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Trust Deficit and Coaching Breakdown: Insight from a B2B Sales Team Intervention

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Abstract

This study aims to explore how trust deficits influence the effectiveness of coaching interventions within a B2B sales organization in Indonesia. The coaching program was initially designed to enhance team performance, but it unexpectedly revealed deeper systemic issues related to organizational trust, structural ambiguity, and leadership behavior. Employing a qualitative exploratory case study, the research involved six sales team members and one observer, using data collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, reflective notes, and internal documents. The results show that coaching functioned less as a performance accelerator and more as a diagnostic tool that uncovered hidden dysfunctions, including client reassignments without communication, unclear performance benchmarks, and reluctance to share customer data. These trust-related barriers significantly reduced the impact of the coaching process. Nevertheless, the intervention prompted participants to request a trust-building session and spurred the company to initiate Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). A conceptual model was developed to illustrate how trust, leadership behavior, and psychological safety are interrelated in shaping coaching outcomes. This study underscores that for coaching to succeed, organizations must first establish relational and structural readiness.

Keywords: coaching, trust deficit, sales organization, leadership, psychological safety

INTRODUCTION

Coaching has become one of the most promoted leadership development strategies within contemporary organizational life. Its increasing popularity reflects the assumption that coaching improves team performance, builds individual capability, and supports behavioral change. In many cases, coaching is embedded into leadership pipelines and change management initiatives, with the expectation that it can create impact both at the individual and team levels (Diane Coutu et al., 2009; Grant, 2014; Theeboom et al., 2014).

However, despite its increasing popularity and widespread adoption, coaching does not always result in successful outcomes (Bachkirova et al. 2023). Research has shown that there is a significant gap between intended impact and actual change (Boyce et al. 2010), and many coaching interventions fail to deliver measurable improvements in performance or collaboration (De Meuse et al. 2009). This raises a critical question: what happens when coaching is introduced into a team context where relational dynamics are already fragile?

Much of the coaching literature has focused on individual-level outcomes (Theeboom et al. 2014), coaching models (Whitmore 1992; Clutterbuck 2023), and coach competencies (Passmore 2020), but there is relatively little attention given to the relational and contextual preconditions that enable coaching to work effectively—especially in team settings. In particular, trust is a variable that, while often discussed as an outcome of coaching, may in fact be a prerequisite. Although some studies suggest that coaching may build trust (Jowett et al. 2023), others point out that lack of trust in the system or within the team may undermine the coaching process from the outset (Abrantes et al. 2020; Atkinson et al. 2022).

Within team coaching literature, the concept of psychological safety has gained prominence, yet is still under-theorized as a gatekeeper for learning and behavior change (Edmondson and Lei 2014). Sales teams, in particular, present a complex case. While they often serve as a focus of performance improvement efforts, they are also high-pressure environments characterized by intense competition, blurred lines of collaboration, and limited transparency (Butt et al. 2020; Mallapragada et al. 2022; AlHussainan et al. 2023).

This study examines a coaching program implemented in a B2B sales organization operating in the chemical industry. The intervention, designed to develop collaboration and team capability, revealed unexpected resistance and breakdowns. What was initially perceived as a skill gap turned out to be deeply rooted in interpersonal and systemic trust deficits, such as peer-to-peer client appropriation, lack of transparency in client assignment, and weak procedural clarity. These issues surfaced not because coaching solved them, but because coaching unintentionally exposed them—acting as a mirror to unspoken tensions.

By exploring these questions, the study contributes to the understanding of coaching effectiveness not as a function of method or model alone, but as contingent upon the relational readiness of the team. In doing so, it challenges the assumption that coaching can function as a neutral or universally applicable intervention, and instead reframes it as a socially embedded practice—one that may succeed or fail depending on the trust climate in which it unfolds.

Previous studies, such as Passmore and Sinclair (2020), have emphasized the importance of psychological safety as a determinant of coaching success, while Taylor et al. (2019) note that coaching is most effective in organizations with supportive feedback systems. However, most of these studies focus on individual-level coaching and overlook complex team-based dynamics—especially within high-pressure sales environments where competition and opacity are common.

This study seeks to fill that gap by exploring how trust deficits manifest in team coaching contexts, and how these affect coaching outcomes. Specifically, it investigates a B2B sales team within Indonesia's chemical sector where coaching revealed deeper organizational dysfunctions rather than immediately improving performance. The objective is to analyze how trust, leadership behavior, and psychological safety interact to influence coaching effectiveness in teams.

The benefit of this study is twofold: (1) for scholars, it contributes a conceptual model integrating relational and structural readiness into coaching theory; and (2) for practitioners, it offers diagnostic tools and policy implications to improve the design of coaching interventions in trust-sensitive environments.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative exploratory case study approach to investigate the dynamics of trust that surfaced during a coaching intervention in a sales organization. The coaching program was originally designed to improve team performance and collaboration among sales staff. However, as the intervention progressed, it became clear that a deeper and more systemic issue—namely, a deficit of trust—was undermining the team's ability to benefit from coaching. The case study design was therefore chosen to enable an in-depth exploration of behavioral, relational, and structural factors influencing coaching effectiveness in a real-world organizational setting.

The lead author served as both the external coach and principal researcher for this study. He is a Professional Certified Coach (PCC) accredited by the International Coaching Federation (ICF), with over 10 years of coaching experience and more than 800 documented coaching hours. His dual role enabled deep contextual immersion and access to authentic team dynamics throughout the intervention. To uphold research integrity, systematic documentation, reflexive journaling, and clear boundaries between facilitation and analysis were maintained.

The second author, also involved in the research team, designed and facilitated the one-day ambidexterity training that preceded the coaching program. This training session served as a strategic alignment phase to introduce shared language and objectives among participants prior to the start of the coaching process. While not involved in the coaching itself, the second author's role as trainer contributed to setting the developmental tone and organizational framing of the intervention.

The study was conducted in a mid-sized B2B industrial chemical company in Indonesia, anonymized as Company X. The coaching intervention involved six members of the sales team— three full-time employees and three senior freelancers—along with one internal observer representing company management. While all six salespeople participated in the early coaching sessions, the focus gradually shifted toward the three full-time employees who exhibited stronger

developmental needs and long-term organizational alignment. These individuals—referred to as Mr. A, Mr. B, and Mr. C—represented a diverse range of sales styles and relational dynamics within the team.

Mr. A is a senior salesperson with over 20 years of experience. He employed a technical, "go-show" selling approach involving in-person client visits and operational system research. Known for his deep product and process knowledge, he served as a subject matter expert within the team.

Mr. B relied on relationship-building through informal networks and a side business, which helped him cultivate rapport with clients. His empathetic nature and supportive attitude positioned him as an informal mentor among his peers.

Mr. C, the youngest participant, displayed resilience and adaptability, using community involvement and localized communication strategies to build trust with prospective clients.

These distinct profiles contributed critical insight into how varying sales approaches interacted with trust dynamics, leadership behavior, and structural barriers throughout the coaching process.

Data were collected using four qualitative methods to ensure depth and triangulation:

• In-depth interviews (individual and group) conducted before, during, and after coaching sessions (Aguinis & Solarino, 2019).

• Direct observation of all coaching interactions by the lead author

• Reflective field notes maintained by the coach-researcher to document real-time dynamics and emotional tone

• Supplementary artifacts, including sales reports, organizational memos, and participant self-assessments

Additionally, an internal observer appointed by the company independently documented each session to support validation and reduce facilitator bias. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis based on the framework developed by Miles et al. (1994). The process involved four stages: (1) data reduction through initial coding of interview transcripts and field notes; (2) data display via matrices to identify recurring patterns; (3) theme development by clustering related codes; and (4) conclusion drawing with validation through triangulation and peer feedback. Initial codes were generated inductively from the raw data, focusing on language that reflected relational dynamics, trust expressions, leadership interactions, and perceived barriers to progress. These codes were then grouped into conceptual categories, which evolved into second-order themes capturing broader organizational issues. To ensure analytical rigor, the study applied several qualitative credibility strategies:

• Methodological triangulation: combining data from interviews, observations, field notes, and documents (Noble and Heale 2019).

• Researcher reflexivity: maintained through reflective memos to monitor bias and role influence

• Audit trail: systematic documentation of coding decisions and theme development
• Member checking: selected findings were discussed with participants for validation
• Peer debriefing: ongoing theme review and interpretation discussions between co-authors

Thematic findings indicated persistent obstacles, including unauthorized client reassignments, lack of transparency around sales accounts, unclear performance benchmarks, and the absence of standardized operating procedures. These factors reflected systemic trust deficits that limited the coaching program's long-term impact.

Triangulation was reinforced through multiple data sources, including field observations, self-assessments, sales reports, and informal feedback shared during sessions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents key findings from the eight coaching sessions conducted with Company X's sales team. The data is presented in chronological order, following the flow of the coaching sessions to illustrate how participants' reflections developed over time. The insights are grouped into two categories: positive aspects (+) and areas for improvement (−). Direct quotes from participants are included to illustrate emergent themes and to preserve the authenticity of their voices.

Finding 1 (+): Full Attendance and Enthusiastic Engagement

Throughout the eight scheduled coaching sessions, all sales team members participated consistently, with only one absence (Mr. B, due to illness). Participants not only attended but engaged actively—sharing insights, clarifying each other's contributions, and responding with constructive feedback. This strong level of participation was supported by a clear directive from company leadership, which had made the sessions mandatory and required any scheduling conflicts to be resolved proactively.

This early commitment reflects a sense of shared purpose that aligns with the principles of transformational leadership. As noted by (Bass 1985), transformational leaders demonstrate inspirational motivation by articulating expectations and fostering collective commitment. In this case, the directive issued at the outset served not merely as an instruction but as a structural form of motivation that legitimised the coaching process and enabled full engagement. The team's responsiveness to this leadership framing indicates a culture that supports participation and development—key conditions for sustainable change in coaching contexts.

Finding 2 (−): No Sales Targets Assigned to Each Salesperson

This finding was surprising, considering that the company has been operating for over ten years and holds a fairly significant market share in its sector. While in the early days of a company it may be acceptable not to have targets as a survival strategy, at a more mature stage, the absence of targets may lead to salespeople working at an average pace without a sense of urgency. This finding emerged in the early sessions, as shown by the following quote:

"We don't have any targets. We just go with the flow." – Mr. A

When asked where sales came from, Mr. B responded:

"From customer requests. We also look around." – Mr. B

With this kind of system, there is no structured way to monitor or evaluate whether a salesperson is performing well, adequately, or poorly. There is no scoreboard or shared file that can be monitored weekly. Each salesperson maintains their own client list privately and does not share it with others. However, an interesting note was added by Mr. B:

"There are no sales targets… but of course the boss watches the progress. He also doesn't have a target. But I know, if there's no progress… the client gets reassigned. For example, if you target a customer and there's no progress, it gets given to someone else." – Mr. B

The absence of individual sales targets and shared performance indicators contradicts key elements of transformational leadership. According to Bass (1985), transformational leaders use Inspirational Motivation to articulate a clear vision, set performance expectations, and create a sense of purpose. In this case, the lack of defined goals led to ambiguity and demotivation, which are signs of ineffective leadership influence. Without structured targets, team members lacked a common benchmark to aspire to, weakening accountability and momentum—two aspects that transformational leadership aims to strengthen.

This leadership gap also relates to the framework of Leadership Behaviors in Sales Teams by Peesker et al. (2020), which highlights the importance of coaching, engaging, collaborating, and championing behaviors. The absence of clear targets and collaborative monitoring structures suggests that essential leadership behaviors—particularly engaging and coaching—were not being fully demonstrated in the team setting.

Finding 3 (+): Participants Requested New Learning Content

An encouraging development was that the participants themselves began to recognize their limitations as salespeople, particularly in their ability to understand others. This recognition emerged organically during the sessions and led to a spontaneous

request for additional learning content. In response, the coach introduced a simple personality-based framework to help participants identify their dominant communication and selling styles, along with how to better relate to various customer profiles.

This initiative signals a high level of learning motivation and sales maturity, where team members no longer see training as compliance but as a path to improve market effectiveness. According to Taylor et al. (2019), coaching can foster the kind of self-awareness that contributes directly to personal and professional growth. Furthermore, Yin et al. (2020) emphasize that when salespeople develop interpersonal understanding, it enhances knowledge sharing and overall team effectiveness—two outcomes critical for thriving in highly competitive B2B environments.

Finding 4 (–): Salespeople Did Not Know Whether Their Performance Was Optimal

This finding was particularly troubling because it raises the question of how a salesperson could be unaware of their own position. They did not even have last year's performance data on hand. This is critical, as sales results are the lifeblood of the company. In the Company X case study, Mr. A responded:

"I don't know how much we reached last year. I'd have to ask Finance. I just estimate that I did better this year." Even Mr. A, who is a senior salesman, can only guess that his performance is better than last year without any evidence.

This situation underscores a fundamental gap in performance awareness, which is critical in any coaching-driven environment. According to (Horvath et al. 2024), coaching is most effective when participants are equipped with feedback and clear metrics to monitor their own development. In this case, the absence of performance records reduced the opportunity for meaningful reflection and learning. Peesker et al. (2020) similarly emphasize that effective sales leadership includes structured monitoring to build accountability. Without access to past data, salespeople are left to guess their progress, undermining both coaching impact and long-term growth.

Finding 5 (–): The Targets Set in Each Meeting Were Very Small

On average, participants only targeted 2–3 customers in each session. In the B2B business model, where results often take months to materialize, good planning is one of the keys to future success. However, the salespeople did not plan accordingly, as they each had different methods. When asked why the customer targets were so few, Pak B replied:

"We just stay focused. It's our method." – Mr. B

While this focused approach can be beneficial, it also carries significant risks if those few customers cannot be secured.

This finding suggests a need for more structured and ambitious goal-setting processes during coaching. According to Peesker et al. (2020), sales leadership must guide team members through goal alignment and engagement to foster strategic thinking and sustained action. The lack of unified planning approaches resulted in disconnected efforts and limited visibility into overall progress. Deiorio et al. (2022) also highlight the importance of action-oriented coaching that encourages measurable objectives. Without a more integrated and forward-looking target system, the coaching process risks reinforcing short-term habits rather than enabling long-term sales effectiveness.

Finding 6 (–): No Standard Method or Openness in Customer Lists

It became increasingly apparent throughout the coaching sessions that no standardized method existed in approaching customers. Each salesperson learned through trial and error and developed their own style.

"Honestly, no one trained me, sir. I figured it out on my own." – Mr. C

This implies two things. On the one hand, Company X's salespeople are resilient, having adapted to the harsh realities of B2B sales without structured training. Mr. A, B, and C each had their own way of sourcing and acquiring customers. On the other hand, this wastes time, especially for new hires who must "hack through the jungle" on their own in an intensely competitive market with undifferentiated products. New salespeople also expressed frustration due to the lack of openness about existing customers. Mr. C, for instance, was disappointed to learn that customers he had worked hard to approach were already claimed by others.

"The customer was already on board, ... but when I got back to the office, it turned out that he belonged to other." – Mr. C

Mr. C experienced this more than once.

The absence of standardized methods and data transparency reflects a deeper issue in organizational knowledge governance. Yin et al. (2020) emphasize that knowledge sharing is essential for team effectiveness, particularly in dynamic sales environments. Without clear guidelines, individual resilience compensates for systemic gaps—yet this creates inefficiencies and risks. Furthermore, (Wang et al. 2023) argue that unclear expectations and siloed practices inhibit learning, collaboration, and onboarding of new staff. These fragmented approaches also erode team cohesion and trust, as seen in the recurring frustration over hidden customer lists. As Suherman et al. (2017) note,

organizational cultures built on transparency and mutual trust are more likely to foster sustainable performance

Finding 7 (–): Lack of Follow-Through and Breakdown in Knowledge Sharing Trust

The coach consistently provided space for growth by assigning follow-up tasks, such as updating and presenting customer progress. Yet, despite having a clear template, no participant completed the assignments. Instead, the coach had to model the expected output, and participants resorted to brief verbal updates. One explanation for this resistance emerged during a session, when Freelancer C remarked:

"I'm afraid it'll be taken, if I reveal my customer. Suddenly, the next time I visit them, one of the salesmen here is already there."

While delivered with humor, this comment revealed a deeper concern about internal competition and the perceived risk of sharing information.

A related case from the past emerged when Mr. B was asked to mentor a junior colleague. However, the trainee eventually took over Mr. B's client without any formal reassignment process or recognition. The issue was never addressed by management, reinforcing Mr. B's reluctance to share knowledge in future sessions. These incidents were never escalated and became a source of informal conversation within the sales team—further reinforcing a climate of mistrust and silent disengagement.

The persistent failure to complete assignments and the breakdown in mentoring behaviors both reflect a collapse in accountability and trust. (Taylor et al. (2019) argue that structured coaching activities—such as progress tracking—are essential to reinforce responsibility and self-directed growth. However, when psychological safety is lacking, participants may avoid visibility out of fear that their contributions will be misused. This aligns with (Passmore and Sinclair 2020) and (Jowett et al. 2023), who emphasize that trust and safety are prerequisites for genuine engagement in coaching. Without these conditions, follow-up activities and knowledge sharing are perceived not as growth opportunities, but as vulnerabilities.

Finding 8 (–): Client Reassignments Were Ordered from the Top

One startling finding was that a customer previously handled by Mr. B was reassigned to Mr. A by managerial instruction. While such changes are normal, the major issue was that Mr. B was never informed about the reassignment. When Mr. B shared this

during a coaching session, he smiled while holding back his disappointment, while the colleague who received the customer simply laughed.

This experience significantly undermined trust between employees and management. It illustrated a lack of transparency and fairness, two dimensions that are essential to psychological safety in coaching (Passmore and Sinclair 2020). When key decisions affecting employee work are made unilaterally and without communication, it reinforces power asymmetry and weakens employee engagement. As Jowett et al., (2023) note, trust is deeply influenced by perceptions of fairness and respectful treatment. In this case, the absence of explanation or recognition for Mr. B's prior effort led to quiet frustration and internal withdrawal.

In coaching contexts, these unresolved dynamics are particularly detrimental, as they diminish the likelihood that team members will engage openly or pursue shared goals. As Ebrahimi (2024) highlights, trust violations—especially when left unaddressed—can escalate into long-term disengagement and relational rifts. For Company X, the implication is clear: if leadership fails to model transparency and fairness, it is unlikely that coaching will yield meaningful behavior change or foster a collaborative culture. This aligns with Patras & Hidayat (2019), who found that perceptions of fairness and leadership behavior strongly influence trust and employee engagement. Additionally, Suherman et al. (2017) emphasize that organizational trust and transparent culture are not only ethical imperatives, but also critical enablers of sustainable performance and collaboration.

Finding 9 (+): Participants Requested a Trust-Building Session

The participants themselves requested a session on how to build trust among salespeople. The session was delivered using a coaching method where the coach asked guiding questions about why this topic was important, its impact, benefits, and the root causes. This session clarified many previous anomalies—why bypassing occurred, why tasks weren't completed, why customer lists weren't shared—and ultimately revealed that the core issue was trust.

The fact that the request for a trust-building session came from the participants themselves is a significant moment in the coaching journey. It reflects a growing level of self-awareness and recognition of relational dysfunctions within the team. Ebrahimi (2024) emphasizes that in internal coaching contexts, mutual trust and psychological safety are essential for surfacing sensitive issues. Similarly, Passmore & Sinclair (2020) argue that trust enables meaningful dialogue, especially when navigating emotionally charged topics

such as fairness and vulnerability. Jowett et al. (2023) also highlight that trust is fundamental in establishing high-quality coaching relationships.

If trust can be rebuilt and maintained within the sales team, the organization stands to gain substantially. A culture of trust supports openness in sharing sales strategies and client information, fosters peer-to-peer learning, and strengthens coordination—critical success factors in competitive B2B environments. As noted by (Suherman et al. 2017), organizational cultures grounded in trust tend to yield higher employee engagement, lower transactional friction, and more consistent performance outcomes. In addition, (Wheeler et al. 2024) emphasize that trust-based collaboration enables shared accountability and reduces relational tension, especially in teams working under uncertain or decentralized conditions. For Company X, this could translate into improved team resilience, reduced client conflict, and long-term growth sustainability.

Finding 10 (+): SOP Development is Underway

Interestingly, the coach's presence over the eight weeks helped reinforce what Company X had already been planning. The company had initiated the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) specifically aimed at formalizing its sales processes and improving consistency across customer acquisition and service practices. This only came to light when the observer assigned by the company was asked about productivity issues such as customer list transparency:

"It'll be recapped in the future." – Observer

From the coach's perspective, SOP implementation had become urgent given the company's maturity. A more formalized approach would help realign outdated systems to fit current business realities.

Several minor but symbolic gaps also surfaced in the same session. For example, Freelancer C casually remarked, "If after three months there's no movement, let others take over." This seemingly informal comment pointed to a more systemic issue—the absence of a shared timeline for sales follow-up, which ideally would be codified in formal SOPs. The lack of clarity in such procedures has implications for both efficiency and accountability within the sales team. Another issue arose when Mr. C admitted, "The client asked for a company profile... I didn't even know we had one," prompting Freelancer B to clarify, "We have one, just ask for the email. Let's send it by email."

While small, these exchanges revealed a lack of shared operational knowledge that SOPs could help resolve. This moment reflects the importance of structural readiness in supporting behavioral change. As noted by Suherman et al. (2017), trust and performance

flourish when clear systems and expectations are in place. Coaching cannot thrive in a vacuum; it requires institutional support mechanisms such as SOPs to translate insights into action. Wang et al. (2023) similarly argue that organizations must build enabling structures to support sustained learning and behavioral change. For Company X, the SOP initiative not only signaled a willingness to evolve but also positioned the company to move toward a more accountable and collaborative culture.

Overall Analysis of the Ten Findings

Taken together, the ten findings from Company X's coaching initiative present a nuanced picture of a team at a crossroads—rich in potential but constrained by longstanding relational and structural gaps. On one hand, the team demonstrated resilience, a willingness to learn, and increasing openness, as seen in their full attendance, their request for learning content, and their self-initiated trust-building session. On the other hand, recurring themes of mistrust, lack of structure, minimal accountability, and poor transparency significantly undermined the effectiveness of the coaching intervention.

A central thread running through many findings is the issue of trust—its absence, violation, and attempted restoration. Trust deficits manifested not only between team members (e.g., bypassing and hidden customer lists) but also in the vertical relationship between staff and management (e.g., uncommunicated client reassignments). These trust issues deeply eroded psychological safety, making it difficult for coaching to move beyond surface-level compliance. As emphasized by Passmore & Sinclair (2020) and Ebrahimi (2024), coaching can only generate meaningful impact when participants feel safe enough to share openly and act honestly.

Another key theme is the lack of enabling systems, such as clear sales targets, performance tracking, and standardized methods. These structural gaps prevented follow-through, obscured progress, and left each salesperson to operate in silos. As noted by (Wang et al. 2023), coaching must be embedded in a supportive organizational context—without it, even motivated participants will struggle to maintain change. The company's recent effort to formalize its SOPs is therefore a promising step toward anchoring behavioral change in operational clarity.

In short, the coaching intervention at Company X served less as a performance accelerator and more as a diagnostic tool—a mirror that revealed underlying dysfunctions in trust, leadership, communication, and structure. Across the ten findings, there were four clearly positive outcomes and six areas for improvement. While the coaching did not

succeed in boosting performance as initially intended, it successfully opened Pandora's box—surfacing issues that had long been buried. These sessions became a valuable space for uncovering sensitive topics, sharing progress and frustrations, and reducing unaddressed interpersonal gaps. It also served as a platform for senior freelancers to share knowledge with junior salespeople. In hindsight, the failure of the coaching program to meet its original performance goals became secondary to its role in revealing the cultural and structural issues that had long remained beneath the surface. This outcome, while different from the original intent, provides a valuable starting point for more sustainable transformation in the future.

These insights are consolidated in the conceptual model below, which illustrates how trust—supported by leadership behaviors—enables a coaching process that fosters psychological safety and engagement. This environment is essential for coaching to deliver its intended outcomes: learning, adaptation, and resilience. While coaching at Company X revealed more problems than solutions, it created a foundation for meaningful organizational transformation.
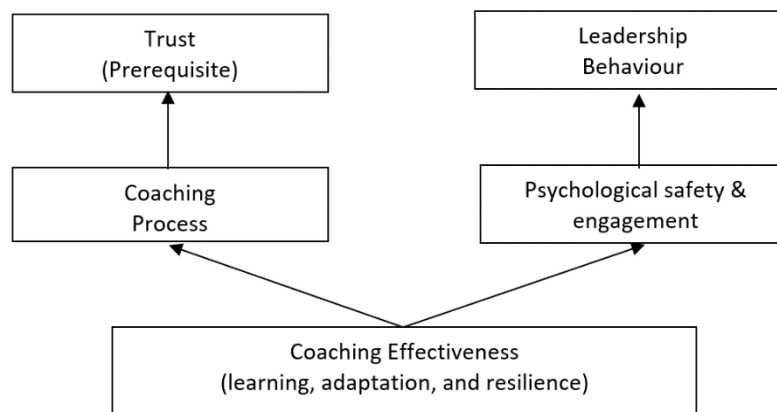
Figure 1. Conceptual Model: Trust, Leadership, and Coaching Effectiveness
Source : Researcher

This conceptual model was developed by the authors based on a synthesis of relevant literature and insights derived from the case study.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined a coaching intervention in a B2B sales team and found that while the initial goal—to improve short-term sales performance—was not achieved, the coaching process revealed critical underlying issues within the organization. These included systemic trust deficits,

lack of structural support, and limited feedback mechanisms, all of which had long hindered team effectiveness. Interestingly, the participants' willingness to learn, their self-initiated request for a trust-building session, and the company's parallel initiative to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) indicated that the organization was beginning to shift toward readiness for change. The study suggests that coaching should not be viewed solely as a performance-boosting tool but also as a powerful diagnostic process that can surface hidden barriers to collaboration and growth. Trust, often seen as an outcome of coaching, emerged as a prerequisite—one that must be present to enable honest dialogue, engagement, and sustained behavioral change. This highlights the importance of assessing trust climates and relational dynamics before launching coaching programs, particularly in environments where competition and ambiguity may already exist.

For organizations, this research reinforces the need to prepare both structurally and relationally before initiating coaching. Leadership behavior, accountability systems, goal-setting practices, and transparency mechanisms must be in place to support the coaching process. Practitioners are advised to combine coaching competencies with systems thinking and organizational insight to maximize impact. The conceptual model offered in this study integrates trust, leadership behavior, and psychological safety as foundational elements for effective coaching. Despite its contributions, this study has limitations. It was conducted in a single organizational setting with a small number of participants, which limits the generalizability of the findings. The data was largely based on qualitative insights and did not include longitudinal performance tracking. Future research could expand on these findings by applying the conceptual model in different industries or organizational cultures. Quantitative validation of the model's constructs and comparisons between internal and external coaches in trust-sensitive environments are also recommended.

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