

Supporting Partners in professional services firms

Executive coaching solutions
from The Tall Wall





Purpose of this document

At The Tall Wall, we specialise in coaching senior leaders in professional services firms. We work with Partners and Partner candidates at all stages of their careers – whether stepping into the Partner role for the first time, taking on new leadership responsibilities, or preparing for succession and legacy.

Professional services firms typically turn to executive coaching for a range of reasons. These fall into two broad categories: proactive and reactive drivers – in simple terms, coaching either enables growth or responds to a challenge.

- **Proactive coaching** is about investing ahead of the curve. It's used to stretch high-potential talent, accelerate business development, support leadership transitions, or build resilience before problems arise.
- **Reactive coaching**, by contrast, is typically prompted by a performance issue, interpersonal challenge, or specific business difficulty. When used sensitively, it can be powerful – but if relied on too heavily, it risks positioning coaching as a remedial or corrective tool.

In our experience, firms with a mature coaching culture recognise the value of both. They respond effectively when targeted support is needed, but they also invest proactively in their people – particularly their Partners – to sustain performance, support growth, and retain top talent.

Through this work, we've identified three areas where executive coaching consistently delivers the greatest impact in professional services firms:

- Developing future Partner talent.
- Supporting Partner transitions – both role changes and career stages.
- Helping Partners thrive through challenge.

This guide explores each of these areas in turn. It's designed to help you reflect on how your organisation is currently using coaching – and spark ideas for how to make your coaching investment go further for your most critical population.

Developing future Partner talent

We support your rising stars to step into Partnership with confidence and clarity, helping them navigate the shift from relying on their technical expertise to embracing their leadership role more fully.

Our work includes coaching individuals to help them determine what they want for the next stage of their career, helping them identify and address missing skills and tackle any limiting beliefs that may limit their progression. We have significant experience in supporting Partner candidates through the selection process to enhance their chances of election and help them use the process to best effect to establish a strong foundation for Partnership.



POPULATION	BUSINESS VALUE	COACHING SOLUTIONS
Future Partner talent 1–2 years pre selection process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased pipeline of future Partners with clear, well-articulated business cases and the confidence to develop these as a fee-earner.Increased ambition for Partnership, paired with a clearer understanding of the commitment and expectations it entails.Rounded and developed personal cases for Partnership.	1:1 coaching
Candidates in the Partner selection process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stronger, more commercially compelling Partner business cases that resonate with selection panels and align with firm strategy.More confident Partner candidates entering into Partnership.	1:1 coaching Group coaching
Diverse candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">More self-assured, authentic Partner candidates who bring differentiated perspectives.Greater resilience and adaptability in candidates navigating the complexities of promotion to Partner.Enhanced awareness of sponsoring Partners/line managers on the challenges facing diverse candidates.	1:1 coaching Group coaching
Participants of leadership development programmes in the run-up to Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased return on investment in Partner candidate programmes through targeted support that helps high-potential candidates translate learning into action and advancement.	1:1 coaching Group coaching



Supporting Partner transitions

Becoming a Partner at a professional services firm is a goal many individuals have worked their entire career to attain. A Partnership career may span decades, which is a long time in a world where the average tenure in a senior role is three to four years.

Working with Partners in professional service firms we see significant stages in a Partner's career. These, bring different opportunities and challenges which typically fall into two categories ...

1. A defined shift in **role**, identified by a change in title or responsibilities: (e.g. becoming a new Partner; stepping into a first or subsequent leadership role; and transitioning as a lateral hire).
2. Not so clearly defined are the **career stages** Partners pass through during Partnership (e.g. mid-career; taking parental leave and approaching retirement).

POPULATION	BUSINESS VALUE	COACHING SOLUTIONS
New Partners in their first 12–18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promotes a smoother transition from candidate to effective Partner, reduces post-election 'drift' and supports sustained performance.	1:1 coaching Group coaching
Partner lateral hires	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Accelerates the integration of new Partners into the firm's culture, systems, and networks – enabling them to build credibility quickly and contribute commercially.	1:1 coaching
Partners moving into new, stretching or organisationally challenging roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Helps Partners step into demanding roles with clarity and resilience – sustaining momentum while earning trust and authority in new environments.	1:1 coaching Team coaching
Partners taking parental leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Thoughtful support around parental leave ensures minimal disruption to clients and teams – enabling a smoother exit and confident return, with business continuity and long-term retention in mind.Signals a progressive, inclusive culture that retains top senior talent through life transitions.	1:1 coaching
Mid-career Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Re-energises talented mid-career Partners to refocus their practice, re-engage with firm priorities, and unlock new opportunities for growth and leadership.	1:1 coaching Time to Think
Partners moving towards retirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduces succession risk by encouraging proactive planning, legacy thinking, and open conversations.Preserves firm knowledge and client trust by facilitating well-paced transitions rather than abrupt or reluctant exits.	1:1 coaching Group coaching

Supporting Partners to thrive when faced with challenges

All individuals experience performance highs and lows in their careers. For Partners, the impact of a performance dip (in whatever form this takes) can be greater. Often this manifests in an individual working less effectively with their fellow Partners, their teams and their colleagues and reducing their business development activity. This prevents them fulfilling their potential and stops them pushing forward with challenges. Coaching supports Partners as they unpick what is happening and work through strategies to move back into a high performance, thriving space for themselves and those around them.



POPULATION	BUSINESS VALUE	COACHING SOLUTIONS
Senior individuals who are experiencing a dip in confidence, performance, behaviours or approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Helps Partners to identify the root challenge and regain clarity and confidence so that they can work with renewed purpose.	1:1 coaching
Psychologically-well individuals who feel stretched and whose current strategies are no longer effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Creates space to step back, reflect, and adapt — sustaining both personal wellbeing and effective performance.	1:1 coaching Time to Think
Partners needing more support to be inclusive leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Builds emotional intelligence and understanding of bias, enabling more thoughtful, adaptive leadership.Fosters a culture of inclusion and belonging, which supports retention, collaboration, and high performance.Enhances the firm's ability to meet targets and expectations around diversity, equity and inclusive leadership.	1:1 coaching Group coaching
Partner experiencing shared performance or relational challenges within a team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stronger team alignment, improved trust and collaboration, and clearer collective direction.	Team coaching



Types of coaching interventions

1:1 coaching

Tailored 1:1 executive coaching relationships focused on longer-term development goals. Typically delivered over 4–8 sessions and may include a 360-feedback process, tripartite with a coaching sponsor and/or psychometric profiling. Parental coaching may require slightly fewer sessions, delivered over a longer period of time.

‘Time to Think’ coaching sessions

One-off, 60–90-minute coaching conversations for Partners to think through a specific challenge or opportunity. Typically offered on a self-serve basis. Ideal for time-pressed leaders needing independent space to reflect and act. Common topics include:

- Unpicking a challenging client or internal relationship.
- Clarifying direction during ambiguity.
- Prioritising time and focus for growth.
- Building resilience in tough market conditions.

Team coaching

A highly bespoke intervention designed to strengthen collective performance, alignment, and collaboration within leadership teams. Designed and facilitated by a specialist team coach, it helps teams surface assumptions, build trust, and improve how they work together. Typically delivered over 1–6 sessions, team coaching may include diagnostics, stakeholder input, and live observation, and is often used during periods of transition, growth, or cultural change.

Group coaching

Small peer cohorts exploring shared leadership challenges and development goals. Facilitated by an experienced coach, these sessions create a confidential space for reflection, challenge, and mutual learning. Typically run as a series of 4–6 sessions, group coaching can complement 1:1 work and may be aligned with firm-wide priorities such as succession planning, business development, or inclusive leadership.

Why The Tall Wall

We are experts in coaching Partners in professional services firms.

We don't do one-size-fits-all. We bring presence, curiosity, and candour to every conversation. We help Partners see the big picture – and the next step.

Understanding the unique dynamics, pressures and opportunities that come with leadership in a professional services environment, is critical. This is why our coaching is always grounded in the real-world context of our clients – every one of our coaches has had a successful professional career before moving into coaching, bringing both empathy and credibility to their work. With coaches based around the world, we're able to support global firms and their leaders with consistency and depth, wherever they are.

Whether your firm is seeking to develop its next generation of leaders, create space for reflection, or support those in transition, we will bring our experience and expertise to help you design optimal coaching solutions.

“The Tall Wall has been a true collaborator with us in all aspects of our Coaching Programme. From when we first spoke with The Tall Wall on our vision, they bought in to our ambition and provided their expert guidance along the way to shape and eventually deliver a unique offering. Feedback from our team members has been fantastic and the insights that The Tall Wall has shared with us as a leadership team continue to help us to learn and develop as an organisation.”

INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING FIRM

“The Tall Wall understands only too well the demands of the legal sector, making them true experts in their field. They have worked hard to build a trusting relationship with the firm and has taken the time to understand our culture and connect with the L&D team which makes working with them productive and enjoyable.”

INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM



CONTACT

If you would like to find out how we can enable your talented people to thrive, please get in touch.

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