

# Coaching a Winning Team to the Next Level

## Snapshot: What can be learned

When Twin Cities Orthopedics decided they needed to enlist help to grow their business, they reached out to Good Leadership to guide them through this transformation. They didn't know what they didn't know, and the results they got from this partnership have improved their business results and positively impacted their company by leaps and bounds.

**Twin Cities Orthopedics knows a thing or two about teams.** After all, many of their patients are team athletes—from the local Little League to the Minnesota Vikings. So when Kevin Warren, the then-COO of the Minnesota Vikings, mentioned that the common-sense coaching of Good Leadership was helping his team succeed, Troy Simonson, CEO of Twin Cities Orthopedics took note.

### But did this team really need help?

At first glance, it didn't look like it. Twin Cities Orthopedics (TCO) was the market leader—operating three dozen clinics, with seven independent practices. Competitors admired how quickly they grew to serve more than 300,000 patients across Minnesota and Wisconsin. They had partnerships with 10 professional and collegiate sports teams and—most notably—their patient satisfaction scores were at a jaw-dropping 98%.

### Was there really room to improve?

Simonson decided to find out. He committed to a single Leadership Alignment Retreat with Good Leadership. It would be a trial run for himself and his leadership team. Maybe they'd learn something, maybe not. "We didn't know how much we didn't know," he says.

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### Discovering their blind spot

Soon 12 of TCO's senior leaders were spending a cold November day together, getting honest. As Good Leadership coaches led them through a series of conversations and exercises, a vague picture started coming into focus. The team began to understand more fully the unique strengths of their organization—and they came face to face with their biggest blind spot.

During the retreat, the Good Leadership coaches conducted a Team Momentum Survey®, as well as a series of discovery interviews and a personality assessment with each leader. The findings were both surprising and affirming.

It turns out: *This team of senior leaders didn't actually see themselves as a team.*

### A common problem

For Good Leadership coaches, it's a problem they see often. Like many mid-sized, fast-growing firms, TCO had been operating on a hub-and-spoke leadership model—where the CEO holds everything together and the rest of the leaders operate individually, deferring big decisions to the CEO. This setup had worked well when TCO was smaller, but now, with more than 2,000 employees and more plans for aggressive growth, it was slowing them down.

Surprisingly, this team had built a thriving organization but had never actually built a business plan together. And many of these highly skilled leaders were holding back their own opinions and expertise, assuming they were expected to follow the CEO's lead instead.

The truth became clear to everyone on the retreat: If TCO was going to grow in all the ways they hoped, the leadership team would need to change how it was operating.

**“I discovered my team thought I wasn't interested in their ideas. Meanwhile, all I'd been wanting was for them to take greater ownership of their decision-making and push back on me with their own input.”**

**- Troy Simonson, CEO**

### Creating a game plan

Rather than hoping they could naturally improve on their own, Simonson engaged Good Leadership to begin coaching the executive team. Together, they identified three key goals:

1. Build a team-driven leadership model that could scale for rapid growth. This would involve redefining expectations, clarifying roles, and strengthening collaboration among senior leaders.
2. Work as a team on the launch of two new business ventures. For the first time ever, the leaders would collaborate closely on the strategic plan.
3. Shift the culture organization-wide. The leaders would start this shift by modeling the core values within their own team.

***In their first year of team coaching, TCO was able to recapture over \$600,000 worth of senior leadership hours.***

***This alone resulted in nearly 200% ROI.***

### Within six months, they were seeing great results.

The next time Good Leadership administered the Team Momentum Survey®, the insights were already shifting. TCO's leaders were reporting better collaboration, better communication, and more shared decisions.

Over the next two years, Good Leadership continued to work with TCO leaders and the results grew exponentially:

- Troy Simonson, the CEO, gained back 30% of his time, which he was able to shift toward business development (and crisis management during the pandemic).
- Patient satisfaction ratings went up even further, to a near-perfect 99%.
- The organization achieved nearly double-digit growth on year-over-year revenue.
- The leadership team created and launched two new businesses—on time and within budget.
- The other senior leaders also reported time management gains, thanks to having greater focus, stronger alignment, and a better ability to partner and delegate.

### The power of healthy tension

This coaching work has sparked a culture change within the leadership group at TCO that's extended into the broader company. For example, there's been a shift in the ability to have healthy tension as a team, which leads to more productive conversations, better decision-making, and greater individual effectiveness for each leader.

“A shift like that usually requires coaching to achieve,” says Kelsey Meyer Schalkle, Good Leadership coach. “The senior leaders needed to learn how to feel more empowered to contribute to strategic conversations. And, as CEO, Troy needed to learn how to open up the chain of communication.”

Simonson agrees. “I used to be more reserved with information,” he says. “Good Leadership has helped me learn how to ‘live out loud’ and say what I'm thinking. I've found that doing this actually takes a weight off my shoulders and empowers our team to support key decisions.”

### Coaching made the difference

Ultimately, what helped TCO is what helps many organizations: Having honest conversations about their strengths and weaknesses with the support of committed coaches. They figured out how to function better as a team, and increase their effectiveness.

Twin Cities Orthopedics has achieved widespread success and growth through its partnership with Good Leadership. Their culture is still adapting, but the organization now has the tools and systems in place to guide conversations, hold leaders and physicians accountable, and adjust to ongoing change. They are poised to sustain and grow their business—and their patient satisfaction—even further.