



LCI WHITE PAPER.

What Every Pharmacy Leader Must Know About Coaching (And Why It's a Game-Changer for Your Team, Patients, and Business)

Executive Summary

Community pharmacy is at a crossroads. With evolving clinical responsibilities, changing regulatory landscapes, digital transformation, and increasing pressure on workforce sustainability, pharmacy leaders are being called to lead differently. Coaching is emerging as a transformative leadership approach that enhances team performance, clinical impact, staff wellbeing, and business resilience.

This white paper **explores the compelling evidence for coaching as a leadership and team development tool in pharmacy**. Drawing on research from Gallup, Deloitte, McKinsey, ICF, FIP, the Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU), the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI), and the World Health Organisation (WHO), it outlines how coaching can help pharmacy owners, superintendent pharmacists, and supervising pharmacists future-proof their people, performance, and practice.

Introduction: The Pharmacy Leadership Challenge

Pharmacy teams continue to adapt to seismic shifts. Community pharmacies are being recognised as increasingly vital parts of primary healthcare systems. At the same time, staffing shortages, regulatory demands, growing clinical complexity, and the integration of new technologies have intensified the challenge of leading well.

In Ireland, the IPU 2023 Workforce Survey and PSI Future Pharmacy Practice Reports cite staff wellbeing, workforce retention, and professional development as key pressure points. WHO workforce sustainability guidance further emphasises the importance of leadership strategies that enable healthcare professionals to thrive, not just survive.

Meanwhile, global healthcare trends identified by FIP (International Pharmaceutical Federation) highlight the growing expectation that pharmacists lead interprofessional teams, deliver public health interventions, and integrate digital tools into person-centred care.

In this continually evolving context, coaching is a core leadership capability that supports:

- Professional autonomy and clinical judgement
- Collaborative team culture and psychological safety
- Staff retention, resilience and motivation
- A high-performing, values-aligned business



Why Coaching Matters: What the Research Tells Us

Leading with coaching has both clinical and commercial impact. Recent findings include:

- **Gallup (2024)** reports that organisations with a strong coaching culture see **27% higher employee engagement and 11% greater profitability.**
- **McKinsey (2024)** highlights confirms that coaching-focused leadership enhances **psychological safety**, which improves collaboration and innovation.
- **ICF & Human Capital Institute** show that coaching cultures significantly **improve employee retention and leadership effectiveness.**
- **Deloitte (2024)** identifies coaching as a key driver of **agility, critical** for navigating disruption in healthcare and business models.
- **WHO and FIP** advocate for coaching in health systems as a lever for **workforce wellbeing, retention, and performance**

The Shift from Manager to Leader-Coach

Pharmacy leaders are increasingly responsible for both business and clinical outcomes. Coaching offers a way to do both well. It helps leaders move beyond reactive management and become more strategic, compassionate, and empowering.

Traditional Leadership vs. Coaching Leadership

Traditional Leadership	Coaching Leadership
Task-focused & directive	Person-centred & facilitative
Top-down communication	Two-way dialogue & reflection
Focus on outputs	Focus on growth & impact
Crisis-driven decision-making	Values-aligned decision-making

This transition aligns with LCI’s values of Healthy and Sustainable Growth, Quality Learning Experiences, and Wisdom of the Room.



The Business, Clinical and Professional Impact of Coaching

1. Improves Workforce Wellbeing & Retention

- Coaching fosters autonomy, meaning, and support—factors linked to improved staff retention.
- Reduces burnout by encouraging reflective practice and real-time problem-solving.

2. Strengthens Clinical Leadership and Decision-Making

- Promotes accountability, clinical judgement, and shared responsibility.
- Builds confidence in handling complex patient care scenarios.

3. Drives Team Performance and Engagement

- Encourages open communication and continuous learning.
- Improves how pharmacy teams collaborate, adapt, and grow.

4. Enhances Patient Safety and Experience

- Creates psychological safety where staff feel confident to speak up.
- Supports whole-person care and consistent, compassionate interactions.

5. Enables Sustainable Growth

- Aligns team efforts with business goals and values.
- Builds a culture that attracts, develops and retains great people.

How Pharmacy Leaders Can Develop Coaching Capability

Pharmacy businesses thrive when both owners and team leaders embrace coaching as a shared language and approach.

1. Embrace the Coaching Mindset

- Be curious, not controlling
- Empower, don't rescue
- Support reflection, not perfection

2. Build Core Coaching Skills

- Listening deeply without interrupting
- Asking powerful, open-ended questions
- Acknowledging strengths and efforts
- Creating space for problem-solving and peer learning

3. Apply Coaching in Daily Practice

- Use coaching questions in supervision, clinical case reviews, and team check-ins
- Support mentoring conversations with coaching skills
- Model openness and continuous learning
- Lead by example—seek coaching yourself, and remain open to feedback.



Case Study: Coaching in Irish Community Pharmacy

An independent pharmacy group in Ireland introduced a coaching-based leadership model across its stores. Superintendent pharmacists were trained in core coaching skills. Supervising pharmacists began using coaching conversations during clinical supervision and team meetings.

Within 12 months, the group reported!

- Increased team cohesion and morale
- Better delegation and shared problem-solving
- Fewer staff absences due to stress
- Improved patient feedback on service experience

WHY CHOOSE LEAD WITH COACHING INSTITUTE?

Lead With Coaching Institute (LCI) is uniquely positioned to support pharmacy leaders because we understand pharmacy—from the inside out.

LCI co-founder, Rachel Dungan, known as *The Pharmacist Coach*, is a pharmacist with 25 years experience leading pharmacy businesses and coaching clinical leaders globally. She has been a key contributor to the FIP Workforce Transformation Programme and co-facilitated WHO-region sustainability workshops across six continents as part of the global study published by FIP.

Rachel brings together the lived experience of pharmacy practice with global, cross-industry leadership expertise. Her deep knowledge of the regulatory, clinical, and commercial realities facing pharmacy teams allows LCI to offer tailored, high-impact coaching development programmes that drive real-world results.

Pharmacy clients also benefit from being part of the wider LCI community—a rich learning environment that enables:

- Cross-industry peer learning, bringing fresh perspectives from healthcare, business, education and beyond.
- Structured leadership development, aligned with international coaching standards.
- Practical tools and real-world application, designed to be integrated into the rhythm of busy pharmacy life.
- A psychologically safe space to grow, supported by a trusted network of leadership peers and expert mentors.
- Strategic support for scaling purpose-driven businesses, without sacrificing clinical quality or team wellbeing.

LCI's programmes are grounded in values of Healthy and Sustainable Growth, Quality Learning Experiences, Application in Real-World Contexts, the Wisdom of the Room, and genuine Partnership and Community. Whether you're a pharmacy owner, superintendent, or supervising pharmacist, partnering with LCI means investing in a coaching leadership approach that works—for your team, your patients, and your business. **Lead With Coaching Institute (LCI) is uniquely positioned to support pharmacy leaders because we understand pharmacy—from the inside out.**



Strategic Recommendations for Implementation

1. Invest in Coaching Skills Training for pharmacy owners, superintendents, and supervising pharmacists.
2. Create Time for Reflective Conversations in the working week.
3. Develop a Shared Language of Coaching across the team.
4. Measure Impact through staff retention, satisfaction, patient feedback, and workflow improvements.
5. Partner with a Specialist Provider to embed a sustainable coaching culture.

Conclusion & Call to Action

Coaching isn't just a leadership trend. It's a proven, practical approach that strengthens pharmacy teams, supports clinical excellence, and sustains business performance. In a time of rapid change and growing demands, pharmacy leaders who coach lead with clarity, compassion, and confidence.

At [Lead With Coaching Institute](#), we help pharmacy owners and clinical leaders develop coaching capability, build thriving teams, and create healthier, more resilient pharmacy practices.



Book a Discovery Call Today

Explore how coaching can help your team, patients, and pharmacy business flourish..

References:

1. **Gallup Research** – Coaching Culture, Engagement & Profitability

“Organizations with a strong coaching culture see 23% higher engagement and 23% greater profitability.”

Source: [Gallup – State of the Global Workplace 2024](#)

2. **McKinsey** – Psychological Safety and Leadership

“Leaders who coach effectively create psychological safety, leading to improved team collaboration.”

Source: [McKinsey – Psychological safety and the critical role of leadership development](#)

3. **ICF & Human Capital Institute** – Coaching Culture and Leadership Effectiveness

“Businesses with a coaching culture report higher retention rates and leadership effectiveness.”

Source: [2023 ICF & HCI – Building a Coaching Culture Report](#)

4. **Deloitte Insights** – Agility, Coaching, and the Future of Work

“Coaching enhances agility and adaptability, key for navigating disruptions.”

Source: [2024 Deloitte Human Capital Trends Report](#)



5. Workforce sustainability and supporting positive practice in community pharmacy – An International Report by the FIP Community Pharmacy Section 2023

6. PSI Workforce Intelligence Report 2023

7. IPU Key Facts on Community Pharmacy in Ireland