

Leading *and* Coaching

at Scale in
a Remote
Work World

2021



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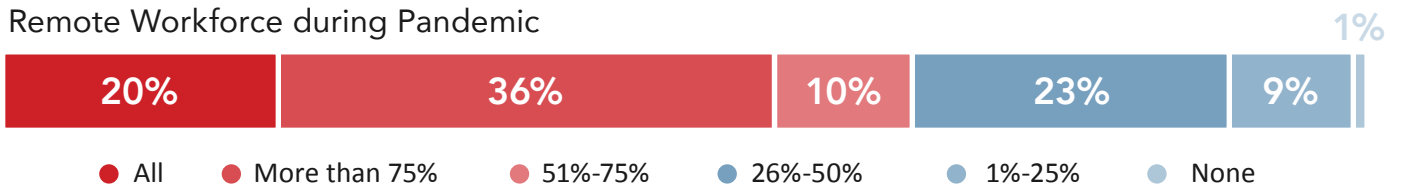
Return-to-Work Strategies

In the wake of organizations completely rethinking their remote work strategies, scores of managers have had to figure out how to coach large, dispersed teams. When coaching and mentoring are more important than ever, it is increasingly difficult to do so effectively. Companies need new tools and strategies to tackle leadership, coaching and mentoring at scale in a remote work world.

Before the pandemic, merely 15% of companies said that more than half of their workforce was remote. More than twice as many companies believe half or more of their workers will be remote once their return-to-work strategies roll out.

Return-to-Work Strategies

Remote Workforce during Pandemic



Remote Workforce after Pandemic

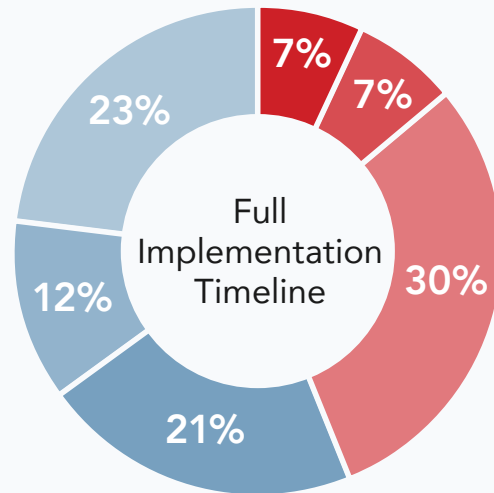
Source: 2021 Brandon Hall Group COVID-19: Impact on Workplace Practices

One of the challenges in making this adjustment is that there is not one set timeline for how soon companies will decide what their strategy is. Only about 14% of companies say their return-to-work strategy has been fully implemented by now. Others are looking to late 2021 or beyond. And 23% still don't have a strategy.

Return to Work Strategies

- Our return-to-the-workplace plan is fully realized now.
- 2nd Quarter 2021
- 3rd Quarter 2021
- 4th Quarter 2021
- First Quarter 2022
- Still under consideration/Don't know

Source: 2021 Brandon Hall Group COVID-19: Impact on Workplace Practices



The uncertain rollout of return-to-work-strategies, plus the fact that only 5% of companies expect their entire workforce to return to the workplace when the strategy is deployed, means that organizations must rethink how they keep their teams engaged, focused and connected. The pandemic already has had a negative impact on employee engagement and the effectiveness of sales teams.

The Impact of the Pandemic

On a scale of 1 to 5, how has COVID-19 negatively impacted your organization in the following areas?



Employee engagement



Sales effectiveness

Source: 2021 Brandon Hall Group COVID-19: Impact on Workplace Practices

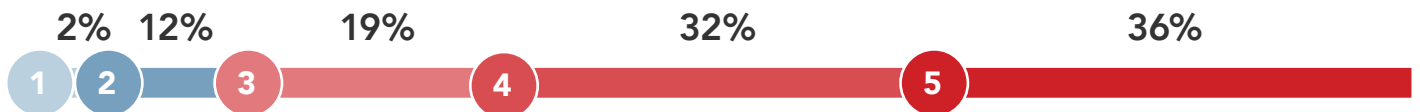


When we look at what companies believe they must do to recover from the pandemic, many of the people-related strategies include a strong manager/coach element. Of course, there are operational considerations such as

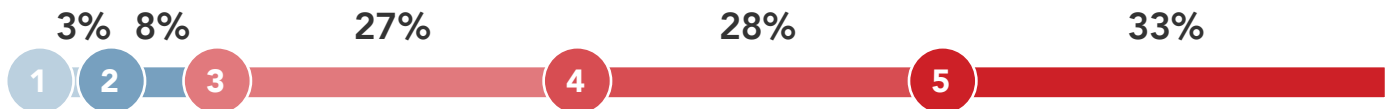
determining who works remotely and who doesn't, but things such as fostering an inclusive workplace, making employees feel valued and creating a strong sense of belonging require strong coaching skills and tools.

Coaching Plays a Huge Role in Pandemic Recovery

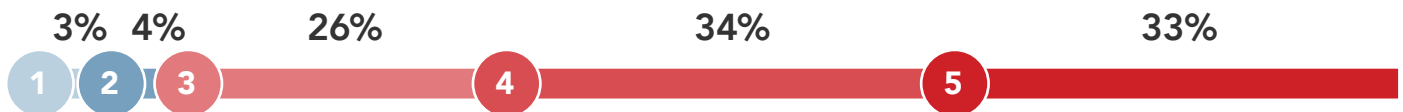
On a scale of 1 to 5, please rank the importance of the following actions for your organization as it seeks to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Provide continuous feedback to employees



Mentor employees



Coach employees

Source: 2021 Brandon Hall Group COVID-19 Study for 2nd Quarter

Coaching Plays a Huge Role in Pandemic Recovery

Providing feedback, coaching and mentoring are all critical elements for pandemic recovery. But the current and future environment requires an ability to coach and manage people synchronously and asynchronously, often at the same time. The increase in remote workers means that not everyone will be expected to keep the same schedules they might have had in the office. People are finding that it's better for them to get work done in chunks throughout the day — or even the evening or into the night. Now, organizations that never had to worry about asynchronous

communications because everyone was co-located in one place are starting to grapple with distance and synchronicity issues, as well.

One of the main challenges, however, is that organizations are unenthusiastic about the current state of their coaching. Merely 30% gave their coaching programs a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale of effectiveness. Throw the turmoil of a remote/hybrid/asynchronous environment in and things become much more challenging. But it starts by understanding what makes a good coach.



Most Critical Coaching Attributes

91% Collaborative

87% Results-driven

89% Motivating

83% Problem solving

88% Critical thinking

71% Process-oriented

4 or 5 on a 5-point scale

Source: 2021 Brandon Hall Group How Can We Develop Great Coaches and Mentors?

For coaches and managers to do all of these things in a remote environment, asynchronous and virtual tools are required. One invaluable tool is video. For example, an Allego client, insurance firm TIAA, radically changed their salesforce onboarding program. It was originally a three-week, in-person program. Now, it is a virtual program spread out over five weeks. They do short, focused touchpoints with people; an hour or two at a time. This includes 20-minute primer videos that prepare everyone for virtual synchronous training sessions. These asynchronous videos get everyone on the same page and boost engagement and collaboration in the virtual sessions. They are followed up with additional, asynchronous content for people to do at their own pace.

Virtual Coaching



97%

The difficulty of training in different time zones can be overcome with **asynchronous training tools**.

91%

Having **video-based training** has helped them become more successful at working remotely.

Source: Allego

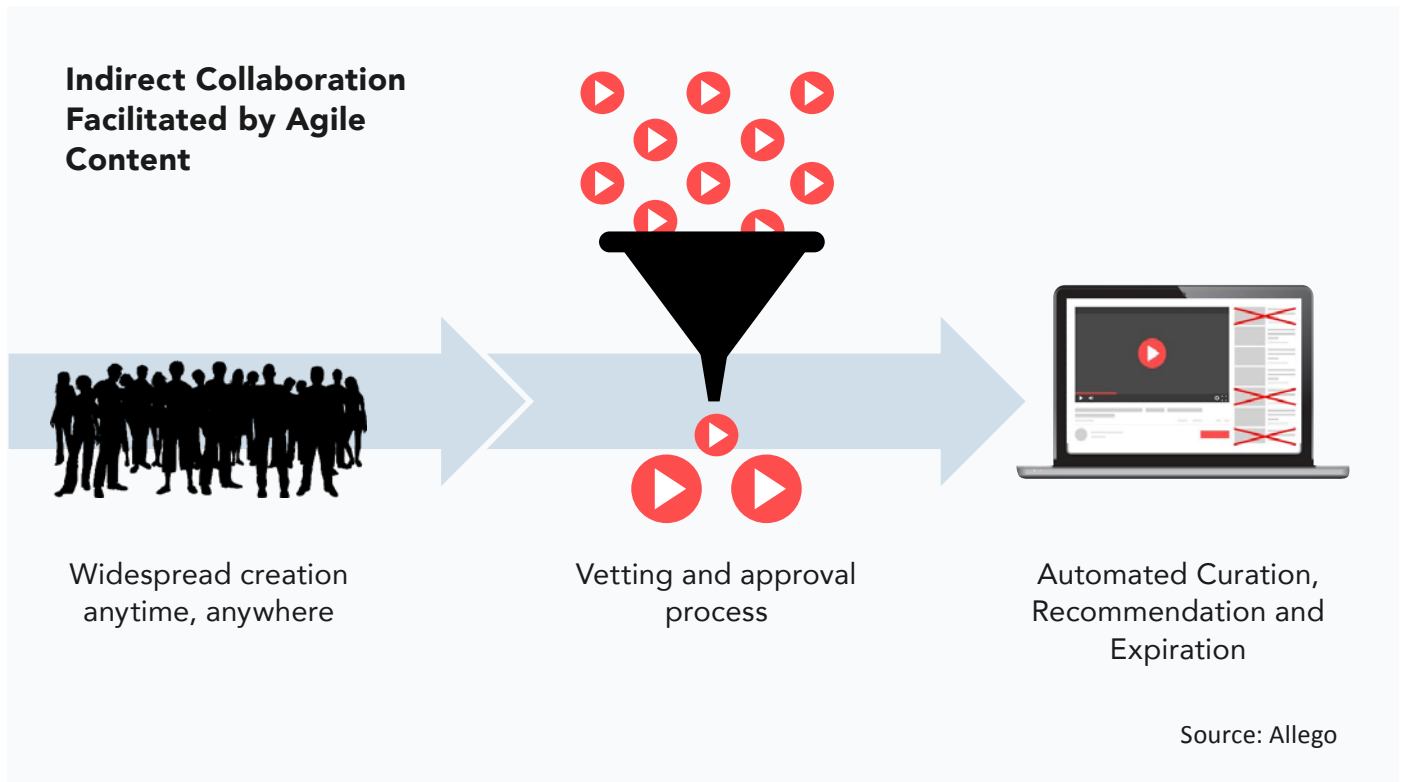
Sales professionals strongly believe the right tools can help.

As we saw earlier, the pandemic indelibly impacted employee engagement. Coaches and managers are on the front lines of rebuilding that engagement, especially when many more employees will be working remotely than before the pandemic. Across all of Brandon Hall Group's research, interviews and case studies around employee engagement, these are the top five most important actions companies can take:

- **Create an atmosphere of trust.**
- **Hold leaders more accountable for driving the organization's mission and values.**
- **Improve the effectiveness of leadership development.**
- **Enable teamwork and collaboration.**
- **Coach leaders to actively foster employee engagement.**



Let's focus on the teamwork and collaboration pieces of this. One idea is indirect collaboration. How can companies solicit great ideas and examples of how people go about doing different tasks on the job? One way is to provide a platform that allows for content creation anywhere by anyone. It can then go through an approval process, then delivered to learners in an automated, curated fashion.



This approach allows people to collaborate asynchronously by creating and sharing best-practice videos. It also becomes a tool for managers and coaches because they can see the content being input, vet the good ones and pass them on. The automated nature frees up valuable time and reduces the burden on coaches. Instead of having to sit someone down and walk

through how to perform a task or demonstrate how to handle a particular client concern or speak to a value proposition, the coach has a collection of examples at their fingertips to bring up.

Tools such as this are also important to something companies have traditionally struggled with: personalized learning at scale. It can

take these coaching moments from one-on-one, synchronous encounters to curated, contextual best practices that were crowdsourced from existing subject matter experts. Arming coaches with these kinds of tools can help address the number-one challenge companies face when delivering personalized learning at scale.

Complexities — Top Challenges to Personalization at Scale

68%

We have managers who are not very good coaches and don't know what their employees are learning.

47%

Our learning organization is not trained properly to develop and deliver personalized learning at scale.

60%

We do not have the technology ecosystem in place to develop and deliver personalized learning at scale.

46%

We do not promote peer-to-peer, collaborative learning.

54%

We believe it would be too expensive.

46%

We don't have a good handle on how to effectively and efficiently reach our learners.

54%

The organization believes a one-size-fits-all approach to learning is sufficient.

42%

We follow traditional learning development processes such as ADDIE and are not familiar/comfortable with new agile development processes.

48%

We believe it would be too difficult to administer and maintain.

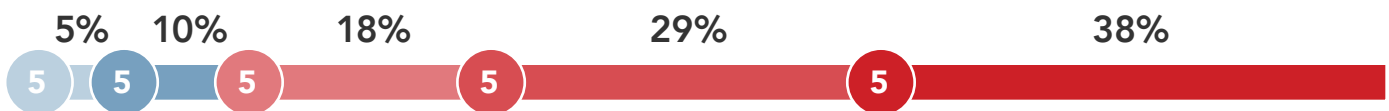
42%

We don't have a good handle on our learners need or drives them.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Upskilling & Reskilling 2021

Another huge enabler of personalization at scale is the use of machine learning and artificial intelligence. Nearly 70% of companies say this kind of advanced data processing and analysis is either important or critical to getting it right.

On a scale of 1 to 5, how important do you feel it is to use Artificial Intelligence and advanced data processing and analytics to assist in your efforts to build out personalized learning?



Source: Brandon Hall Group Upskilling & Reskilling 2021

AI also enables coaching at scale. For instance, sales team leaders and coaches often need to listen to sales calls in real-time or recordings, which can add up to a significant amount of their time. By leveraging a tool such as Conversation Intelligence, a coach can take a sales conversation, analyze it against proper language and behavior parameters and receive feedback on how the call could be improved at their fingertips. It can also be used to help develop great coaching by similarly analyzing coaching calls. Then leaders can select examples of great coaching and put them in a playbook or make them available through a learning-recommendation engine.

Other areas where AI can aid in coaching at scale include:



Self-assessment.

Given the right data and parameters, AI can assess performance within a call or video, giving the learner a chance to check their progress before engaging with their coach.



Automated feedback.

Following the self-assessment, an AI-powered platform can provide immediate, automated feedback to the learner, allowing them to adjust before sending a version to their coach.



Coachable moments.

Artificial intelligence can detect topics that are spoken about on calls, whether they are client-facing or internal leadership/coaching conversations. These can be flagged as coachable moments to be addressed.



Key Considerations for Managing Remote Teams

Technology will be the key to successfully leading remote teams especially at any kind of scale. As teams grow larger and more dispersed, it becomes even harder for coaches and leaders who are already stretched thin to manage them. By leveraging technology in the right ways, synchronous, one-on-one interactions can be more meaningful and strategic.

Other things to consider about making the most of coaching check-ins:

- Leverage coaching check-ins to discuss development opportunities and career advancement.
- Provide coaching feedback tips and checklists for managers.
- Employees also need tips and checklists for coaching interactions.
- Use technology to ensure managers and employees are on the same page before the check-in meetings.
- Find the right balance: Don't abandon, but don't micromanage.

Authors and Contributors



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About Allego

Allego's modern learning and enablement platform ensures that sales reps and other business-critical employees have the skills and timely knowledge to make the most of each selling situation or initiative. Instead of traditional onboarding and training marathons — which are rapidly outdated and quickly forgotten — enablement and training teams use Allego to deliver the fresh, bite-sized learning that employees need to close deals in today's dynamic business environment. Content is personalized and mastered through reinforcement, on-the-job coaching and peer collaboration. More than 300,000 professionals use Allego to onboard faster, deliver consistent messaging, rapidly adopt best practices, coach and practice more frequently, and collaborate more effectively.



To learn more about Allego and learning and enablement in the flow of work, please visit www.allego.com.



About Brandon Hall Group

With more than 10,000 clients globally and 27 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

Some ways we can help ...



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