

How Workday Partnered with BetterUp to Support People Leaders

Workday was founded in 2005 by Aneel Bhusri and Dave Duffield, who were committed from day one to making the company a great place to work. Workday currently has more than 8,200 employees globally with its headquarters in Pleasanton, California. Greg Pryor is the senior vice president, people and performance evangelist at Workday, responsible for applying Workday's technology to optimize the company's internal talent management programs, including leadership and manager effectiveness, learning, career engagement, and performance enablement.



"I've had managers pull me aside and tell me that the program has changed their life, that they see things in a different way, and that BetterUp has given them the skills to unlock new ideas. They've said that it's now hard for them to imagine what life was like before they began work with their coach."

Greg Pryor

SVP, People & Performance
Evangelist, Workday

Workday has grown at a rapid pace since the company's inception. Though this growth was indicative of the company's success, it had an unintended side effect. Workday faced the same challenge experienced by nearly every high growth company: a tension between growth and culture. The company needed a way to bring all of its employees into its values system quickly, and ensure that people leaders were truly growing and leading in alignment with Workday's culture. The company also needed a way to help people leaders newer to management learn and on-ramp quickly, in alignment with the speed of the business.

"Our functional team looked at data from Stanford culture surveys, Great Place to Work, and Glassdoor," said Greg. "We saw early, modest, but weak signs that our culture was beginning to be diluted. Some employees were telling us that we were bringing in people leaders who didn't do things 'the Workday way,' and it was causing them to feel disempowered. We also had a lot of amazing business contributors who were newer to people leadership, and were taking on many demanding people leadership responsibilities quickly."

Aneel Bhusri, co-founder and chief executive officer at Workday, and the company's leadership team, were deeply committed to investing in Workday's people in order to sustain the company's special culture. "Many senior leaders would have perhaps avoided the issue or chosen to invest in other areas, but Aneel doubled down on our people, and provided the resources needed to support our people leaders. It's truly a testament to the values and caliber of our leaders here, as they have been so involved in this effort," said Greg.



Workday Members Were Highly Motivated To Engage With Betterup And Developed Strong Rapport With Their Coaches

9.2 / 10

Average Overall Satisfaction

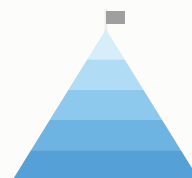
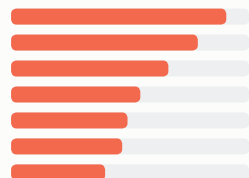


4.6 / 5

BetterUp is a valuable use of my time

4.7 / 5

Working with my coach has made me more effective at my job



4.6 / 5

My coach has helped me make meaningful progress towards my goals

One of the steps Workday took to protect and nurture its special culture was reaching out to BetterUp to try out its leadership coaching. In partnership with Workday, BetterUp introduced an initial pilot program focused on people managers, with the goal of helping Workday support and grow its people leaders in the future.

Focus on Three Key Areas

Before the program went live, the Workday team worked with BetterUp to define key objectives. At a cohort level, coaching was intended to support people leaders in building awareness and skills across three areas:

- 1. Building high trust team environments.** Help people leaders develop the awareness and people leadership skills necessary to consistently build high trust, high engagement environments with their team.
- 2. Providing career growth for direct reports.** Help people leaders enable and facilitate strong career growth for their teams, including providing career experiences and coaching.
- 3. Reversing early signs of cultural dilution.** Help people leaders build an environment where each of their leadership practices is consistently aligned with Workday's culture.

"BetterUp offered a truly valuable combination of a couple of things. Our people leaders had access to seasoned coaches that had a lot of experience and could really understand our culture, and BetterUp gave us the ability to democratize coaching, making it available to those who never had it before."

The goal was for the BetterUp program to help move the needle in these areas and contribute to Workday's broader People Leader Effectiveness strategy.

An Experimental, Agile Approach

Workday's approach was strategic, experimental, and agile, starting with an initial pilot to see if 1:1 professional coaching would work at scale.

"Given Workday's growth, it was a great time to deliver highly personalized coaching," said Greg. "We wanted to get moving quickly and adopt an incubation mindset throughout the process, and see what we could learn."

With Workday's senior leadership team's support, the first phase of the program concluded after six months with 75 managers across Workday completing 1,000 coaching sessions. "The results from that were strong, and participants

got so much from the experience. We saw the value in scaling it,” said Greg.

Workday continues to explore ways to expand the scope of the BetterUp program. “We continue to look at where coaching is the most effective,” said Greg. “Does coaching have a bigger impact on frontline managers? Does seniority of role matter as much as time as a people leader? Are certain functions or groups able to build stronger uplift in their leadership capabilities? We’re always learning more.”

Using Data To Drive Insights

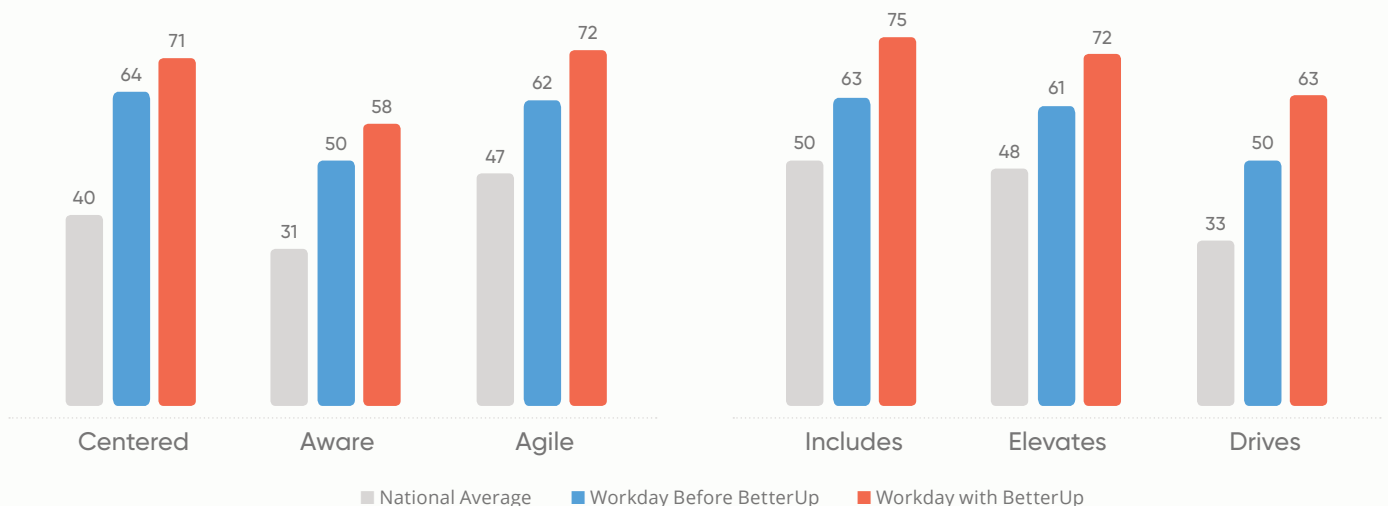
BetterUp’s scalable solution offered Workday more than the ability to offer personalized coaching to its people leaders. It also gave insights into how leaders were responding to their coaching experiences and which leaders could benefit most from coaching.

“We will continue to leverage data for valuable insights as we scale with BetterUp,” said Greg. “We can get more decisive about where coaching can really add value against our key business and people outcomes. Our next stage will be to evaluate feedback from the leaders’ teams to see how their employee experience has shifted.”

What’s Next

Workday is looking to extend the program to additional people leaders, and by the end of its fiscal year, expects that the company will be able to offer personalized coaching to nearly 20 percent of its people leaders. “Our partnership with the BetterUp team has been very beneficial. The process has been easy, BetterUp was flexible in meeting our needs, and our leaders have had a seamless and positive experience,” said Greg.

Behavioral Data Shows Considerable Improvements Across Several Dimensions



About BetterUp

BetterUp is the first leadership development platform to connect coaching to lasting behavior change.

[Learn more at betterup.co](https://betterup.co)