AVION CONSULTING
EXECUTIVE PERSPECTIVE

The Value of Executive Coaching

I have spent most of my career on the inside of these engagements, not reading about them from outside. The research finally caught up to what the room already knew.

5 to 7x

Typical reported return on investment for executive coaching across major industry studies

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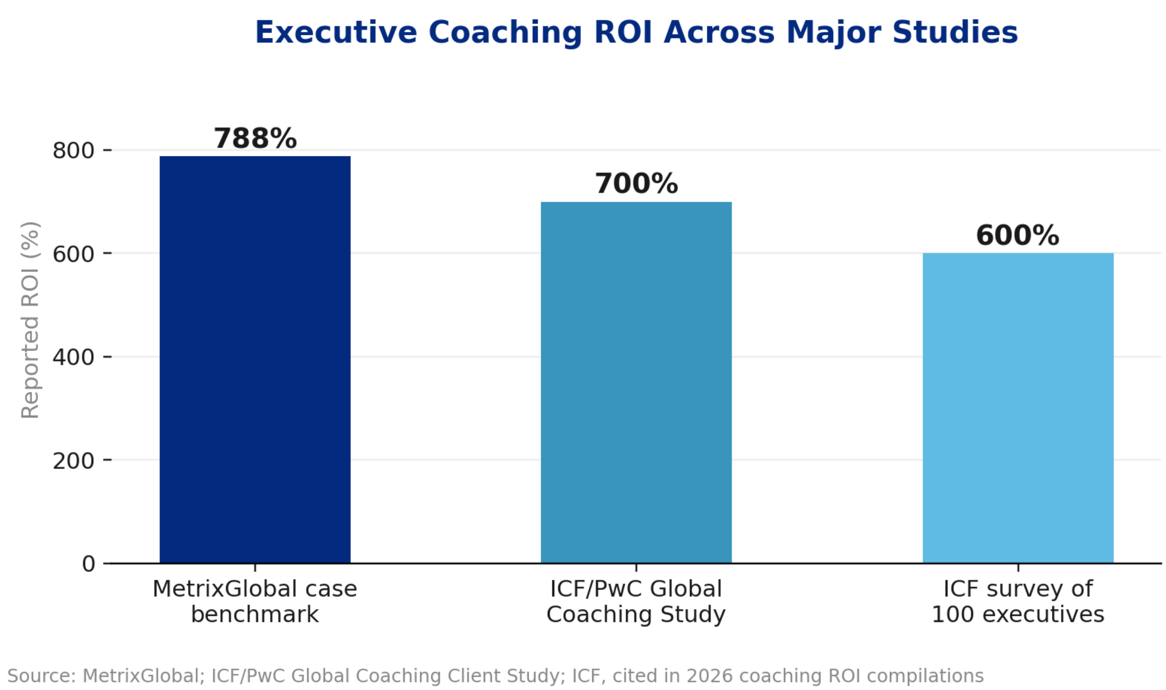
A Field I've Watched Get Studied Well

Few leadership development interventions have been studied as consistently as executive coaching, and I say that as someone who has delivered a fair number of these engagements myself. Across more than two decades of research, from the original MetrixGlobal case benchmark to the ICF and PwC Global Coaching Client Study, the reported return has stayed in a remarkably narrow band: most credible studies report a 5 to 7 times return on the coaching investment, and 86 percent of organizations that actually track coaching ROI report a positive return.



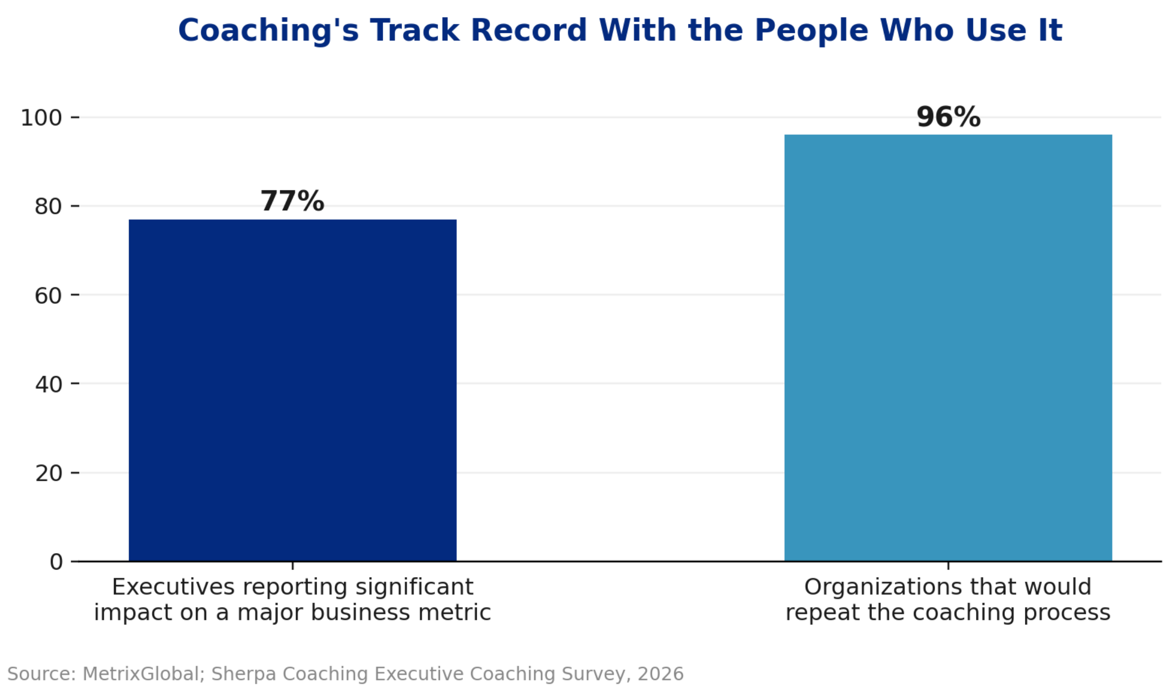
Reported ROI has stayed in a consistent range across the major studies in the field.

The Honest Caveat Worth Naming

Most of these figures rely on self-reported outcomes from executives who chose to be coached, which skews the numbers positive and deserves genuine skepticism rather than uncritical citation. Based on what I know of this research and what I have seen firsthand, the more defensible way to read it is not as proof of a precise multiplier, but as a consistent signal across independent studies, different methodologies, and different decades, all landing in the same range. That consistency is harder to dismiss than any single number.

Where the Value Actually Shows Up

Seventy seven percent of executives report that coaching had a significant impact on at least one major business metric. When coaching is combined with skills training rather than delivered alone, productivity gains have been measured as high as 88 percent, compared to a 22 percent gain from training alone, a finding that has held up since it was first documented. The value rarely stays contained to the individual leader. It shows up as reduced turnover on their team, faster decision cycles, and better handoffs across a leadership group when several executives are coached simultaneously rather than in isolation.



Coaching's track record with the executives and organizations who have actually used it.

The Numbers at a Glance

Metric	Figure	Source
Typical reported ROI range	5 to 7x investment	ICF/PwC Global Coaching Client Study, 2026
MetrixGlobal case benchmark ROI	788%	MetrixGlobal, cited in 2026 compilations

Metric	Figure	Source
Organizations reporting positive ROI after tracking it	86%	ICF/PwC Global Coaching Client Study, 2026
Executives reporting significant impact on a major business metric	77%	MetrixGlobal
Productivity gain from coaching combined with training	88%, vs. 22% from training alone	Olivero, Bane & Kopelman, cited in 2026 research
Organizations that would repeat the coaching process	96%	Sherpa Coaching Executive Coaching Survey, 2026

Why Coaching Keeps Outperforming Its Reputation

Coaching still carries a lingering reputation in some organizations as a remedial intervention, something offered when a leader is struggling rather than something offered because a leader is worth the investment. I have not found that framing accurate in years. The strongest ROI studies consistently show the return climbing, not falling, when coaching is offered to already high-performing leaders navigating a genuine stretch: a promotion, an expanded scope, a transformation they are expected to lead. Coaching amplifies capability that is already there. It does not manufacture capability that is not, and no framework I have used changes that basic fact.

Two Jobs, Two Different Fixes

For the CEO

If coaching is still positioned internally as something offered only when a leader is underperforming, that framing is actively working against the return the research describes. The leaders generating the highest ROI from coaching are usually your best ones, stretched into genuinely new territory, not your most troubled ones.

For the CHRO

Build the business case on the range, not a single headline number, and be upfront about the self-report caveat before someone on the finance side raises it for you. A credible, hedged case for a 5 to 7x return survives budget scrutiny better than an unqualified claim of 788 percent that invites the first hard question to unravel it.

The Question Worth Asking

The research question worth sitting with is not whether coaching works. Across two decades and multiple independent methodologies, in my experience and in the data, that case is about as well established as leadership development research gets. The better question is which of your leaders, right now, are being asked to stretch into something genuinely new without the structured support the data says would materially change their odds.

References

1. International Coaching Federation and PwC, "Global Coaching Client Study," 2026.
2. MetrixGlobal, executive coaching ROI case study, cited in International Coaching Federation and American University research compilations.
3. Manchester Inc., "Maximizing the Impact of Executive Coaching: Behavioral Change, Organizational Outcomes, and Return on Investment," Fortune 1000 executive study.
4. Olivero, G., Bane, K.D., and Kopelman, R.E., coaching and training productivity research, cited in 2026 executive coaching compilations.
5. Sherpa Coaching, "Executive Coaching Survey," 2026.