transformation real. Drawing on the International Coaching Federation’s (ICF) definition of team coaching and the Association of Change Management Professionals’ (ACMP) definition of change management, we explore:

- a) What change professionals can learn from coaches.
- b) What coaches can learn from change professionals.
- c) When and how they should partner.
- d) Specific Roles That Might Be Attributed To A Change Initiative Where A Team Coach and Change Manager Work Together
- e) Practical examples and case studies across contexts.

Our central argument: Team coaching unlocks the human capacity for change, while change management provides the structure to scale transformation. Together, they amplify desired business outcomes.

Defining the Disciplines

Team Coaching

ICF defines team coaching as:

“Partnering in a co-creative and reflective process with a team and its dynamics and relationships in a way that inspires them to maximize their abilities and potential in order to reach their common purpose and shared goals.”

Team coaching is distinct from team facilitation or team training. It is not about imparting knowledge or guiding a process; it is about enabling a team to reflect, learn, and transform how it thinks, collaborates, and leads. It does this by coaching the team as one system, while they are conducting their business as a team.

Change Management

ACMP defines change management as:

“the practice of applying a structured approach to transition an organization from a current state to a future state to achieve expected benefits.”

Change management focuses on adoption, communication, stakeholder engagement, and measuring readiness.

The Bridge

If we were to use the definitions for team coaching and change management above, we might conclude that coaching emphasizes *reflection, relationship, and resilience* while change management emphasizes *structure, strategy, and scalability*. Successful transformation is greatly enhanced by including both coaching and change management.

Other Key Definitions:

Systemic Team Coaching is defined as "a process by which a team coach works with a whole team, both when they are together and when they are apart, in order to help them improve both their collective performance and how they work together, and also how they develop their collective leadership to more effectively engage with all their key stakeholder groups to jointly transform the wider business." (Hawkins, P. (2021). Leadership Team Coaching.)

Key principles of Systemic Team Coaching include:

- 1.Focus on the team as a whole system, not just individual members.
- 2.Emphasis on stakeholder engagement and value creation.
- 3.Integration of internal team dynamics with external relationships and impact.

4. Consideration of the team's role within the larger organizational ecosystem

Source: (Hawkins, P. (2021). Leadership Team Coaching.)

Team of Teams Coaching - Definition

Systemic Team of Teams Coaching is an organization and eco-system wide intervention designed to foster effective collaboration and synergy among multiple teams by focussing on partnering vertically, horizontally and transversally across the organization, as well as effectively team with stakeholders, beyond the organizational boundaries. It ensures that the team of team's function collectively and synergistically so that they are more effective than the sum of their parts through collaboration and partnering. (Hawkins, P, and Carr C., 2025, Team of Teams Coaching: Using a Team Approach to Increase Business Impact).

A Team of Teams Coaching approach is a systemic, multi-team coaching framework designed to cultivate agile, interconnected organizational ecosystems, where teams collaborate beyond their individual boundaries and align with broader organizational purpose and stakeholder needs. It focuses not only on developing internal coaching expertise and teaming culture, but also on designing interventions that enhance the whole network's collective performance.

The Power of Team Coaching in Transformation

From the lens of systems theory and complexity science, organizations are living systems, not machines. You cannot “install” change like software. You must **cultivate conditions** where people and teams adapt, innovate, and align continuously.

Team coaching provides those conditions by:

- **Aligning teams around shared purpose** – reducing fragmentation.
- **Building resilience** – enabling teams to manage ambiguity and stress.
- **Developing accountability** – ensuring commitments are owned collectively.
- **Fostering collaboration across boundaries** – dismantling silos.
- **Embedding cultural shifts** – translating new values into behavior.

Mini Case Study – Global Engineering Firm

A multinational engineering firm launched a sustainability transformation. The roadmap was clear, but regional teams worked in silos, undermining progress. Team coaching brought cross-regional leaders together to clarify shared purpose, build trust, and coordinate efforts. Resistance decreased, innovation accelerated, and the firm reached sustainability targets two years ahead of schedule.

What Might A Change Manager Want to Know About Team Coaching?

A change manager, responsible for leading and managing organizational change, would benefit from understanding team coaching to effectively guide teams through the change process. Here are key aspects a change manager might want to know about team coaching or enroll a team coach to assist:

1. Improved Team Dynamics

- **Team Coaching** helps improve team dynamics, ensuring that members collaborate more effectively, resolve conflicts, and align their efforts with the change objectives. A change manager should understand how to facilitate discussions that encourage open communication and trust within the team.

2. Alignment with Change Goals

- Coaching helps teams align their individual and collective goals with the broader change initiatives. A change manager would benefit from understanding how to coach teams to see the "big picture" and how their roles contribute to the success of the change.

3. Building Resilience and Adaptability

- Change often introduces uncertainty and stress. Through coaching, teams can become more resilient and adaptable to these challenges. Change managers should be able to coach teams to handle ambiguity, reduce resistance to change, and stay focused on outcomes.

4. Developing Leadership within Teams

- A change manager should recognize the potential to foster leadership within teams. Coaching helps identify team members with leadership potential and empowers them to take initiative in driving change, which can facilitate smoother transitions and innovation.

5. Enhancing Problem-Solving and Decision-Making

- Team coaching fosters collective problem-solving and decision-making skills. A change manager would want to use coaching to help teams find their own solutions to challenges arising from the change process, rather than dictating answers, which can build ownership and accountability.

6. Encouraging Accountability

- Coaching encourages team members to take ownership of their roles and responsibilities during the change process. Change managers should use coaching to promote accountability, ensuring that every member understands and delivers on their commitments.

7. Support for Team Growth and Development

- Change can reveal skill gaps or areas for development. Coaching provides a platform for addressing these gaps, enabling teams to develop new competencies needed for successful change. A change manager should leverage coaching to support continuous learning within teams.

8. Managing Team Energy and Motivation

- Sustaining energy and motivation during periods of change is challenging. A change manager should use team coaching strategies to keep teams motivated, recognizing achievements and maintaining focus on long-term success.

9. Facilitating Feedback and Reflection

- Regular feedback is critical during change initiatives. Through coaching, a change manager can create a feedback-rich environment where teams reflect on their performance, learn from setbacks, and make adjustments to improve their effectiveness.

10. Building a Collaborative Culture

- Finally, team coaching promotes collaboration, which is vital for successful change management. A change manager should foster a coaching culture where teams are encouraged to share knowledge, support each other, and work cohesively towards common goals.

In summary, team coaching is a valuable tool for change managers to ensure that teams remain aligned, motivated, resilient, and effective throughout the change process. Understanding the principles of team coaching can greatly enhance a change manager's ability to lead transformational efforts

What Change Professionals Can Learn from Team Coaching

Uncovering Hidden Resistance

In many change initiatives, resistance is treated as a lack of compliance or “buy-in.” Change professionals may design more communication plans, more training modules, or stronger accountability mechanisms in response. But these surface-level approaches miss the hidden forces underneath resistance.

Team coaching brings those forces into the open. By creating reflective space, inviting candor, and exploring not only what people do but what they believe and fear, coaching surfaces the root causes of resistance that block transformation.

a) **Competing Commitments**

Kegan and Lahey’s (2009) *Immunity to Change* framework highlights that people often hold **competing commitments**: conscious commitments to the change, but unconscious commitments that conflict with it.

For example, a leader may be committed to cross-functional collaboration but unconsciously committed to protecting their department’s autonomy. Another example might be a manager who is committed to transparency but also committed to avoiding conflict.

Team coaching surfaces these tensions by asking teams to articulate both their stated goals and the hidden commitments that sabotage them. Once acknowledged, the team can test new behaviors and gradually release the hidden commitment.

Mini Case Study – Global Tech Firm

During a digital transformation, a senior leadership team claimed they were committed to empowering frontline decision-making. Yet, through coaching dialogue, it emerged that several executives were deeply committed to maintaining centralized control to avoid reputational risk. This hidden commitment explained why decision-making authority never cascaded. Once surfaced, the team experimented with pilot projects that delegated real authority in low-risk areas. Confidence grew, and empowerment spread more widely.

b) **Emotional Drivers**

Resistance is rarely purely rational. Emotional drivers—fear of loss, identity threat, status erosion, or uncertainty—often lurk beneath the surface.

- **Fear of loss:** Losing influence, routines, or expertise.
- **Identity threat:** “Who am I if my role changes?”
- **Uncertainty stress:** Anxiety about the unknown future.

Team coaching normalizes these emotions by naming them without judgment. Through inquiry and reflective dialogue, coaches help teams articulate what feels at stake and then reframe the change in ways that connect to enduring values and aspirations.

Mini Case Study – Healthcare Merger

In a hospital merger, clinicians resisted new protocols. The change team assumed they needed more training. In coaching sessions, it became clear the resistance was rooted in **fear of losing their identity as patient-centered caregivers**. Once surfaced, the change narrative shifted: the protocols were framed as reinforcing quality care, not diminishing it. Resistance softened, and adoption accelerated.

c) **Team Dynamics**

Resistance is often amplified by group dynamics:

- **Conflict avoidance:** Teams avoid difficult conversations, leaving issues unresolved.
- **Lack of trust:** Members doubt one another’s intentions, fueling passive resistance.
- **Power dynamics:** Dominant voices drown out dissent, driving disengagement.

Team coaching uses observation and systemic inquiry to make these dynamics explicit. Coaches hold up a mirror to the team, asking: “*What’s happening here that we are not saying?*” This creates space for honest dialogue, reducing covert resistance and building shared accountability.

Mini Case Study – Financial Services Integration

A cross-functional team formed after a reorganization was quietly undermining the integration process. Team coaching revealed a pattern of conflict avoidance: critical issues were discussed in private but never in the group. Once the team learned to name conflicts directly, trust increased, and they began addressing operational issues openly—dramatically accelerating progress.

Creating Psychological Safety

Resistance often thrives in silence. If people do not feel safe to voice concerns, the unspoken issues harden into disengagement. Team coaching strengthens psychological safety, enabling leaders and teams to take interpersonal risks—challenging assumptions, admitting mistakes, asking for help, or raising uncomfortable truths.

- Coaches model curiosity and non-judgment.
- They invite all voices into the dialogue, not just the dominant ones.
- They help teams build agreements on candor and constructive conflict.

This safety creates the conditions for genuine engagement with change. When teams feel safe, resistance becomes a conversation, not a barrier.

Mini Case Study – Manufacturing Transformation

A manufacturing firm introduced a new lean operating model. In coaching sessions, frontline supervisors admitted they were quietly ignoring some practices because they feared being blamed for mistakes. Coaching helped the leadership team establish ground rules for psychological safety, including reframing mistakes as learning opportunities. Within months, supervisors became active advocates of lean practices, leading to measurable productivity gains.

Facilitating Adaptive Leadership

Ronald Heifetz’s work on adaptive leadership highlights that many challenges are not technical (solvable with expertise and procedures), but adaptive (requiring people to learn, unlearn, and shift values or beliefs). Change management provides the roadmap, but team coaching develops the *adaptive capacity* to walk it.

In adaptive challenges:

- The problem is not clearly defined.
- Solutions require experimentation.
- Progress demands shifts in mindset and culture.

Team coaching provides the reflective space where teams can:

- Name the adaptive challenge.
- Test hypotheses through safe-to-fail experiments.

- Learn from setbacks without shame.
- Expand leadership capacity to think systemically and collaboratively.

Mini Case Study – University Transformation

A university undergoing digital learning transformation faced tension between faculty and administration. Change management laid out new processes and technologies. Team coaching helped academic leaders confront the adaptive challenge: moving from an identity rooted in traditional teaching to one embracing digital pedagogy. Through iterative dialogue and pilot programs, faculty shifted their mindset, and the institution’s online programs grew rapidly.

Change professionals are often under pressure to “drive adoption quickly.” Team coaching slows down the conversation just enough to surface competing commitments, emotional drivers, and group dynamics. This reflective pause prevents costly rework, strengthens trust, and ensures that change is not just imposed but truly owned.

What Team Coaches Can Learn from Change Professionals

a) Structure and Scalability

Coaches thrive in emergent conversation but can underestimate the importance of milestones. Change professionals bring methodologies (e.g. ADKAR, Kotter’s 8 Steps, Bridges’ Transition Model) that connect reflection to outcomes.

b) Measurement and ROI

Executives demand evidence. Change practitioners track adoption, readiness, and performance. Coaches can strengthen impact by connecting team dynamics to measurable outcomes (e.g., productivity, retention, engagement).

c) Stakeholder Mapping

Change professionals excel at identifying stakeholders, assessing influence, and managing communications. Coaches can use these maps to understand systemic dynamics and power relationships affecting team performance. When teams identify who their stakeholders are

both inside and outside of the organization, they can determine who they should spend more time partnering with due to levels of power and influence on the outcomes.

When Should Change Managers and Team Coaches Work Together?

Change managers and team coaches should work together at key moments in the change process to ensure the change is implemented smoothly and teams are equipped to adapt effectively. Collaboration between these roles can maximize the success of the change initiative by aligning strategy with team dynamics and development. Here are some key situations where they should work together:

1. During Change Planning and Strategy Development

- **Why Collaborate:** At the start of the change initiative, change managers can work with team coaches to identify potential team challenges, gaps in skills, and areas for development. Team coaches can provide insight into team dynamics and readiness for change, helping the change manager tailor the strategy.
- **Key Outcomes:** An informed strategy that addresses both structural and people-related aspects of change, improving buy-in and engagement.

2. When Establishing Clear Roles and Responsibilities

- **Why Collaborate:** To ensure that team members understand their roles during the change process, change managers and team coaches should collaborate to clarify expectations and responsibilities. Coaches can help ensure that roles align with individuals' strengths and team dynamics.
- **Key Outcomes:** Greater clarity in responsibilities and alignment between individual contributions and the overall change objectives.

3. In the Early Stages of Change Rollout

- **Why Collaborate:** As the change process begins, there can be uncertainty, resistance, or confusion among teams. By working together, change managers can focus on the implementation of the change while team coaches help teams navigate the emotional and psychological challenges that arise.

- **Key Outcomes:** Early identification of resistance or morale issues, allowing for timely interventions that keep teams on track.

4. When Addressing Resistance to Change

- **Why Collaborate:** Resistance is a common challenge in change initiatives. Team coaches can work alongside change managers to understand the root causes of resistance and provide coaching to help teams shift their mindset, adapt, and engage with the change.
- **Key Outcomes:** A more collaborative and constructive approach to overcoming resistance, improving team alignment with the change effort.

5. During Critical Phases or Milestones

- **Why Collaborate:** At major milestones or during critical phases of the change process (such as a new system launch or restructuring), there may be significant stress or disruption. Change managers and team coaches can collaborate to ensure teams remain focused, resilient, and cohesive.
- **Key Outcomes:** Teams stay motivated and aligned with key milestones, with minimized disruption and increased morale during high-stress periods.

6. To Promote Team Learning and Development

- **Why Collaborate:** Change often requires new skills or competencies. Change managers and coaches should work together to identify skill gaps and use coaching sessions to address them. Coaches can help team members develop the skills they need to adapt to the new environment.
- **Key Outcomes:** Teams are empowered with the skills and mindset needed to thrive in the new state, supporting long-term success.

7. When Shaping and Reinforcing a New Culture

- **Why Collaborate:** Many change initiatives involve cultural shifts. Team coaches can support change managers by coaching teams on new behaviors, communication styles, and ways of working. This ensures the change in culture is embedded at the team level.
- **Key Outcomes:** A smoother cultural transformation, with teams embracing new values and behaviors that support the change.

8. For Continuous Feedback and Reflection

- **Why Collaborate:** Regular feedback and reflection are critical for both change management and team development. Coaches can help facilitate team reflection sessions, while change managers use the insights to adjust change strategies. Together, they can create an environment of continuous improvement.
- **Key Outcomes:** Timely feedback loops that help both the change manager and team coach address challenges, adjust strategies, and celebrate successes.

9. When Managing Team Morale and Well-being

- **Why Collaborate:** Change initiatives can create stress and uncertainty, impacting team morale. Team coaches can work closely with change managers to monitor the emotional and mental health of teams, intervening where necessary to boost morale and ensure teams remain engaged.
- **Key Outcomes:** A healthier, more motivated team that can handle the challenges of change without burning out or becoming disengaged.

10. At the Conclusion of the Change Initiative

- **Why Collaborate:** Once the change is fully implemented, both roles should work together to review the outcomes, celebrate successes, and identify any remaining areas for development. Coaches can help teams reflect on lessons learned and support them in maintaining performance and cohesion in the new state.
- **Key Outcomes:** A smooth transition into the post-change phase, with teams prepared to sustain the change and continue developing.

In summary, change managers and team coaches should collaborate throughout the change process, particularly during planning, rollouts, critical milestones, when addressing resistance, and when building skills and culture. Their collaboration ensures that both the structural aspects of the change and the human elements are managed effectively.

Examples of Potential Partnerships

Simple Situations

- **New System Rollout:** Change managers handle training, adoption, communications, change interventions; coaches help teams adapt emotionally.
- **Role Changes:** Change professionals clarify responsibilities; coaches help leaders embody new ways of working.

Complex Situations

- **Cultural Transformation:** Change sets the roadmap; coaches support executive teams to live the new culture.
- **Enterprise Integration:** Change manages milestones; coaches help teams navigate identity, trust, and collaboration.

Mini Case Study – Pharmaceutical “Team of Teams” Transformation

A global pharmaceutical company was facing mounting pressure to accelerate drug discovery and bring new therapies to market faster. The traditional hierarchical R&D structure had produced incremental improvements but was too siloed to meet the speed and innovation demands of the industry. In response, leadership announced a bold reorganization into a “**team of teams**” model.

The Change Management Approach:

Change professionals led the structural redesign, creating new governance mechanisms, redefining reporting lines, and mapping interdependencies between research, regulatory, manufacturing, and commercialization functions. On paper, the new structure promised agility and collaboration. However, in practice, leaders from different functions were hesitant to share resources, mistrust lingered across divisions, and meetings often turned into political negotiations rather than joint problem-solving.

The Role of Team Coaching:

Recognizing these challenges, executive sponsors engaged a cadre of systemic team coaches to work alongside the change team. The coaches focused on three areas:

1. **Resolving Tensions and Unspoken Dynamics:** In early sessions, coaches observed that cross-team leaders were avoiding difficult conversations about priorities and resource allocation. Through facilitated dialogue, the leaders began naming the underlying tensions—such as competition for budget or concerns about loss of influence. By surfacing these unspoken dynamics, the group moved from positional bargaining to collaborative problem-solving.
2. **Fostering Candor and Trust:** Coaches helped the leadership teams establish ground rules for candor, creating space for constructive conflict. Over time, leaders reported feeling more comfortable challenging assumptions, admitting mistakes, and requesting help. This shift reduced the passive resistance that had slowed decision-making.
3. **Building Shared Accountability:** Instead of focusing solely on their departmental metrics, leaders began to co-create **shared outcomes**—such as time-to-clinical-trial readiness or regulatory approval success rates. Coaching conversations emphasized the collective purpose: improving patient outcomes through faster, safer drug development.

The Results:

Within 18 months, the organization saw tangible improvements:

- Decision-making cycle times decreased by 30%, allowing more rapid progression of promising compounds.
- Employee engagement scores improved significantly, particularly in the dimension of “trust in leadership.”
- Voluntary turnover among high-potential scientists dropped by 22%, reversing a trend that had worried senior leaders.
- The company’s first therapy developed under the new structure moved from discovery to Phase I trials in record time, reinforcing belief in the new model.

The Insight:

Change professionals provided the map—a new governance structure and operating model. But it was team coaching that enabled leaders to walk the terrain together. By surfacing resistance,

building trust, and embedding shared accountability, team coaching turned a structural change into a cultural transformation. The complementarity is clear: one provides the map; the other enables the journey.

Specific Roles That Might Be Attributed to a Change Initiative Where A Team Coach and Change Manager Work Together

In a change initiative where a team coach and change manager work together, specific roles can be attributed to leverage their unique skills, ensuring both the technical and human aspects of the change are addressed. These roles allow for a complementary approach to managing change, improving both the effectiveness of the initiative and the team's ability to adapt. Here are some roles that may be attributed:

1. Change Manager: Strategy and Execution Leader

- **Role:** The change manager is responsible for designing and implementing the overall change strategy. They manage the timeline, resources, and deliverables, ensuring the technical and operational aspects of the change are executed efficiently.
- **Focus:** Structure, process, communication, stakeholder engagement, and risk management.
- **Collaboration with Coach:** The change manager sets the strategic direction, while the team coach helps ensure that the team is emotionally and behaviorally aligned with that direction.

2. Team Coach: Facilitator of Team Adaptation

- **Role:** The team coach focuses on the human side of change, helping teams navigate the emotional, psychological, and behavioral aspects of transitioning to the new state. They work closely with teams to enhance collaboration, build resilience, and address resistance.
- **Focus:** Team dynamics, coaching individuals and groups, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, and skill development.
- **Collaboration with Manager:** The coach supports the change manager by making sure teams are engaged, collaborative, and open to the change.

3. Change Sponsor: Senior Leadership Support

- **Role:** A senior leader or executive often serves as the change sponsor, providing high-level support and ensuring the change initiative is aligned with organizational goals. The sponsor advocates for the change, securing resources and overcoming organizational barriers.
- **Focus:** Organizational alignment, resource allocation, senior leadership engagement.

- **Collaboration with Coach and Manager:** The sponsor collaborates with both the change manager and team coach by addressing organizational resistance and ensuring alignment between the team's efforts and broader organizational objectives.

4. Change Champion: Advocate for Change

- **Role:** A change champion is often a member of the team or an influential employee who advocates for the change, helping to communicate its benefits and encourage buy-in among peers.
- **Focus:** Communication, role modeling desired behaviors, peer engagement.
- **Collaboration with Coach and Manager:** The change champion works with the team coach to reinforce positive behaviors and mindsets, while supporting the change manager by addressing any informal resistance or concerns from within the team.

5. Communication Lead: Message and Stakeholder Engagement Manager

- **Role:** This individual is responsible for ensuring that communication about the change is clear, timely, and aligned with the needs of various stakeholders. They craft messaging that promotes the benefits of the change, addresses concerns, and provides regular updates.
- **Focus:** Internal and external communication, stakeholder engagement, feedback loops.
- **Collaboration with Coach and Manager:** The communication lead ensures that both the change manager's strategy and the team coach's work with teams are reflected in the messaging, keeping everyone informed and aligned.

6. Learning and Development (L&D) Specialist: Skills and Knowledge Enabler

- **Role:** This role focuses on identifying the skills and knowledge gaps resulting from the change and ensuring that the team is equipped to adapt through training, development programs, and learning resources.
- **Focus:** Training, upskilling, capability building, knowledge transfer.
- **Collaboration with Coach and Manager:** The L&D specialist works with the team coach to support skill-building within the team and collaborates with the change manager to ensure learning aligns with the broader change strategy.

7. Team Leader: Operational Support and Engagement

- **Role:** Team leaders, who are directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the teams undergoing change, act as liaisons between the change manager and the team. They ensure that the change is implemented at the operational level and that the team remains productive during the transition.

- **Focus:** Operational tasks, team performance, ongoing communication with the change manager.
- **Collaboration with Coach and Manager:** The team leader ensures that the coaching efforts align with the team's day-to-day tasks, and keeps the change manager informed of any operational issues that could hinder the change.

9. Feedback Coordinator: Monitoring and Adjusting to Team Needs

- **Role:** In larger change initiatives, someone may be designated to gather and assess feedback from teams about the change process, identifying pain points and opportunities for improvement. They play a key role in monitoring team sentiment and performance throughout the initiative.
- **Focus:** Continuous improvement, feedback loops, metrics tracking.
- **Collaboration with Coach and Manager:** The feedback coordinator works closely with the coach to gather insights on team morale and with the change manager to adjust the strategy based on real-time feedback.

10. Culture Lead: Driving Behavioral and Cultural Shifts

- **Role:** This role focuses on ensuring that cultural shifts, such as new values, behaviors, and attitudes, are embedded within teams. They work closely with the team coach to drive and reinforce cultural change.
- **Focus:** Culture change, behavior modeling, alignment with organizational values.
- **Collaboration with Coach and Manager:** The culture lead works with the coach to drive team behavioral change and with the change manager to ensure the cultural aspects align with the overall change strategy.

Summary

By defining these roles, the collaboration between a change manager and a team coach can be more effective, with each professional focusing on their strengths:

- **Change Managers** focus on strategy, structure, and process.
- **Team Coaches** focus on team dynamics, behavior, and mindset.

Together, they ensure that both the technical and human elements of the change are managed effectively, resulting in a more successful and sustainable change initiative.

Broader Team Coaching Concepts for Change

Systems Thinking

Team coaching sees teams as nested systems: within organizations, ecosystems, and stakeholder networks. Coaches help teams locate themselves in these systems, aligning with broader change goals.

Vertical Leadership Development

Change requires leaders to grow in complexity of thinking (Petrie, 2014). Coaches accelerate vertical development by challenging assumptions and expanding mental models.

Collective Intelligence

Coaching enables teams to move from “collection of experts” to “expert team,” enhancing creativity and problem-solving during transformation.

Mini Case Study – Nonprofit Turnaround

A nonprofit facing funding cuts needed to reinvent services. Team coaching helped leaders generate collective solutions, while change professionals built the adoption roadmap. Together, they secured new funding streams and transformed service delivery.

Future State: Integrated Practice

The most powerful impact emerges when coaching and change converge:

- Coaches who understand change frameworks.
- Change professionals who embody coaching mindsets.
- Integrated practitioners trained in both.

Mini Case Study – Global Retailer

A retailer piloted integrated practitioners—dual-certified in coaching and change. They guided transformation projects with both roadmaps and reflective practice. Outcomes: faster adoption, stronger culture, lower resistance.

Conclusion: Team Coaching as Catalyst

Change without coaching risks compliance without commitment. Coaching without change management risks insight without impact.

When they meet, transformation is possible.

- For change professionals: Learn to harness the depth of team coaching.
- For coaches: Learn to scale insights through structured change approaches.
- For organizations: Invest in partnership to amplify transformation.

The invitation: let team coaching lead as the catalyst, with change management as the partner that ensures adoption and scalability.

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