



Coaching Skills for HR Professionals:

Building Capability, Confidence, and Strategic Influence

SHRM 2026 PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

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Today's Journey



Coaching Employees

Moving from solving to ownership



Coaching Operational Leaders

Partnership and accountability



Strategic Coaching & Systems Thinking

Moving from symptoms to patterns

Three Coaching Contexts

Employee

Day-to-day coaching
conversations

Operational Leader

Accountability and
behavior change

Executive Leadership

Systems, patterns,
strategic influence

**Ownership for them.
Strategic influence for you.**



INSTRUCTIONS



Take 10–15 minutes to reflect on real coaching situations before the workshop.



Be as specific as you can. The more real your examples, the more value you'll gain from the session.



These situations may involve employees, operational leaders, or your boss.

PRE-WORKSHOP REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Coaching Skills for HR Professionals: Building Capability, Confidence, and Strategic Influence



Bring real organizational coaching situations into the workshop to maximize practical application and reflection throughout the session. Your experiences will help us explore concepts in meaningful, relevant, and immediately useful ways.



COACHING CHALLENGES INVENTORY

Identify three real coaching situations you're currently navigating or expect to navigate in the near future. For each, answer the following questions.

- What is that person's level (Employee, Operational Leader, or Boss)?
- What is the coaching situation?
- What makes the situation difficult to coach?
- What outcome would you like to create?
- Where do you feel stuck?
- Who currently owns the solution?

COACHING CHALLENGE #1

COACHING CHALLENGE #2

COACHING CHALLENGE #3

Throughout the workshop, we will explore how coaching conversations can create greater clarity, accountability, ownership, and strategic influence.

Where Are You Operating?



Coaching Is *Not*

Rescuing them

Fixing it for them

Advising them

Over-functioning

Taking ownership

Absorbing emotion

Mediating

Solving FOR instead of thinking WITH

**Coaching is about
helping people distinguish their
own thinking
so they can take meaningful action
toward their goals.**



Choosing Your Intervention: Coaching is not always the right option.



Facts vs. Interpretations

Facts

Observable. Verifiable. Specific.
What a camera would record.

Interpretations

Meaning we assign. Stories we tell
ourselves.
Conclusions we draw.

Most conflict lives in the interpretation.

HR Options for Responding to Janet

"Bob humiliated me."

Empathize

Investigate

Advise

Escalate

Validate

Solve

Mediate

Do Nothing

Coach

Permission to Coach

"What would be most helpful right now?"

"Would you like support, advice, help thinking this through, or coaching around how you want to handle it?"

These questions shifts their approach — and the accountability for the conversation.

(Hint: Because it's actually a coaching question!)



The *Being* of a Coach



Presence



Curiosity



Patience



Trust



Calm



Listening



Partnership



Silence



Nonjudgmental

Coaching vs. Alternatives

Fact vs. Interpretation

Permission to Coach

Being of Coach

**Ownership for them.
Strategic influence for you.**



So let's think about how to respond to Dominic in a way that:

Maintains partnership

Increases strategic influence

Supports the business

Keeps ownership where it belongs

COACHING SKILL

Your first job: Get on the same side of the table.



Question Quality

"Why" Questions

Trigger defensiveness. Imply judgment.
Close thinking down.

"Why did you let this go on so long?"

"Why is this happening?"

"What" & "How" Questions

Open exploration. Generate
accountability. Move forward.

"What would you like to be different?"

"What's your ideal outcome?"

Questions That Create Ownership

- **What feels most difficult about addressing this directly?**
- **What have you tried so far?**
- **What outcome are you hoping to create?**
- **What have you not yet said to Bob?**
- **What would success look like?**
- **What accountability should exist if nothing changes?**

Coaching your Operational Partner:

1

Establish Partnership

Same side of the table

2

Ask Open-ended and What/How questions

Expand their thinking

3

Being of Coach

Notice your urge to rescue/solve/advise/take ownership prematurely

4

Help Dominic identify the NEXT PLANK

Rome wasn't built in a day - sometimes one step is the start.

Ownership for them. Strategic Influence for you.

Insight + A.C.T.I.O.N. = Results™

COACHING SKILLS

The A.C.T.I.O.N.™ Framework

A — Aligned

C — Clear

T — Tracked

I — Institutionalized

O — Owned

N — Non-negotiable



The A.C.T.I.O.N.TM Framework

A

Aligned

Aligned to Strategy

Is the action aligned to the broader strategy, priorities, and desired outcomes?

The A.C.T.I.O.N.TM Framework

C

Clear

Clear Expectations

What does success look like specifically?

What behaviors, outcomes, and criteria define it?

The A.C.T.I.O.N.TM Framework

T

Tracked

What Gets Tracked Gets Done

Who tracks what, how often, and in what format?

The A.C.T.I.O.N.TM Framework



Institutionalized

Embedded in Rhythm

Is this action embedded into actual organizational rhythms and systems?"

The A.C.T.I.O.N.TM Framework

A large, bold, purple letter 'O' is centered within a light purple rectangular box. The box has rounded corners and a subtle gradient.

Owned

One Owner

Is there **one** person with real ownership and authority?

The A.C.T.I.O.N.TM Framework

N

Non-negotiable

Sustained Until Done

Is this important enough to sustain attention until the result is achieved?

COACHING SKILLS

Creating partnership

Ownership

What/How Questions

Accountability through moving into
meaningful A.C.T.I.O.N.

**Ownership for them.
Strategic influence for you.**



A Different Kind of Answer

Tactical

Keeps you and Stefanie in the weeds
and specifics

Strategic

Elevates the conversation
Presents themes
Demonstrates your systems thinking

Two Ways of Doing the Work

Tactical HR

- Incidents
- Complaints
- Details
- Behaviors

Strategic HR

- Patterns
- Themes
- Systems
- Organizational conditions

Organizational Symptoms

Unclear communication

No collaboration

Changing priorities

Attrition

Quiet quitting

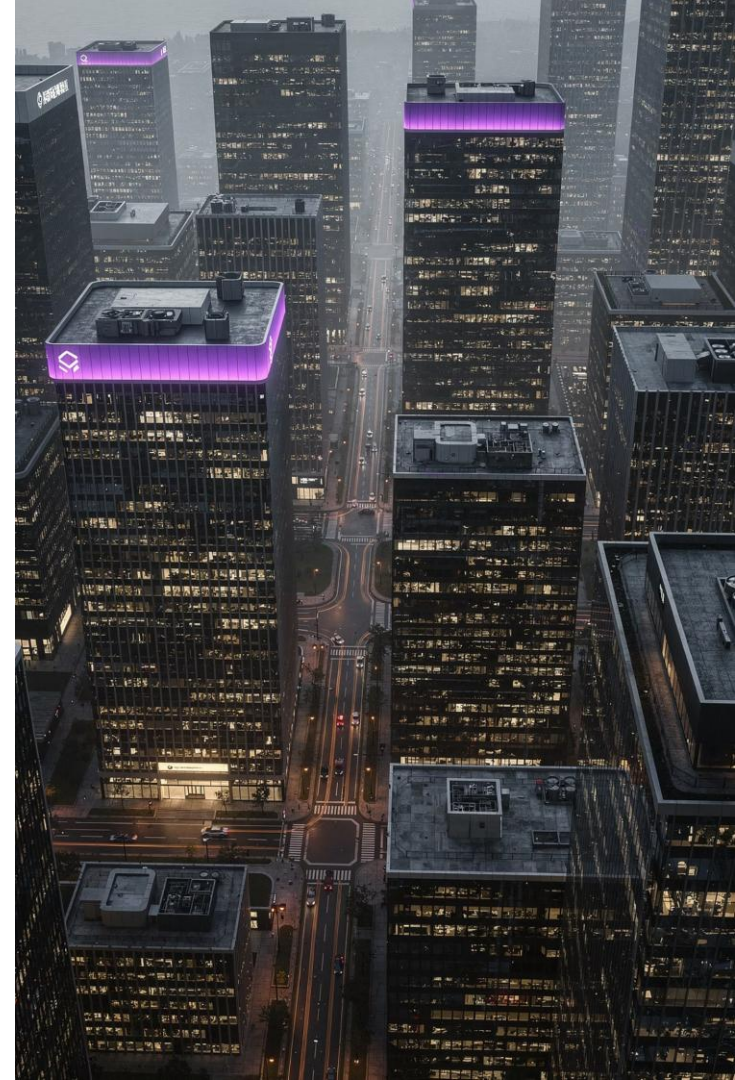
Burnout

Conflict

Things move slowly

Lack of engagement

**Strategic HR thinking is when
you stop hearing fifty separate
problems...
and start hearing patterns.**



What We Covered Today



Strategic Coaching & Systems Thinking



Coaching Operational Leaders



Coaching Employees

Coaching Employees

Facts vs. Interpretation

Separate what happened from what it means.

Permission to Coach

Establish the coaching relationship explicitly.

Being of Coach

Your presence and stance shape the conversation.

Coaching Operational Leaders

Same Side of the Table

Partner, don't police.

Coaching Questions

Open-ended vs “why”

Accountability

Hold the standard with care.

A.C.T.I.O.N.™ Framework

A structured path from insight to movement.

Strategic Influence

Contextual Listening

Hear what the organization is saying beneath the surface.

Patterns

Cluster symptoms into meaningful themes.

Systems Thinking

See the whole, not just the parts.

Organizational Themes

Name what others can't yet see.



**Ownership for
them.**

**Strategic
influence for you.**

The work you do matters.

**Thank you for helping create more clarity,
accountability, ownership, and humanity inside
organizations.**

Maren Perry · Arden Coaching

