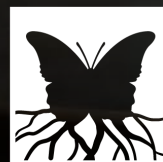


Developing a
COACHING
CULTURE
at Wärtsilä



Coach
ADVANCEMENT
BY TRACY SINCLAIR

Elina Välimaa, PCC, is the Learning and Leadership Lead at Wärtsilä, a global company of 17,500 employees headquartered in Helsinki, Finland. Wärtsilä is on a journey to decarbonise the maritime and energy industries.

Elina discovered Tracy Sinclair and Coach Advancement when a colleague was engaged in one of Tracy's coach training courses. At the time, Elina was looking for partners to help in developing the coaching culture at Wärtsilä. The partnership was a natural fit, especially given Coach Advancement's commitment to partnering with clients that work toward a healthier, more sustainable future.

The partnership "very much embraces the way that we like to work," Tracy says. "We have enjoyed a really good partnership in terms of the exploration, the design and the delivery of the various services that we've offered so far."

Coaching Opportunities at Wärtsilä

Studies show that organisations with the strongest coaching cultures leverage a combination of internal coach practitioners, external coaches and leaders who have been trained to use coaching skills. Wärtsilä has invested in all three of these modalities.

"The organisation is already really working in the best practice way, in terms of how to build coaching culture, which is really a joy to see because not all organisations will invest so much of their time, energy and resources into building all three of those key modalities," Tracy says.

Wärtsilä offers two main learning journeys. Leader as Coach training is available for line managers and people who are leading others and keen to develop coaching skills. Coaching certification training supports the growth of the organisation's internal coaching cadre. This is a more advanced course for HR professionals, continuous improvement professionals and others who use coaching skills in their daily work and intend to pursue a credential from the International Coaching Federation.



Photo credit: Wärtsilä

In addition to training, Tracy offers external coaches to support senior leaders in their personal and professional development.

Champions for Coaching

As a result of their own experiences, Wärtsilä's senior leaders have become champions for coaching in the organisation. "There's a growing awareness now of coaching and there is senior sponsorship of that," Tracy says. "There is a strong commitment to coaching being very visibly placed within their leadership model and the continuous, learning organisation framework, continuous improvement framework. And from my experience as an external partner that is really embodied. It's not just something that's on a slide, it's something

that people talk about and that they are aware of."

Tracy adds that she sees "a commitment by the organisation to have this as a process and not a destination."

Wärtsilä has already built a community of more than 50

coaches, and that number continues to grow. "Once you are on the path to certification, the beauty of it is that you need to have at least 100 hours to be applying for the certification on the first level, ACC. So, it's a kind of a machine that starts to feed itself," Elina says.

The demand for coaching within Wärtsilä also continues to grow, in part thanks to targeted internal communications initiatives raising awareness of coaching.

"People are engaging in coaching for all sorts of reasons."

TRACY SINCLAIR, MCC



Photo credit: Wärtsilä

“You are pulling the potential out of the people.”

ELINA VÄLIMAA, PCC

Finally, Wärtsilä embodies a holistic view of coaching. “It’s not just linear in terms of one kind of coaching. People are engaging in coaching for all sorts of different reasons,” Tracy says.

Energizing Individuals and Transforming Teams

Elina says she loves to see both coaches and coachees coming out of coaching sessions energized and inspired. “You are pulling the potential out of the people. It’s not that your people are dragging their feet, but it’s something beneficial when the people that are being coached see the benefit.”

Tracy notices leaders are a bit hesitant to practice new coaching skills with their teams at first. However, when they do, “you can just see such a shift in their mindset and their awareness, even if it’s something as simple as listening more, which might sound so minor in a way, and yet it’s the biggest transformational shift we could possibly want.”

She has also noticed leaders engaging differently with one another. “It’s transformational because in learning to coach someone else, we start to coach

ourselves. We start to take on a different mindset naturally ourselves,” Tracy says. “There’s so much more that comes from this way of working than just learning some valuable skills. The bonus that you get from the effect of coaching conversations is multiplied far more than you might think based on the content of that day.”

Looking Toward the Future

As both the demand for and availability of coaching continue to grow at Wärtsilä, Elina says they’re looking ahead toward future offerings, including team coaching. “We are more mature in a way that we can move toward that. And that’s something which will be very useful, because with one-to-one coaching, you can only get so far.”

“The best way to really create and nurture coaching culture is through that ripple effect,” Tracy adds.

Tracy and Elina are also collaborating on next steps toward ensuring the sustainability of Wärtsilä’s coaching culture. They’re exploring mechanisms for measuring and benchmarking organizational data, such as ROI, ROE and other patterns or trends.

They’re also considering how to model lifelong learning within the Wärtsilä’s coaching community and leadership team. As they do so, they’re keeping the broader goals of the learning organisation in mind, including the development of underpinning skills and competencies, including coaching and growth mindset. “It’s about psychological safety,” Tracy says. “It’s about building a feedback culture and then also building a continuous improvement culture. So those are the elements that we are developing in parallel to coaching.”



Photo credit: Wärtsilä



Photo credit: Wärtsilä

Developing Coaching Culture in Your Organisation

If you're considering building a coaching culture in your organisation, it's important to do it for the right reasons. "Do it for the long term and get your senior leaders involved and exposed to coaching in the early phases of that development," Elina suggests.

"Use all the different modalities (leaders as coaches, internal coach practitioners and external coach practitioners) if possible," Elina adds. "Have a systematic approach and plan for it, and get senior leaders involved and exposed to coaching so that they see how it can benefit the business."

Tracy agrees with that approach and believes that getting senior leaders' buy-in is important to ensure that coaching is the way you want to do things, rather than just a project to focus on for a short period of time. "This is definitely a long-term, deep commitment to how you want your organization to be and what the culture and the identity is of that organization," she explains.

Just as with coaching, building a coaching culture is a journey, not a destination. If your organisation is ready to embark on its journey, we'd love to be your guide.

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Is your organisation ready to embark on a coaching culture journey?

Contact Coach Advancement today for your free consultation with Tracy Sinclair, MCC. To best meet your organisation's needs, we offer a range of external coaching services, coach training for internal coaches, and provisions for coaching skills for managers and leaders.

BOOK NOW



Tracy Sinclair is co-founder and CEO of Coach Advancement by Tracy Sinclair, offering a wide range of coaching education programmes and services for professional coaches and organisations building coaching culture.

Tracy is a multi-award-winning Master Certified Coach (MCC) with the International Coaching Federation (ICF). She is also a trained Coaching Supervisor, Mentor Coach and ICF Assessor. She works as an international Corporate Executive and Board Level Coach, a leadership development designer and facilitator working with a wide range of organisations. Tracy also specialises in working with organisations to support them develop coaching culture. Tracy has co-authored a book [*Becoming a Coach: The Essential ICF Guide*](#) (2020) which provides a comprehensive guide to coaching for coaches at all levels of skill and experience, the psychology that underpins coaching and the updated ICF Core Competency Model.

Learn more about Tracy Sinclair and Coach Advancement at coachadvancement.com.



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