



5 Trends in Executive Coaching for 2025

The future of work is ever-changing, and leaders must update their best practices accordingly

Abstract

If you were an executive coach pre-2020, the way you used to work probably looks fairly different from how you work today. Most people you worked with probably had one, full-time, in-person job. You might have worked primarily with executives and met them in person. It's possible that you didn't meet too many other people who were also executive coaches, or who really understood what one was.

All of that is changing.

The market for executive coaching and related fields is growing and is expected to reach \$25 Billion by 2031. That's great news for people looking to benefit from coaching. It's great news for coaches, too. But the growth in the industry means not only more work but also more practitioners and faster change. That means it's more important than ever for you to know what's new and trending in the field.

The coaching landscape at the start of 2025 looks very different than it did even just one year ago. In this white paper, we'll revisit the trends from last year and update what we believe are the biggest trends we expect to see in the field in 2025. We'll also share how Barometer XP's resources can help keep your coaching fresh and relevant going forward.

In this white paper, we'll look at five of the biggest trends we expect to see in the field in 2025.

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Trend 1: Artificial Intelligence

No matter what the field, the biggest business trend in 2024 was Artificial Intelligence (AI). The growth and use of AI will continue to increase in 2025, but what does it mean for coaching and facilitation?

Coaching and facilitation are relationship businesses that are hard to replace effectively with computers, but AI can be a valuable tool behind the scenes. AI is being used by coaches for numerous administrative and operational tasks, including:

- Developing plans and assisted workflows
- Discovering reading material and research
- Translating and analyzing data
- Asking for feedback and ideas
- Recording and summarizing conversations

Executive coaches need to approach the integration of AI into their practice thoughtfully and ethically – not to mention sustainably – maintaining a human touch and ensuring client privacy and data security. There will be coaches who try to fully automate their services, which should encourage those in the industry to tell clients how they do and do not use AI in their practice. It's also worth considering how interactions with a Large Language Model (LLM) or digital interface make you feel, as the emotion is likely true for others. If everyone adopts AI technology, differentiating one person's services from another will be more challenging, even when the actual coaching experience differs greatly.

Given the speed of change in the AI field, coaches would be wise to stay updated on advancements and opportunities that can enhance their business without diluting their core

values. Tech leaders like OpenAI now allow subscribed users to train and share their own Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT), fully loaded with their communication style, data, or proprietary models. That has enormous implications for how people think about and execute their work, both in personal and professional settings.

Trend 2: Hybrid Continues but RTO Looms

Since 2020, it's been widely accepted that virtual coaching (via phone, video conferencing, or text) is as good as in-person coaching. Like with any disruption, professionals who thrive build competencies and confidence around new systems. In this case, coaches not only adapted their service offerings for virtual mediums, they also found ways to make it better.

Looking at the data, remote coaching has been a win-win for coaches and clientele alike. Folks in rural or smaller areas now have access to the same professionals as those in major metropolitan areas, and accepting an assignment no longer means having to factor in transportation costs. That means lower overhead costs for customers and additional time for coaches to build a bigger book of business.

As the COVID-19 pandemic fades into the background of workplace priorities, to best meet the needs of their clients, coaches will find value in a hybrid model. Being flexible, whether supporting people remotely, in person, or both, can help address an emerging factor in 2025: Return-to-Office (RTO) decrees.

An increasing number of companies are requiring their workers to come back to the physical office, renewing a friction point between employees and leaders, or even between leaders within a company. Coaches should be prepared to help clients navigate this fraught dynamic. Increasing empathy and fostering trust across all levels of an organization can help establish a modernized solution for everyone involved. Each team is unique; they should be treated as such.

Trend 3: Games & Team Building

The past few years have shown the importance of collaboration, communication, and teamwork in running a successful organization. A [2023 Gallup poll](#) found that the majority of workers feel disengaged from their work and that lack of engagement can have serious

business consequences.

Savvy leaders understand that employees need a healthy culture to perform their best, and may look to invest in group coaching and team building. Employees have become wary from bad team building experiences, so coaches and facilitators should look for more engaging and evidence-based approaches.

The body of research validating play at work for team building is growing, and games are becoming more common in learning and development, albeit at the individual level.

Most people have positive associations with playing games as a means to foster human connection. Whether it was a game of Candyland with an indulgent grandparent or a complicated combination of Four Square and Basketball made up on the playground, we learned our earliest lessons in collaboration, creativity, and teamwork from playing together.

It's no wonder then that organizations are turning to games and memorable team activities as a way to increase collaboration and bring joy to the workplace. With remote teams spread across different geographic locations, many games (especially social ones) can cross the digital divide seamlessly.

During Covid, companies sought out any virtual activity from cocktail parties to escape rooms to sustain a cohesive team environment. As we enter a more permanent hybrid period of work, companies are getting serious about the way they play. An online game of Pictionary is fun, but using it to reflect around pre- and post-game questions amplifies the learning. Play that leads to improved work conditions is worth investing in. The person who facilitates that experience makes a difference too.

In 2025, companies won't just be looking for facilitators and coaches who can host a game night, they'll be looking for facilitators and coaches who can bring organized, constructive play, and provide and explain results and next steps.

Some examples of areas that games can help:

- Unfair treatment at work (e.g., bias, favoritism, misguided policies)
- Unmanageable workloads
- Lack of role clarity
- Unreasonable time pressure

Trend 4: Coaching for All

Part of the tremendous growth in the coaching market is that the act of being coached is no longer seen as something only for executives. Today, corporate (or group) coaching and coaching for emerging leaders are both on the menu for organizations.

Because an executive's performance is often tied to their relationship with other members of the team, corporate coaching is often part of an executive coaching engagement.

For example, if the CIO can't achieve their goals, they may cite interpersonal conflict with the CFO, who struggles to align their own managers. A corporate coach will understand the dynamics of the situation and work with all parties to adjust their approach.

More companies are also recognizing that leaders exist at all levels of an organization. Often, the people who are best at distributing information and have the most influence over a department are not the people with "Manager" or "Director" in their titles. Providing coaching to an entire team can help with communication, professional development, and employee engagement.

In 2025, as organizations attempt to retain top employees, investment in their coaching and training will become more common. Coaches who demonstrate the ability to work with both groups and individuals will compete for these contracts, and those who know how to level up their learning experiences with engaging tools (i.e. games) will win them.

Want to get serious about bringing play to your clients? [Barometer XP's Play Facilitator Certification](#) consists of three half-day virtual sessions that empower you to design, deliver, and measure meaningful play engagements.

You'll learn how to:



Choose games for engagement and use them effectively so you set yourself and your clients up for maximum success



Understand the workings of game facilitation, from live engagement to feedback so you can deliver a seamless client experience



Leverage this groundbreaking methodology to grow your reputation by achieving results your clients thought were out of reach

With the Play Facilitator Certification, you will also receive:

- 1 year of access to Barometer XP's [Play Concierge Platform](#), which includes a searchable game database, culture assessment for aligning transformative learning, and on-call expert support for your engagements.

Want more information? Email info@barometerxp.com

Trend 5: The Evolution of DEI

Starting in 2020, companies across sectors and industries invested heavily in coaching, consulting, and training to make their workplaces more inclusive and equitable for all employees, ensure that workforce composition was more representative of the client population, and remove some of the structural and cultural barriers that prevented some employees from thriving. The results were mixed.

Over the last few years Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (DEI) became a loaded and divisive term that factored heavily in the recent US elections. In the aftermath of the outcome, federal, state, and local laws have gone into effect forbidding government spending on any DEI programs, and some companies publicly announced the end of their DEI initiatives.

The field as we knew it is gone.

But the problems persist, and a large part of executive coaching is helping leaders create and sustain the kind work environment where everyone can thrive. The need for developing self-awareness, empathy, emotional intelligence, and better interpersonal skills will always be critical for leaders. The only thing that may need to change is the terminology used by coaches, facilitators, and consultants.

To avoid triggering an unwanted resistance in 2025, a coach would be wise to avoid focusing on diversity in identities -- race, gender, ethnicity, religion, etc -- and instead focus on fostering greater understanding across different behaviors, skills, and perspectives. Attributes like personal communication styles or emotional intelligence.

Ultimately, coaches aim to unlock human potential and enable human-centered workplaces. Syncing around a common language is a fundamental piece of achieving that goal.



Conclusion

The past few years have upended our business and social norms. With climate change, unrest throughout the world, and a new administration settling in, 2025 promises to be just as transformational in our daily lives and our work lives.

Although the Great Resignation has subsided, employers are still concerned with retaining their best employees, so they are looking for coaches, facilitators, and consultants who can help find more enjoyment, success, and meaning in their work.

An organization that wants long-term success in the face of economic uncertainty and an ever-increasing speed of change needs to have a plan in place to actively re-engage “quiet quitting” employees and build a culture that encourages a tight-knit community within the workplace. The best vehicle for accomplishing these goals is the team, and one of the most effective methods of team cohesion available is organized, focused constructive play.

If you'd like to learn more about how to effectively add play and games to your coaching or facilitation repertoire, [contact us today](#).

Want to see what's possible with play? Attend a Barometer XP event. Their experts demo games, share facilitation strategies, and offer spaces to explore:
www.linkedin.com/company/barometerxp/events



About Barometer XP

Barometer XP is a company dedicated to harnessing “the science of play at work.” Founded in 2020 on the belief that adult learning should have an experiential component to give teams a chance to practice, experiment, and grow together, Barometer XP has found a niche between traditional professional development and team-building activities to modernize teams for 21st century challenges.

Barometer XP

2202 18th St. NW, #265

Washington, DC 20009

www.barometerxp.com