

## New Case Study

# Fostering Sustainable Excellence: URMIC's Journey to Empowered Leadership and Well-being with Valor Performance

The University of Rochester Medical Center (URMC) is a premier academic medical institution in the United States, and serves as the focal point for the University of Rochester's endeavors in health research, education, and patient care. URMIC partners with Valor Performance to build leadership capacity, retain talent, and mitigate burnout.

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# URMC's Challenges

URMC faced several challenges that prompted them to seek innovative approaches to faculty and leadership development:

- **Shortage of faculty and staff:** A shortage of faculty and staff strained resources and increased workloads, with a recognized impact on both patient care and professional development opportunities.
- **Workplace Burnout and Sustainability:** Burnout and sustainability issues were prevalent among clinical educators due to competing demands and the high-stress environment.
- **Desire for Development:** As life-long learners, faculty and staff expressed a strong desire for opportunities to learn, grow, and develop their leadership and career skills.

**This coaching experience has been incredible! It has created tangible changes in my leadership approach & has helped me to better navigate difficult situations. I have found working with my coach to be hugely impactful.”**



Dr. Erin Shope,  
D.M.D.

# The Solution

URMC's dedication to nurturing the growth of their staff took a significant step forward through their partnership with Valor Performance. At its core, Valor's performance coaching program aimed to empower URMC's leaders even amidst a challenging healthcare environment.

Through a series of one-on-one professional virtual coaching sessions, supported by a guided, self-directed learning platform, URMC leaders gained invaluable self-awareness, developed agency, and honed communication and leadership skills, equipping them to set an example and tone for their multidisciplinary teams.

What set Valor apart from URMC's other internal resources was its individualized, confidential approach, ensuring that each leader's unique needs were addressed in a safe and private environment.

Moreover, Valor Performance's coaching program seamlessly integrated with URMC's internal resources, such as mentoring programs and workshops, creating a holistic and comprehensive development experience for the organization's dedicated staff.

**“I have a newly honed tool set of skills to call upon in my various roles and utilize those tools with agility and flexibility.”**



Dr. Heather Busick,  
Primary Care  
Physician and  
Associate Chief  
Medical Information  
Officer

# The Results

URMC's investment in Valor Performance coaching yielded impressive results that surpassed initial expectations in various critical areas, validating its substantial impact on leadership development, stress reduction, and overall organizational performance.

## Strong Demand and Active Engagement

Valor Performance witnessed an overwhelming demand, with twice as many faculty members expressing interest in the program compared to the administrators' initial predictions. In addition, an impressive 92% of URMC's participants were actively engaged in the Valor Performance coaching experience. This remarkable level of interest and participation underscores the value that URMC leaders placed on the coaching program and highlights the organization's commitment to investing in leadership development.

92%

92% of URMC's participants were actively engaged in the Valor Performance Coaching experience.

Dr. Janine Shapiro, Asso. Dean for Faculty Development, Medical Director for Continuing Medical Education, & Professor of Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine elaborated: *"Having a way to provide [support for faculty] in a way that is flexible, provides the autonomy that faculty are looking for and the flexibility during this complex time in academic medicine...I mean, [the participants] voted with their feet. When [Valor] was offered, they jumped at the opportunity. So the faculty decided, and they showed us what they value."*

## Goal Progress

Another significant achievement was the remarkable progress made by participants toward their goals. An overwhelming 97% of participants reported making tangible progress in achieving their goals in areas such as building confidence, adaptability, communication and improving time and energy management. This result emphasizes the program's ability to drive meaningful, measurable improvements in leadership capabilities and performance that will allow participants to succeed and flourish in academic medicine for the duration of their careers.

## Leadership Effectiveness

An astonishing 96% of URMC participants stated that their involvement with Valor had significantly improved their performance and effectiveness at work.

Across Valor, this improvement in effectiveness is validated by colleagues, managers and peers, as evidenced by 360 feedback collected through Valor Viewpoints. On average, 73% of participants experience an improvement in their ability to influence their team toward its organizational goals, with an impressive 27.9% increase from baseline data collected, showcasing the broader positive ripple effect within their teams and organizations at large.

# 96%

96% of participants stated that their involvement with Valor had significantly improved performance & effectiveness at work.

# 73%

73% of participants experience an improvement in their ability to influence their team toward its organizational goals.

**“The 1:1 coaching has made a significant impact, identifying areas where I have been stuck, and providing opportunities for reflection, insight, and concrete steps to becoming a stronger leader. I’m grateful for the opportunity to engage in this work.”**



Dr. Valerie J. Lang,  
Professor of Medicine,  
Senior Associate Division  
Chief & Director of  
Faculty Development,  
Hospital Medicine  
Division, Associate  
Director of Meliora in  
Medicine

In addition, 75% of participants experience an improvement in their ability to ask for and use feedback to grow and achieve their goals, and colleagues observed a 10% increase from baseline in Valor participants' ability to communicate their intentions effectively to others. All of these notable results reinforce the fact that Valor Performance coaching not only enhances individual effectiveness but also strengthens team dynamics and organizational culture.

### **Stress and Burnout Reduction**

Utilizing the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) assessment, a commonly-used psychological survey, URM C observed a noteworthy reduction in perceptions of stress levels among participants. After just 2 months of Valor coaching, participants experienced an approximate 6% decrease in their PSS scores.

Incredibly, continued coaching for an additional 3 months (5 months in total) resulted in a total reduction of 18% in stress levels.

This outcome aligns with research from Mayo Clinic on the impact of professional coaching to mitigate emotional exhaustion contributing to burnout with a 17% decrease in stress through virtual coaching (Dyrbye).

This highlights the significant and sustained positive impact of coaching on stress management and burnout reduction by not only significantly lowering stress levels, as demonstrated by the substantial decrease in PSS scores, but also by equipping participants with effective coping strategies and resilience-building techniques to navigate the high-pressure healthcare environment more effectively.

Furthermore, Valor Performance leveraged a modified version of the NASA Task Index focused on cognitive workload, which has been shown to correlate to the risk of burnout in physicians (Harry).

Initial data findings reveal that while participants in Valor Performance coaching found their work to be as mentally demanding as before they began Valor coaching, they experienced a substantial 23% increase in their success rates when it comes to accomplishing their job tasks and a 16% decrease in feeling insecure, discouraged, stressed and annoyed compared to before Valor.

**18%**

18% total  
reduction in  
stress levels

**17%**

17% decrease in  
stress through  
virtual coaching

**“Embrace this experience on the basis of the way that it encourages leaders to engage, prioritize, & to use their experiences. The personalization & flexibility, & alignment across multiple workplace cultures and dilemmas...This is the real deal, & it leads to all kinds of productive ripple effects for organizational change.”**



Dr. Jessica Shand,  
Associate Professor  
of Pediatrics,  
HealthHumanities, and  
Bioethics, and Director  
of URM's Clinician  
and Faculty Wellbeing  
Program

### **Nurturing Faculty**

Program administrators seized the opportunity to address the concerns of over-extended faculty and staff effectively. By equipping them with the tools and strategies necessary to take control of their own development, build strong boundaries, be confident in their abilities, and manage themselves and their energy more efficiently and sustainably, Valor Performance contributed to a more balanced and empowered workforce, while also fostering a culture of self-driven improvement and leadership excellence. Dr. Shapiro explains: *“I think clearly, this was an opportunity for us especially during this time where we have the shortage of faculty and staff and workplace burnout was an opportunity for us to show our faculty how we value them and were invested in their professional development.”*



URMC's investment in Valor Performance has yielded exceptional results, from high demand and engagement to substantial progress in leadership development and stress reduction.

### The Difference with Valor

Valor's coaching stood out due to its tailored and flexible nature. The individualized coaching approach built trust and addressed each participants' specific needs, leading to meaningful progress, and the blend of live and asynchronous components provided flexibility while keeping participants engaged. Participants found the coaching program both rewarding and effective, resulting in positive impacts on job satisfaction, well-being, and performance.

URMC's success story with Valor Performance coaching serves as an example of how innovative approaches

can address challenges and drive positive change. By partnering with Valor, institutions can create a culture of empowerment, self-leadership, and growth that benefits both individuals and the organization as a whole.

**“Overall, participating in Valor was a wonderful experience and I will continue to implement what I have learned going forward in my career.”**



Dr. Alissa Huston,  
Associate Professor  
of Medicine  
Hematology/  
Oncology and Co-  
Medical Director  
Pluta Integrative  
Oncology &  
Wellness Center

# Key Takeaways from URMC's journey working with Valor Performance

## 1. Addressing Talent Shortages and

**Overwork:** URMC's partnership with Valor Performance helped them address talent shortages and increased workloads, showing the importance of innovative solutions for staffing challenges.

## 2. Stress Reduction and Burnout

**Mitigation:** Valor coaching contributed to a substantial reduction in stress levels, underlining the impact of coaching on stress management and employee well-being.

## 3. Measurable Leadership

**Improvement:** Participants reported significant progress in leadership capabilities, highlighting Valor's ability to drive tangible improvements in performance.

## 4. Empowerment and Self-Driven

**Improvement:** Valor Performance empowered employees to take control of their development, fostering a culture of self-driven improvement and leadership excellence.

\*Dyrbye, Liselotte. "Professional Coaching and Surgeon Well-being: A Randomized Controlled Trial." *PubMed*, 1 April 2023, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36000783/>. Accessed 26 September 2023\*

\*Harry, Elizabeth. "Physician Task Load and the Risk of Burnout Among US Physicians in a National Survey." *PubMed*, 2021, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33168367/>. Accessed 26 September 2023.\*