



ATTRACT & RETAIN TALENT

5-step guide to setting up
Parental Transition Coaching
in your organisation



A Guide to Setting up a Parental Transition Coaching Programme

- 1 Identify the problems you are seeking to solve and set objectives
- 2 Get the project team on board and your coaches ready to go
- 3 Map out the process to get the coaching programme in place
- 4 Set up communications to make sure people hear about the coaching
- 5 Evaluate and report the results!

1

Identify the problems you are seeking to solve and set objectives





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Identifying the specific challenges, you are looking to address will help you ensure that you can set tangible goals as well as make it easier to sell the concept into senior management.

This means you are much more likely to get the buy-in you need to proceed quickly – from both a time and budget perspective.

There are 2 sets of common problems which will be addressed through parental-transition coaching:

At an individual level

You may well be hearing personal challenges as employees move through the parental transition from expectancy to return such as:

'Most of my friends' companies provide support and coaching for all their new parents'

"I have really lost my confidence'

'My manager doesn't understand how exhausted I am feeling'

'I don't feel able to talk about my baby and family openly in case I am judged by my team'

'There are no other parents in the team - I feel isolated'



'As a new dad I don't feel I can ask for parental leave'

'I have been refused the flexibility I need - I can't make it work for the longer term'

'I can't get the right work/family balance and it's stressing me to the point it's affecting my overall mental health'



'I feel guilty every time I leave at 5pm because the rest of the team is so stretched'

'I feel like I've been forgotten about on leave - I'm so disconnected'

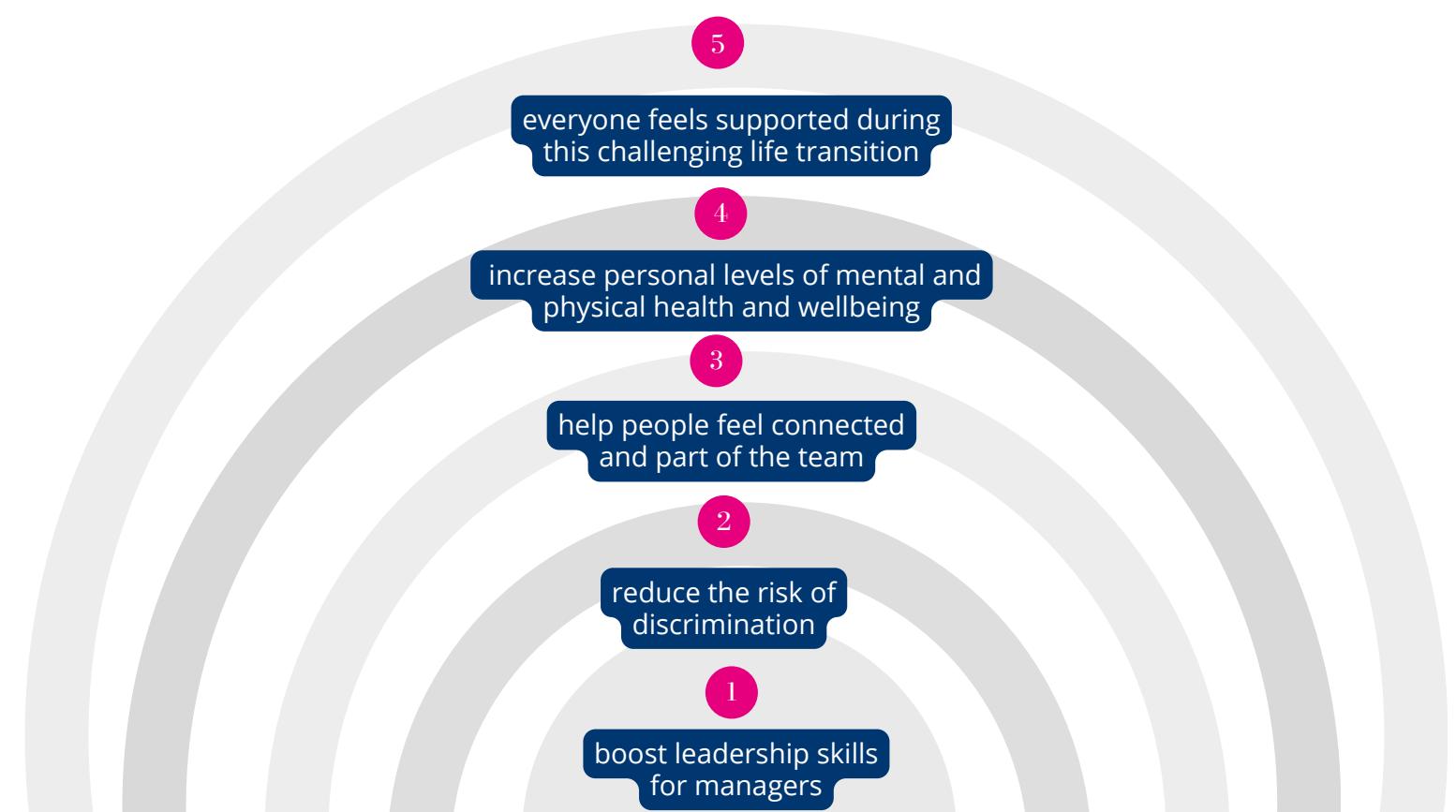
'I don't feel supported by my organisation despite having given 5 years of solid professional experience'

'The impact of not addressing these concerns ranges from poor mental health and wellbeing to low productivity and retention levels.'

Worst-case scenario, an individual may have been treated in such a way that a case for discrimination is raised (for example pregnancy discrimination). Not only does this cause a huge amount of distress for the individuals involved, this situation also poses a reputational and financial risk to the company.

Possible objectives for your parental-transition coaching programme

- To ensure everyone feels supported during this challenging life transition.
- To increase personal levels of mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- To help people feel connected and part of the team.
- To reduce the risk of discrimination.
- To help boost leadership skills for managers.



The positive impact of supporting working parents reverberates throughout the organisation, enhancing its reputation as a family-friendly employer

At an organisational level

Over time, if the individual concerns are not addressed, the organisational will face:

- Decreasing return rates from leave.
- Decreasing retention rates.
- Increase in absenteeism due to poor health and high stress levels.
- Losing potential talent to competitors who offer a family-friendly, flexible and supportive culture.
- Missing D&I targets due to inability to attract and retain diverse talent.
- A weaker female leadership talent pipeline.

Possible objectives for your parental-transition coaching programme:

- Increase return and retention rates.
- Increase levels of health and wellbeing.
- Increase number of females in the leadership talent pipeline.
- Attract more diverse talent.



2

Get the project team on board and your coaches ready to go





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Project team

Representatives from HR, L&D and/or D&I will be best-placed to make up the project team.

The perfect team would have someone from each of these functions, because a successful coaching programme would enable everyone to meet their personal and team goals and objectives.

In addition, the skillsets would be complementary – for example someone from HR can ensure family-leave policies are competitive and someone from L&D can make sure the delivery and evaluation is strong.

Senior buy-in is crucial, so ensure that budget holders/key decision makers are involved right from step 1. Ideally, engage people who have been affected by some of the challenges outlined above – for example a recent returner or a manager who has had to manage a particularly challenging parental leave scenario.

Finally, if you can find a mix of experiences to bring to the project management table – even better – for example mums, dads, same-sex parents, adopters. This ensures the programme remains truly inclusive from start to finish.

Coaches/mentor. Internal or external?



There is a lot to be said about having a mix of external coaches and internal parent mentors to bring the best of both worlds.

Employees often feel higher levels of trust and psychological safety when working with an external coach.

We need to bear in mind that as individuals go through the parental transition they may well struggle with relationships with their managers or colleagues or personal issues which they want to ensure remain 100% confidential.

Talking these problems through with someone external to the organisation can also create a much more strategic, objective space.

Having a choice of coaches (internal or external) is really important so individuals can freely choose their partnership and therefore more naturally connect with someone who 'gets them'.

Internal parent mentors can be a great way to offer long-term, consistent support, with the added advantage of having internal knowledge and networks.



Coach or parental transition coach?

A qualified and experienced coach can bring a lot of value to an individual's professional journey. However, those coaches with either a lot of experience or ideally a qualification in parental-transition coaching will be able to deeply connect with and partner up with employees every step of the way.

See our article on the [10 things your employees need to know about parental transition coaching](#).

A mix of experiences to bring to the project management table



HR, L&D,
DE&I



Senior
Managers



Working
parents

3

Map out the process to get the coaching programme in place





Map out the process to get the coaching programme in place

Once you've set up what you want to achieve, who will help you do it, and gained senior support and buy-in, you're ready to map out the process around how you will actually get the coaching in place for the right people at the right time. Here are the key things to consider:



1

Who is in scope?

Dependant on budget and demographics – best practice is to ensure coaching is offered to all new parents rather than 'just those taking maternity leave' or 'just those at a senior level' – this ensures everyone feels included and supported. Will you limit the coaching to one location or several?

As most coaching now happens virtually over Teams or on the phone, your demographics are much wider!



2

Will there be a pilot?

It's recommended to start with a small group to include expectant parents and returners so after say the first 6 coaching sessions have taken place you can collate feedback to ensure you are on the right track.



3

How many sessions will you offer?

Best practice is to offer up to 4x 1-hour 1-1 coaching sessions per person from expectancy through to the first 3 months of return.



4

How will people hear about the coaching and how will they sign up?

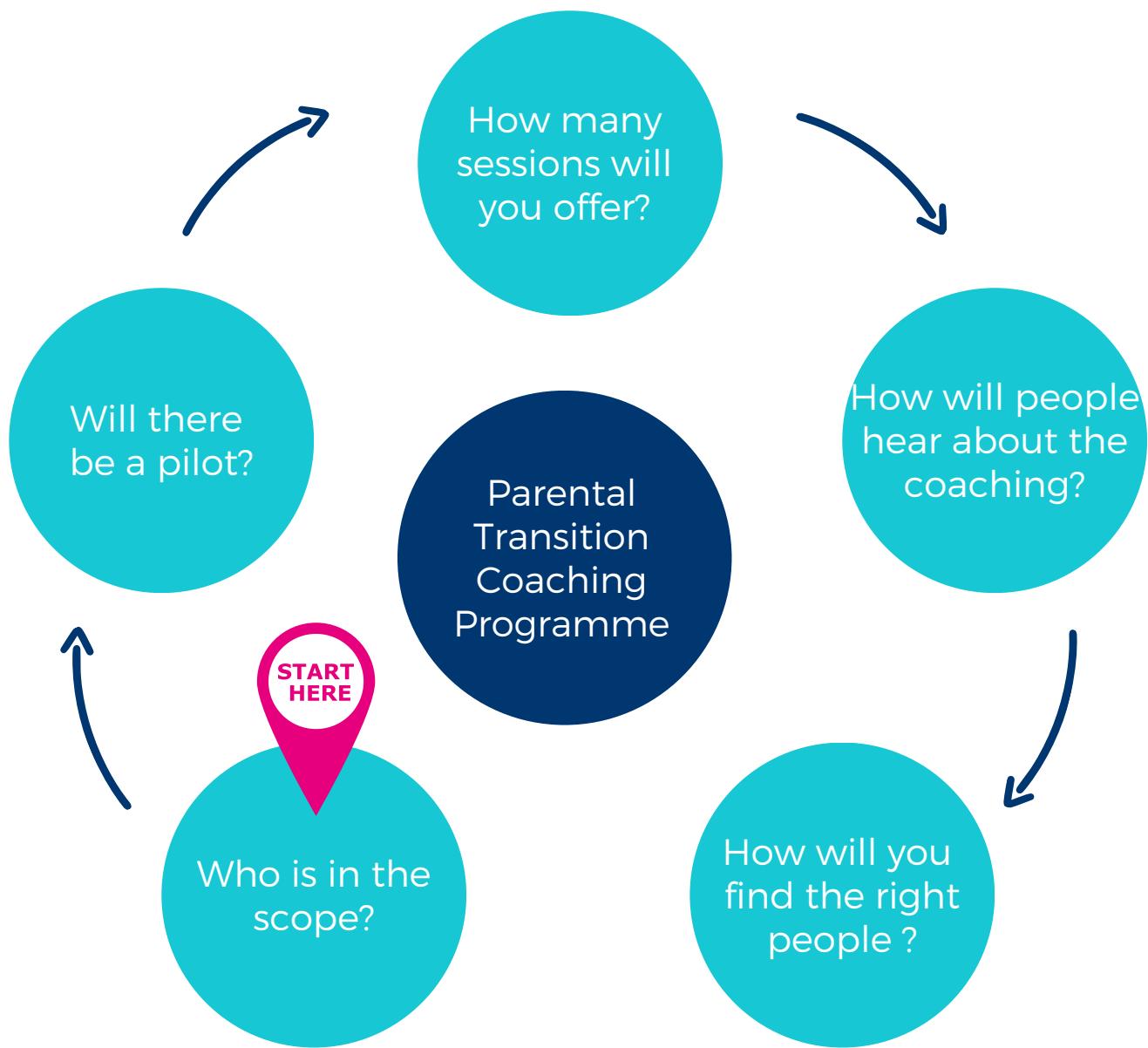
Step 5 (over the next page) covers the comms, and if you decide to use an external coaching provider, you may find they will do all of the admin for you in terms of offering up coach profiles to potential coachees and arranging the introductory sessions.



5

How will you find the right people?

Ensure that someone in HR is able to provide you with an upfront (and then regularly updated) list of everyone currently expectant, on leave and recent returners so you can contact these employees directly.



4

Set up communications to make sure people hear about the coaching





Set up communications to make sure people hear about the coaching

Making sure people hear about the coaching is of course, imperative and a mix of communication always works best. Consider:

- Newsletters.
- A designated family/benefits webpage.
- A launch webinar.
- Information on the coaching sent out as standard whenever someone announces their parental leave.
- HR Business Partners talk about the coaching if 1-1 parental leave meetings are held.
- Digital or physical posters.

5

Evaluate and report the results!





Evaluate and report the results!

A simple feedback questionnaire at the end of the coaching period, to include questions which will give you both quantitative and qualitative data is the simplest and most effective way to track the progress of your coaching programme.

If you have chosen to work with an external coaching supplier, this can all be done for you, and results presented in a summary format, which makes it very quick and easy for you to report progress back to the senior management team.

Things you may wish to track through your evaluation:

- Questions around the coach – for example reliability; level of objectivity, challenge, follow up.
- Questions around the impact – for example practical takeaways and changes made; level of confidence; levels of wellbeing; future career confidence.
- Free-form option to record any personal observations.

Finally, it's crucial to summarise the evaluation after the pilot sessions have taken place, and then again annually – and of course share the results with your project team, sponsors and budget holders to ensure buy in for next year!



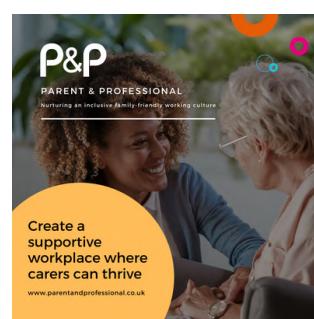
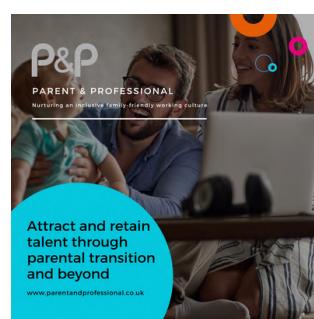
ABOUT P&P

Why is Parental Transition on our agenda

At Parent and Professional, we believe that creating a family-friendly workplace culture is essential for supporting all employees, especially during major life transitions like parenthood.

Our commitment is to help organisations create a culture that truly supports the health and wellbeing of individuals balancing their professional and personal lives. This includes navigating parental transition, caregiving responsibilities, midlife health challenges, and work-family balance. We recognise that by providing the right support during these important moments, we can help employees thrive both at work and at home.

Our award-winning approach, we ensure that every team member feels valued—not just for their professional contributions but also for their unique personal journeys. By placing parental transition at the heart of our agenda, we are dedicated to cultivating a supportive environment where everyone can flourish.





P&P VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE

Attract and retain talent through parental transition

Catch up on our virtual roundtable where panellists discuss supporting employees through the parental transition.

This insightful session reveals the real impact of coaching on talent retention and DE&I initiatives. Listen in as HR leaders from ISIO, Legal & General, and Attest share global case studies and success stories, highlighting how coaching has transformed workplaces.

Featuring insights from Aileen Cowler, Jacqueline Alcindor, Carol Paddison, and P&P's Co-Founder Helen Letchfield, the recording is now available to explore proactive strategies for supporting working parents.



Helen Letchfield

P&P Coaching
Co-Founder



Aileen Cowler

ISIO
Talent Development
Manager



Jacqueline Alcindor

Legal & General Investment
Management
D&I Programme Partner



Carol Paddison

Attest
Interim Head of
People



P&P RESOURCES

Download our other roundtable reports



As organisations aim to diversify their workforce, leaders must create environments where everyone feels valued, understood, and empowered. This white paper highlights the importance of inclusive leadership, its effect on creating a family-friendly culture, and the roles of individuals and teams in fostering an inclusive and thriving workplace.



Our Thriving Together Toolkit highlights the importance of supporting work-family balance. With over a third of employees prioritising this above other benefits, the toolkit provides practical steps for fostering a family-friendly workplace that boosts both employee wellbeing and organisational strength.



Our aim for this whitepaper is to highlight some of the key challenges that the LGBTQ+ community may face at work, as well as considering how business leaders, HR and D&I teams can best support minority groups to enable their wellbeing, balance, growth and career development.



There are approximately 4.7 million unpaid carers in the UK, the need for a proactive, inclusive, and family-friendly workplace is more important than ever. This white paper underscores the importance of supporting carers and offers actionable strategies for organisations to implement.

Join our working parents LinkedIn community



Our Working Parents LinkedIn Group is a supportive space where working parents connect, share insights, and access resources to thrive both at work and home. Join to gain practical advice, build a network, and contribute to discussions on balancing career and family.

TOOLKITS



DOWNLOAD

P&P
career coaching



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5-Step guide to setting up Parental Transition Coaching in your organisation

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THE BALANCING ACT
Expert Advice and Practical Tips for Work-Family Balance

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THE BALANCING ACT
Ideas to Promote Work-Family Balance in the Workplace

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SUPPORT FOR WORKING PARENTS
Top 20 practical ways to get a better work/family balance

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ANDROPAUSE IN THE WORKPLACE
A Guide for Employers and Employees

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BALANCING CARING AND A CAREER
Top 10 life skills developed by carers which help professional life - includes a real life case study.

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PARENTS & CARERS' NETWORKS
A guide to setting up a parents and carers' network in your organisation

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WORK-FAMILY BALANCE
Summer Break **CHECKLIST**
Supporting working parents as summer approaches.
A checklist for HR and Managers

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NAVIGATING NEURODIVERSITY
15 ways to manage a diverse skill set for a culture of inclusion



Support careers through family & life changes

www.parentandprofessional.co.uk



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Let's collaborate

Build a Family Friendly
Workplace Today

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