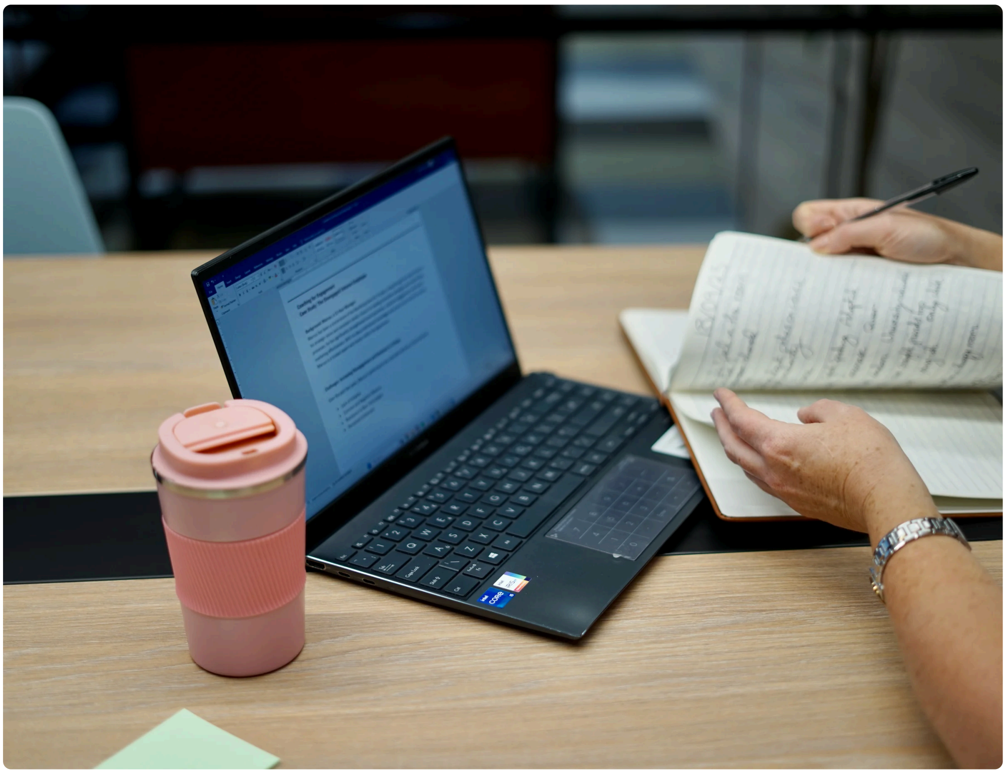
London's tech scene grew up fast. A company can move from a rented desk in Shoreditch to a 200-person team across two floors in Old Street within two years. Capital flows, customers arrive, and then the hard part begins. Execution at scale requires new muscles, and the leadership habits that worked at ten people start to break at fifty. By the time you are navigating Series B, the cost of leadership debt shows up on every dashboard: slower shipping, noisy escalations, brittle culture, missed forecasts. Training and coaching are not perks at this stage, they are operating levers.

This piece draws on a decade of working with founders and executives across London hubs like Level39, Paddington's Scale Space, and the King's Cross corridor. The patterns repeat, but the fixes are contextual. What works for a fintech with an FCA-regulated product differs from a gaming studio or a deep-tech spinout from Imperial. The goal is to help you design Leadership Training that fits London's constraints, your growth profile, and your leadership bench.

The moment scale exposes leadership gaps

Early traction hides a lot. The founder sells, an early engineer both codes and runs stand-ups, an ops manager doubles as HR. Once you reach roughly 40 to 60 people, coordination overhead rises, the product surface area widens, and you hire your first layer of managers. That is when recurrent failure modes appear:

- A founder-CEO keeps playing star individual contributor, approving every decision. Managers disengage, velocity stalls, and the best people leave quietly for roles where they can own outcomes.
- Engineering scales faster than product or design, so teams ship features without market context. You hit a churn bump six months later and blame sales.
- You copy big-company processes too early. Stand-ups balloon to 45 minutes, performance reviews become a compliance ritual, and nobody can say why a decision was made three weeks ago.



All of this has a leadership root cause. Not because you hired the wrong people, but because nobody taught your new managers how to manage, and nobody helped the founder switch jobs from building to enabling.

What strong leadership training looks like for London scale-ups

Strong programs feel practical and close to the work. They blend company-specific content with external perspective. In London, you also need to account for decentralized teams across time zones, hybrid patterns midweek, and a competitive hiring market that will punish you if your managers falter. A few design choices tend to pay off:

- Short, high-cadence modules that respect delivery cycles. Ninety-minute sessions every two weeks beat a two-day bootcamp that nobody remembers.
- Cohorts that mix functions but keep seniority bands tight. A group with engineering managers, product leads, and customer success leaders at roughly the same level sparks useful cross-pollination without intimidation.
- Live practice with real materials. Have people rewrite a weak quarterly OKR they plan to publish on Monday, or run a difficult feedback conversation they have been avoiding. The transfer to real work is immediate.
- Anchoring around your stage metrics. A Series B fintech might use NPS, payment success rate, and approval time. A climate data company might prioritise model accuracy, ingestion latency, and enterprise pilot conversion. Training should show how leadership behaviors move those numbers.

The best Leadership Training has a humble backbone. It is designed to make itself obsolete by building internal capacity. That can start with an external Leadership Coach or Executive Coach, then transition to internal facilitators who carry the cadence forward.

London specifics that shape program design

London’s advantages and quirks influence how you build and deliver training.

Commute and hybrid patterns. Tuesdays to Thursdays tend to be the densest in-office days. If you want cross-functional energy, schedule in-person modules midweek. Mondays and Fridays skew remote, so reserve those for coaching or async prep. Facilities near mainlines like Waterloo, Liverpool Street, and King’s Cross cut friction for those outside Zones 1 to 2.

Time zones. Many London tech firms run engineering in Central or Eastern Europe, and customer teams in Ireland or Portugal. If your managers run distributed teams, include modules on asynchronous leadership, crisp written communication, and low-latency decision forums. A simple practice like posting decisions in a shared channel with context, options considered, and owner reduces meeting load by 20 to 30 percent.

Regulatory context. Fintech, healthtech, and mobility companies touch FCA, NHS, or TFL frameworks. Leadership Training should include decision hygiene in regulated environments, documentation discipline, and how to balance speed with traceability. Without that, teams swing between cowboy shipping and bureaucratic paralysis.

Employment norms. UK managers often under-index on direct feedback because they fear grievance processes. Training should cover fair process, documentation, and a humane but firm standard for performance improvement. ACAS guidance and your own policies can be referenced without turning the room into a legal seminar.

The shift from founder to CEO

The founder’s transition is the hinge of the scaling story. At 15 people, you can be the smartest doer in the room and get away with it. At 80, that style becomes a tax. The founder’s new job is to design the system that produces decisions without them. That means:

- Defining a steady strategy cadence. Quarterly strategy memos, single-threaded ownership per area, and a monthly forum where trade-offs are made in public. If decisions float in private chats, your managers learn to wait for the whisper rather than drive outcomes.
- Writing, a lot. Clear memos cut meetings. Training founders to write one to two pages on direction and reasoning is one of the highest ROI investments you can make. In London especially, where hybrid is normal, the founder's written voice holds the culture together.
- Delegating with mechanisms, not vibes. Decision rights, metrics, review rhythms, and escalation thresholds are mechanisms. When they exist, people feel safe taking bets. When they don't, everything routes to the top.

A Leadership Coach can be a mirror here. The founder does not need therapy from their coach, they need structured reflection, practice at letting go, and standards for executive behavior that cascade to the team. Early sessions often focus on calendar architecture, how to hold effective one to ones, and how to stop rescuing projects. It is surprisingly mundane, and that is the point.

Training first-line managers before it is urgent

Your first wave of managers typically comes from your best individual contributors. They are proud builders who now must succeed through others. They are also allergic to fluff. The curriculum that works for them looks like this:

Managing the week. Prioritisation, planning, and triage. How to run a 25-minute stand-up that ends with owners, next steps, and visible blockers. How to protect two mornings per week for deep work, for themselves and their teams.

Feedback and performance. The difference between coaching, feedback, and evaluation. How to give precise, timely feedback that lands. How to reset expectations within UK norms, including probation extensions and realistic PIPs when necessary.

Decision-making. Framing a choice with data, options, risks, and an owner. Calling when a decision is one-way or two-way. Logging decisions in writing so they can be revisited without blame.

Hiring and onboarding. Writing scorecards, running structured interviews, and onboarding someone to productivity within 30 days. London's talent market is liquid. A strong onboarding reduces first-year attrition, which for some firms can run 20 percent higher than expected without attention.

Managing up and across. Too many first-line managers either hide or pester. Training helps them surface risk early without drama and partner across functions without turf fights. That requires shared language and expectations between managers and their executives.

By week six you can usually see the change. One to ones shift from status updates to coaching conversations. Engineers get clearer specs. Customer issues stop pinballing. It is visible in Retool dashboards and in the atmosphere on the floor.

Product and engineering leadership at scale

London is heavy in product-led and data-centric businesses. Product and engineering leaders must align on three things: how to pick bets, how to measure progress, and how to stop doing work that does not matter. Training here is concrete.

Outcome over output. Use product metrics that tie to business outcomes. For a B2B SaaS, think adoption by account tier, time to first value, expansion revenue, and retention cohort curves. For a consumer app, daily active use, activation rate, and habit depth. Train managers to translate those into sprint goals and backlog curation.

Technical quality. Prevent the build-up of invisible debt. Introduce a Leadership Coach London quality bar that includes alerting coverage, rollback readiness, and on-call health. A rule like 20 percent of capacity reserved for debt and reliability is not a slogan, it is an operating norm that leaders reinforce.

Discovery and delivery rhythms. Many teams confuse speed with haste. Training managers to run tight discovery cycles with customers, rapid prototyping, and data checks saves months. Good leaders teach their teams to kill their own ideas early when the signal is weak.

Incident leadership. The first major outage is a rite of passage. Postmortems can scar or strengthen. Training leaders to run blameless reviews, write crisp timelines, extract two or three system changes, and publish internally within 72 hours builds trust. London’s enterprise buyers watch this closely.

Sales and customer leadership for sophisticated buyers

If you sell into banks in Canary Wharf, retailers in the West End, or public sector bodies, your sales and customer leaders must combine consultative selling with rigorous forecasting and delivery. Leadership Training in these functions should cover:

Forecast hygiene. Stage definitions, exit criteria, and pipeline reviews that surface risk. This is not about interrogation, it is about shared clarity. A weekly 45-minute pipeline session where three deals get deep inspection beats a 90-minute rollup of numbers.

Value conversations. Teaching managers to coach reps on value, not feature lists, matters in London’s price-sensitive market. Framing ROI with a CFO lens, and supporting customer success with proactive health scoring, leads to cleaner renewals.

Cross-functional accountability. Product hears signals from the field in fragments unless leaders build a loop. Training on voice-of-customer practices, including how to create a monthly synthesis that product can act on, makes a difference in quarters, not years.

The roles of different coaches and when to use them

Founders sometimes ask if they need a Leadership Coach, an Executive Coach, or a Business Coach. The labels overlap, but the focus differs. A quick guide helps position the right person for the right moment:

- Leadership Coach: Focuses on observable leadership behaviors across levels. Useful for new managers and directors, or executives who know a few habits are holding them back. Emphasis on feedback, delegation, influence, communication.
- Executive Coach: Works with C-suite on role transition, board relationships, strategic communication, and team dynamics. Often includes stakeholder interviews and 360s. Helpful during Series B to C, or when a founder becomes CEO of a 150-person company.
- Business Coach: Concentrates on the operating model and commercial levers. Useful when the company is profitable but stuck, or when margins are thin and unit economics need rework. Can be valuable for CROs and COOs alongside the CEO.

Many London firms blend coaching with peer forums. For example, pairing an Executive Coach with a quarterly dinner of three other founders facing similar board pressures creates context and accountability that coaching alone cannot deliver.

Building a curriculum that fits a 90-day window

A 90-day sprint is long enough to build habits and short enough to fit the cadence of most scale-ups. A workable structure looks like this:

Month one: start with foundations. Set shared expectations for managers. Introduce a company-specific leadership model that includes decision rights, communication norms, and feedback cadence. Give everyone a copy of a plain-language guide to one to ones and performance notes. Run one workshop on strategy translation, where managers reframe company goals into team objectives and key results that pass the sniff test.

Month two: deepen practice. Focus on coaching skills, conflict resolution, and cross-functional collaboration. Add a live exercise where managers present a short memo on a decision they own, with data and trade-offs. Have peers ask questions. Keep it brisk and safe.

Month three: operationalize. Introduce light 360s or targeted stakeholder feedback, then help managers write a personal leadership plan with two or three commitments and measures. Train them to inspect their calendars and team rituals against those commitments. Create a manager handbook that captures the best patterns learned, owned by the group, not HR.

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Run these modules in the office when possible. London offers plenty of neutral venues that avoid the distractions of your own meeting rooms. A morning at Fora or Huckletree, followed by an afternoon back at HQ for shadowing and application, keeps energy up and context anchored.

Measuring ROI without turning it into a spreadsheet exercise

You should feel the difference in the work before you see it in the numbers. Still, numbers matter. Define a few leading and lagging signals up front:

Leading signals in the first 30 to 45 days: completion rates for one to ones, documented goals at the team level, decision logs in use, faster PR cycle times, fewer ad hoc escalations.

Lagging signals over a quarter or two: improved hiring throughput without a dip in quality, decreased regretted attrition, higher employee NPS for manager quality, better forecast accuracy, and fewer incidents with shorter time to resolution. In product, watch for cleaner release notes and more consistent experiment documentation.

Tie this to cost. A program that costs £60,000 for 30 managers might feel heavy, until you measure the cost of replacing three strong engineers at £25,000 to £40,000 each in agency fees and ramp time, plus lost velocity. The math is not subtle.

Case notes from London teams

One Shoreditch-based Series A developer tools company struggled with a glut of ideas. Every team had a pet project, and the roadmap bloated. We ran a two-day split *bronwynleighcrawford.com Business Executive Coaching* workshop that forced product and engineering managers to rank initiatives against a simple framework: customer frequency, revenue linkage, and engineering complexity. After painful debate, they killed seven out of fifteen items and gave the survivors real resources. Six weeks later, deployment cadence was slightly slower, but adoption per release doubled because teams finished what they started. The win was managerial courage, not genius prioritisation.

A West London healthtech grew fast through pandemic contracts, then faced a harsher market. Their managers feared performance conversations, so accountability sagged. We built a light, legally sound performance playbook and practiced the conversations. Within one quarter, they exited two chronic underperformers respectfully and reset expectations for five others. The signal to the team was clear and fair. Productivity improved, but so did morale.

Avoiding common pitfalls

Two traps catch many scale-ups when they invest in leadership.

The offsite illusion. A sparkling two-day offsite at a country venue feels productive. It is also a sugar high if not followed by cadence. Training must come with rituals you can keep, like a monthly manager forum, a written decision log, and a quarterly leadership retro. Otherwise the old equilibrium reasserts itself by the next sprint.

An imported playbook. Big tech patterns tempt leaders to copy and paste. Some translate, others do not. London's hybrid reality, regulatory context, and funding cycles require adaptation. Use external ideas as ingredients, not recipes. If the practice does not map to your constraints, your managers will quietly ignore it.

Selecting a provider who fits your stage

London has plenty of providers. Some are superb with first-line managers, others specialise in executive transition. Rather than chasing brand names, look for three signals:

Stage fluency. Ask for examples with companies that look like yours by headcount, revenue model, and speed of change. A provider who only worked with 5,000-person firms will drown you in process.

Coach bench and match. Good programs have multiple coaches and facilitators. That matters for chemistry and credibility. A former VP Engineering can gain engineers' trust faster, while a seasoned sales leader helps commercial managers hear feedback. Insist on chemistry sessions before committing.

Practice orientation. Review real artifacts from their programs, not slideware. Handbooks, decision templates, and feedback guides should be lean and sharp. If you cannot picture your managers using them next week, pass.

On fees, London rates vary. For cohorts of 12 to 16 managers, expect £25,000 to £45,000 for a 90-day program including design, delivery, and light coaching. One to one Executive Coach support for founders and C-levels typically ranges from £1,500 to £4,000 per month per leader, depending on cadence and scope. A Business Coach engagement aimed at revenue operations or unit economics, often project based, might run £20,000 to £60,000 over a quarter. Prices move with reputation and depth, but these bands are a reliable sanity check.

Board alignment and investor leverage

Your board will back leadership investments if you show how they reduce risk. Come with a simple plan that ties Leadership Training to operational outcomes the board already cares about: forecast reliability, hiring quality, retention, product velocity, and customer renewals. Investors in London often have portfolio leadership resources. Use them, but do not let a generic portfolio program override your context. Blend external cohorts for perspective with your internal program for practice.

A savvy Chair or NED can also play a role. Encourage them to join a kickoff session and reinforce expectations for managerial standards. When managers see that leadership quality is a board topic, commitment rises across the company.

Remote and hybrid delivery that still feels human

Not every module needs a room. You can run powerful sessions over video if you design for it. Keep groups under eight for virtual practice, use breakout pairs for role-play, and assign pre-work that takes less than 20 minutes. Record short demos on how to run a good one to one or write a clear decision memo, then spend live time practicing rather than lecturing.

For hybrid teams, declare your default. If a session is designed for in-person **executive business coaching services** energy, protect it and set travel expectations early. Pick locations near major routes to ease travel from Brighton, Cambridge, or Oxford. If it is virtual, design it as such. Avoid hybrid half-measures where some people huddle in a room while others watch passively online.

Culture as an operating system, not a poster

Leadership Training lands when the culture supports it. Culture is not foosball or slogans, it is how decisions get made, how status is conferred, and how people are rewarded. In London's talent market, culture clarity is a recruiting edge. Candidates ask for examples: When did you kill a project that was someone's favorite idea? How do you handle failure? What happens when a top performer is a jerk?

Make your answers visible. Publish your leadership principles and the behaviors you reward. Put them into your interview scorecards and performance reviews. Then train to those behaviors. Otherwise, you are teaching one thing while promoting another, and people notice.

A simple starting plan for the next quarter

- Identify 12 to 16 managers across functions who influence 70 percent of delivery. Aim for consistent seniority.
- Define three operating outcomes you want to improve, and the metrics that reflect them. Share baseline numbers.
- Select a provider who will customise content to your stage, and run chemistry checks with two coaches for fit.
- Commit to six 90-minute sessions over 90 days, mostly in person midweek, with light pre-work and live practice.
- Pair the cohort with two to three senior leaders in one to one coaching, and create a monthly manager forum to sustain habits.

With that, you have the spine of a program that respects time, builds capability, and ties directly to results.

Final thoughts from the field

Leadership development earns a reputation as a soft, optional investment when it is decoupled from the work. That is avoidable. In London’s scale-up rhythm, leadership is the work. When managers learn to set crisp goals, to make decisions in daylight, to give and receive feedback cleanly, and to build cross-functional trust, your operating model firms up. Cycle times tighten, customers stay, and your best people see a future for themselves inside your company rather than in the glass towers across the river.

A good Executive Coach helps a founder become a real CEO. A pragmatic Leadership Coach lifts the manager layer that drives daily output. A sharp Business Coach fixes revenue engines that chug when the market turns. Combined with clear mechanisms and a cadence you can sustain, that support transforms a pile of smart people into a company that scales.

London offers the density, the peers, and the talent to make this stick. The rest is choice and follow-through.