

# How Handshake Builds High-Performing Leaders with Strive

High-growth startups recognize the need for skilled people leaders, but often face the challenge of determining how to best support them amid rapid changes and growing pains.

## Opportunity

As a growing company, Handshake sought to establish a shared foundation for their Directors and Managers that would solidify company values, create a common language, and provide support that could keep up with the company's growth.

68% of HR leaders across industries say building critical skills and competencies is a top priority for 2021<sup>1</sup>

Teams that participate in programs to develop their strengths are **6x as likely** more likely to be engaged at work<sup>2</sup>

## Solution

Handshake participants completed two modules of Strive's core curriculum in which they:

- Engaged in dynamic group discussions
- Practiced skills in role play breakouts
- Completed application challenges on Strive's social learning platform.

Additionally, participants completed four months of Strive Advising as well as a 360 assessment and executive coaching.

“Handshake has scaled rapidly over the past couple years and the People team has done our best to keep up with that growth by offering internal trainings and learning and development opportunities. We really wanted to partner with an external program that gave everyone similar language and shared tools and resources.”



**Emily Zader**  
Senior People Business Partner

## Program Timeline



<sup>1</sup> Gartner, [Gartner Top 3 Priorities for HR Leaders in 2021 \(2020\)](#)  
<sup>2</sup> Gallup, [The Future's Top Workplaces Will Rely on Manager Development. \(2020\)](#)

## Results

The Strive program supported leaders at Handshake in developing their leadership skills and created tangible impacts that were seen throughout the company. After seeing a 10% increase in their management survey scores following their pilot cohorts, Handshake expanded their Strive programming to other leaders at the company.

### Net Promoter Score

# 62.5

(-100 to 100)

### Engagement

# 73.5%

of participants completed their 360 assessment

### Enjoyment

# 4.5 / 5 avg.

"How would you rate your experience with Strive?"

### Transformation

# 4.4 / 5 avg.

"I apply my Strive lessons in the workplace"

## Testimonials



“ Brooks E. Scott | Strive Executive Facilitator

The cohorts really **appreciated the opportunity to work with and learn from the other people in the cohort**. It seemed like they were dealing with the same leadership challenges which helped us all make an even deeper connection. I'm still in touch with many of them now and **they have all expressed how meaningful the training was and how much they still use it today.**”



“ Emily Zader | Senior People Business Partner

The Strive program has really helped **establish some of those connections across our management and director tier** that would have been hard for us to develop naturally during this period of remote work... **These are all things that our managers have learned through Strive and have really taken back to their teams and have made the entire company more successful.**”



“ Ben Christensen | Co-Founder

“After our first cohort of managers went through Strive, we saw a **10-percentage-point increase** in the survey questions related to management at Handshake. As a data-driven company, this kind of tangible feedback is incredibly important to us, and **we were so excited to see our work with Strive yield results so quickly. We're excited to see the results from future cohorts!**”

“ Having clear frameworks and tools to bring to my work, and having **a space to practice**... I liked the smaller group format and getting to spend recurring time with them. ”



**Jordan Pedraza**  
Director of Global Support, Trust and Safety, and Operations

“ The **connection with the director level team** - we generally don't facilitate too many other spaces for that. ”



**Katie Williams**  
Former Director, Education Success and Operations

“ 2 hours of **focusing on improvement and being better**. Just wish it was 4+ hours, or a whole day. ”



**Andy Ennamorato**  
Engineering Manager