

# How do we retain and inspire talented *new parents?*

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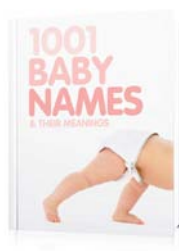
*An Employer's Guide to My Family Care's  
Life Transition Coaching for Maternity & Paternity Returners*

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**My  
Family  
Care™**



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Making work+family work

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When you've invested time in your employees, and supported them in a career path to leadership positions, you can't afford to see them leave or lose confidence during the maternity and paternity journey. How employers help employees with the transition from working individual to working parent is critical to creating loyalty, engagement and ensuring retention.

Coaching will help your employees handle the practical and emotional aspects of the parent transition in a way that also enables them to develop in their post-maternity or paternity career.

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*"The programme gives me the opportunity to get an objective view on my situation, which is hard to do by myself; it helps me to observe things neutrally. The coaching call has been absolutely fantastic for me in this way and I really appreciate that support."*

**Maternity returner,  
Financial services.  
One-to-one coaching  
by telephone**

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### How can we help?

The maternity or paternity journey starts well before employees go on leave. From the moment women find out they are pregnant their focus and priorities change. Their biggest uncertainties are how becoming a parent will impact their career and how their career will impact motherhood. Similar concerns arise for most expectant fathers too.

Managers consider whether a woman will work throughout her pregnancy, whether and in what capacity she will want to come back from maternity leave. There's also the question of whether a new father might want to work different hours and what any new parent's level of engagement will be. Planning and communication are critical to a successful parent transition both for the individual and their manager.

Our Head of Coaching brings extensive knowledge and practical experience gained through more than 20 years experience of executive coaching, mentoring and leadership development; pioneering maternity coaching since 2005. So we know the issues and what works.

Our coaching solutions are highly flexible and can be tailored to the needs of the organisation. We provide coaching on a group or individual basis either face-to-face, by telephone or webinar.

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### Why do employers offer coaching to their Maternity & Paternity returners?

#### Retaining valuable talent

Coaching has a valuable, well documented role to play in increasing the retention of new parents returning to work after maternity or paternity leave.

#### Productivity and commitment

Coaching before, during and after leave can have real benefits on performance. It can ensure productivity right up until the point of leave, lay the foundations for and then ensure a productive, effective return. Disruption to the business and the team is minimised through better planning, communication, and smooth handovers.

#### Creating engaged employees and developing the employer brand

Helping and supporting new parents ensures that their ability to manage their work commitments is maximised, it also means that they feel more valued and in turn value their employer more.

#### Enhanced Leadership development

Coaching through the transition to working parent supports personal development. It frequently delivers confidence, a sense of empowerment and clarity of goals, both personal and professional.

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## One-to-one coaching

### 1. Planning and preparation

The planning and preparation session during pregnancy is aimed at boosting women's confidence and performance as they adjust to the maternity transition and prepare for maternity leave. It is equally relevant for expectant dads or any adopting parent to have this preparation, especially when they plan to take additional paternity leave. It allows the individual to align their professional and personal aspirations as they plan for and communicate about their leave and future plans.

#### What do we coach parents-to-be on?

- Communicating with line managers, colleagues and HR
- Building a handover plan and strong foundations for return
- Developing and using a support network, including champions and sponsors
- Keeping in touch during leave: staying pro-active whilst making the most of those early months
- Understanding core values, competencies and strengths
- Managing stress and conflicting priorities
- Being aware of childcare choices and any flexible working options

#### How do parents-to-be benefit?

- Smooth the handover of role and responsibilities
- Stay in charge of career and professional profile
- Understand and address the challenges of maternity and paternity leave
- Balance the emotional and practical preparations
- Create a strong support network and manage the help and advice that are offered

### 2. Return with confidence

It can make all the difference for those on maternity or paternity leave to get back in touch with their professional identity, their career goals and take charge of their return. During leave, our coaches will help the new parent get ready to 'hit the ground running', with confidence and clarity.

#### What do we coach new parents on?

- Looking forward in terms of career path and related action-planning
- Communicating influentially with line managers, colleagues and HR
- Maintaining professional profile and confidence
- Developing and using support networks, connecting with champions and sponsors
- Reflecting on the transition, personal values and work-life balance

#### How do new parents benefit?

- Prepare for return in a focused, planned way
- Negotiate and influence working patterns, exploring the business case for any new arrangements
- Balance the emotional and practical aspects of returning to work and leaving baby
- Share experience and tips with peers in group coaching
- Have the support of a confidential sounding board for hopes and fears in one-to-one coaching
- Keep in touch with a compelling career path going forward

### 3. Back in the driving seat

This session can be pivotal for the working parent who needs to sharpen up skills for managing time and boundaries. We build confidence and support but also recognise that huge personal development that takes place at the transition to parenthood. This session in particular encourages the individual to harness their own strengths, dealing with any anxieties relating to a need to 'prove' him or herself.

#### What do we coach new returners on?

- Creative, practical solutions to the challenges of daily life, balancing childcare and returning to work
- Effective communication and planning with managers, colleagues, clients and the team
- Balancing work and home life, setting priorities in line with career aims and family needs
- The nuts and bolts of better conversations about things that matter with people at work and at home
- Developing leadership potential through understanding the transition and acknowledging strengths

#### How do new returners benefit?

- Manage return in an active way instead of taking a more passive wait-and-see approach
- Communicate confidently and influentially
- Identify career aims and life balance that work in tune with personal values and professional aspirations
- Benefit from positive psychology approaches that build capability and reduce guilt and anxiety
- Feel supported and valued by their employer

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*"Today has been most helpful as it's personal and has enlightened me as to how to approach a particular situation, so I can go and do the right thing: it's very beneficial."*  
Maternity returner, Financial Services. One-to-one coaching on return to work

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## Combining coaching with Childcare Search

Coaching can also be very effectively combined with Childcare Search. Our New Parent Return to Work Plan offers both the practical solution to childcare and support for the individual through transition coaching to maximise talent retention.

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## Facilitating Keep In Touch Days

We're also able to help companies make the most of those all important 'Keeping In Touch' days through tailored coaching sessions and helping you to design a company wide KIT day.

- Planned meetings with managers and focused coaching beforehand. We support win-win conversations preparing for return, for example, exploring the business case for any flexible working requests, exploring the needs and compromises from every angle.
- Group coaching to support networking opportunities. Feedback overwhelmingly values this element of a KIT day – knowing there are others in the same situation and sharing experience. Giving this social side structure and the challenge of coaching brings out ideas and support.
- We recommend designing business updates into the day as well as a Q&A panel to learn from the experience of previous returners.

We can also take care of the practical aspect of childcare through providing temporary professional on-site crèche facilities for new parents.

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*"I really got a lot from talking with other Dads today. It's opened my eyes, almost as though I've been waiting three years for this conversation, since my first child was born."*

**Father of two, Global FMCG company. Dads focus group**

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## Engaging new fathers

As women's roles, responsibilities and priorities change as they become working mothers, so do those of their partners. The 2011 changes to paternity leave bring this into sharp focus.

So working fathers as well as working mothers need to address changed priorities, managing work and family together and the pressures that go with both.

In addition to our Life Transition Coaching for maternity and paternity returners we also provide dedicated group workshops for new fathers that enable them to explore, with peers, their parenting values and how they fit with professional life. They offer an upbeat look at strategies to make the most of working fatherhood, and manage pressures to perform in both work and family life.

As an until recently neglected group, a high degree of impact in employee engagement can be achieved through the right support for fathers.

A particularly innovative formula involves offering group coaching for your employees going through maternity and paternity along with their partners from outside the organisation. Employers benefit from the smoother work-life balance that follows from really good communication at home about shared responsibilities.

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## Our expert coaches and specialists

We have a team of highly-regarded leadership and maternity coaches around the UK and in certain other regions internationally, who all have experience of working in senior roles as well as managing the balance of family life.

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## Connecting with our other services

### Backup Care

We provide the UK's only comprehensive and award winning backup child, adult and eldercare solutions. Our Backup Care helps employees find the best child, adult and eldercare available when usual care arrangements break down or last minute ones are needed.

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Find out how My Family Care's Life Transition Coaching could make a difference to your company

**Call 0845 676 7680**  
**Click [myfamilycare.co.uk](http://myfamilycare.co.uk)**

