



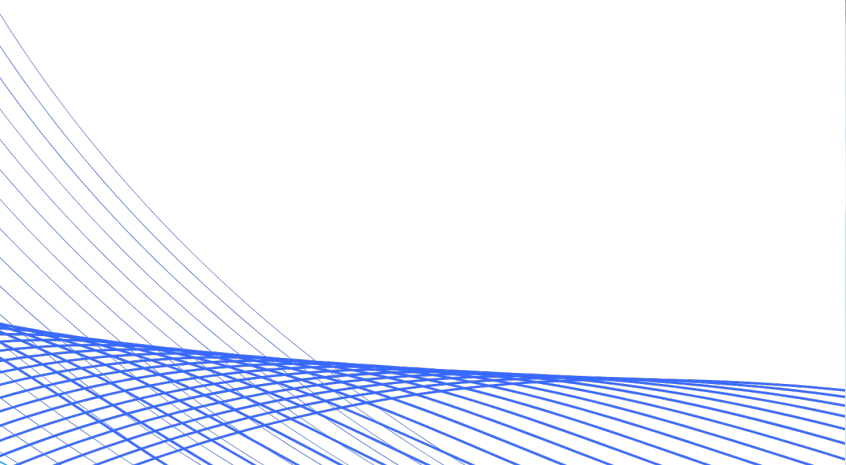
VALOR

New Case Study

Cultivating Success: How Valor Performance Supercharged Upwork's Internal Development Program

Upwork seeks out Valor Performance to enhance the development, well-being, and performance of its workforce.

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Upwork's Challenges

Upwork, a prominent online freelance talent marketplace, has consistently prioritized the development, well-being, and performance of its workforce. To bolster these efforts, Upwork partnered with Valor Performance, a 1:1 performance coaching platform.

Valor was introduced to Upwork's sales organization, and together they have successfully launched multiple cohorts of employees within the sales organization. The employees within these cohorts encompassed a diverse range of roles, from quota-carrying sales representatives to sales operations professionals and seasoned sales leaders with 5-10 years of experience. This case study highlights how Valor seamlessly integrated with Upwork's internal leadership development program and the positive outcomes it achieved.

Upwork faced various challenges that necessitated a comprehensive solution:

- **Retention and Development:** Upholding talent retention and fostering employee development were paramount for Upwork. While they had a robust internal leadership development program, they sought additional support.
- **Stress Management:** Rapid scaling brought about elevated stress levels among employees. Balancing stress management with productivity was a significant challenge.
- **Cross Functional Collaboration:** Effective cross-functional collaboration was crucial for Upwork's operational success, and they required a solution that could help facilitate this.
- **Performance Improvement:** Upwork aimed to elevate overall employee performance, particularly within their sales teams, which played a pivotal role in the company's growth.

The Solution

Upwork's decision to form a collaborative partnership with Valor Performance was the result of a careful integration of several pivotal factors, each playing a significant role in shaping the nature and success of this strategic partnership.

One such factor was Valor's client-centric approach, which seamlessly resonated with Upwork's core values. This approach was designed to ensure that employees felt not only valued but also well-supported in their professional growth journey within the organization.

Valor's commitment to prioritizing the individual needs and aspirations of participants contributed to creating an environment where employees felt recognized and encouraged in their developmental endeavors at Upwork.

Another integral component of the collaboration was Valor's ability to provide customized coaching.

Through both personalized 1:1 coaching sessions and engaging group sessions, Valor's approach aligned seamlessly with Upwork's commitment to tailored leadership development. This personalized coaching strategy allowed Upwork's employees to receive guidance and support that catered specifically to their individual needs, fostering a more personalized and effective development experience.

Valor's commitment to participant engagement also emerged as a pivotal element of the collaboration.

Through the provision of an interactive and client-centric platform, Valor effectively fostered active participation among employees in the coaching process. The emphasis on maintaining high levels of engagement significantly contributed to cultivating a more dynamic approach to leadership development within Upwork.

The Results

Engagement & Performance Improvement

Upwork's collaboration with Valor Performance yielded overwhelmingly positive outcomes. A resounding 100% of participants expressed that their experience with Valor was not only a valuable use of their time but had also notably improved their performance at work. Moreover, 100% of participants also reported increased job satisfaction directly attributable to the impactful coaching provided by Valor.

"Entrusting Valor with the coach-matching process has let us focus our attention on core aspects of the leadership program and allows the Upwork team to maximize the learning outcomes of our program participants."

Chrissy Blakey, Sales Training Program Manager

100%
Of participants expressed Valor improved their performance at work.

100%
Of participants reported increased job satisfaction.

Upwork Sales Operations Manager, Coreane Mangione enthused –

"[My coach] has been an exceptional coach throughout our year-long partnership. Under her guidance, I completed my LeadUp capstone project with confidence. That project helped me to establish clear goals and strategies for my new team, allowing us to move forward with a clear vision of how we measure success and put our values into action. Her coaching has also helped me keep a resilient growth mindset in the midst of transition at work. I wholeheartedly recommend [my coach] and the Valor program."

Resilience and Stress Management

One particularly telling metric underscored the effectiveness of Valor's coaching approach: when asked about their ability to consistently perform at a high level despite stress and pressure, clients rated their experience an impressive 6.5 out of 7, showcasing the tangible impact of Valor on their resilience and stress management.

Additionally, an incredible 91% of respondents acknowledged the positive impact of their Valor experience on their professional lives.

High Satisfaction and Recommendation Rates

Remarkably, every participant chose to work with their matched Valor coach throughout the entire coaching

experience, underscoring the high level of satisfaction and perceived value in the coaching relationship.

Eric Ventry, Director of Managed Services at Upwork agreed, saying,

"From the first session, I felt really confident in the match as I was able to candidly present to him where I was at in my leadership journey including my areas of opportunity. This allowed for more effective conversations with [my coach] and him being able to target the weak spots with a collaborative game plan for improvement."

Further reinforcing the success of the partnership, a unanimous 100% of participants expressed their willingness to recommend Valor to their colleagues, emphasizing the platform's efficacy in driving individual and collective success within the Upwork team.

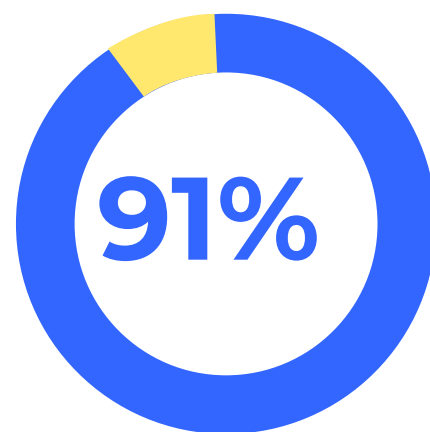
Cohort-Specific Performance Improvements

Examining the specific outcomes from the most recent cohort of Valor participants, which launched in October 2023, the data revealed significant improvements across key areas. Notably, 90% of clients demonstrated enhanced empathy and understanding, as validated by both peers and direct reports, representing a substantial 15% increase from the baseline.

Furthermore, 100% of clients experienced marked progress in influencing their teams toward organizational goals, registering an impressive 30% increase from the initial assessment. Additionally, all participants reported an improvement in their ability to remain calm amid chaos and pressure, highlighting the comprehensive impact of Valor's coaching on various aspects of professional performance.

Seamless Integration with Upwork's Development Program

Valor seamlessly integrated with Upwork's internal development program, proving to be a critical success factor. This alignment facilitated a smooth transition for participants and ensured a holistic, complementary approach to employee development.



91% of respondents acknowledged the positive impact on their professional lives.

During times of organizational change, particularly layoffs, Valor played a crucial role in supporting Upwork employees. The coaching proved instrumental in aiding employee adaptation and maintaining morale during such transitions. Angie Turk an Enterprise Sr. Sales Manager, stated it best, explaining:

"I cannot overemphasize the value of incorporating Valor into your development regimen, including both their training programs and the expertise of their coaches. Personally, the experience with my coach at Valor was truly exceptional, to say the very least."

Chrissy Blakey, Sales Training Program Manager at Upwork, agreed –

"Not only have I witnessed the transformative impact of coaching on our sales leaders, but I've also had the privilege of experiencing it myself. As

both a participant in coaching sessions and a leader who has been coached, I've seen firsthand how coaching can unlock untapped potential, enhance self-awareness, and accelerate professional growth."

The Valor Difference

Valor Performance significantly impacted Upwork's internal sales leadership development programs, forging a unique synergy that exceeded traditional coaching platforms.

The alignment of shared values, where Valor's client-centric approach mirrored Upwork's commitment to a supportive culture, not only facilitated professional development but also nurtured a profound connection to organizational values, fostering a distinct sense of belonging among employees.

Furthermore, Valor's customized coaching seamlessly integrated with Upwork's existing development program, ensuring employees received personalized guidance within the structured framework of Upwork's initiatives.

“The benefits of coaching extend beyond individual sessions and create a ripple effect throughout Upwork, driving sustained improvements in performance, engagement, and culture over time. I see people talking more, leaning in more, leading more.”

Chrissy Blakey, Sales Training Program Manager

This integration not only maximized the impact of the coaching experience but also addressed specific skill gaps, actively involving participants in a dynamic approach to leadership development within Upwork.

The transformative collaboration positioned Valor Performance as a pivotal catalyst in Upwork's journey toward sustained excellence in sales leadership development.

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In conclusion, Upwork's collaboration with Valor Performance showcased a strategic decision to enhance its internal development program. This partnership facilitated a comprehensive approach to employee development, yielding increased retention, enhanced performance, and a workforce that felt valued and well-supported. The seamless integration between Valor Performance and Upwork's internal initiatives contributed to a more holistic and effective development experience for employees.