

## PARTNERING WITH COHD

# Kayla Kilpatrick's Journey From Leadership Program Participant to Organizational Change Agent

KAYLA KILPATRICK  
PEOPLE OPERATIONS LEADER



## INTRO

At Cohd, our mission is make Elevaters— team members with the intention and skill to continuously elevate themselves, their team, and their organization. This case study highlights the journey of Kayla Kilpatrick, who has had the unique opportunity to interface with Cohd on a number of levels. First, as a participant in our ElevateCollective Program and subsequently as a People Operations Leader who chose to partner

with Cohd as she spearheaded the growing leadership development initiatives within her organization.

**In the following case study, we explore what Kilpatrick found most compelling as a program participant, and more so why partnering with Cohd offered a uniquely fitting solution to her organization's needs.**

## BACKGROUND

Kilpatrick's introduction to Cohd came when she enrolled in the 10-month ElevateCollective Program.

Almost a year removed from graduating the program, Kilpatrick sites many of the coaching and mindset tools she learned as easy to recall and apply, and pivotal to her growth as a team member.

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"At its core, the program taught me to start thinking differently," Kayla said. "You've been able to take important and complex ideas and you've found the tools that make them really simple."

Upon completing the ElevateCollective Program, Kilpatrick was promoted to Director of People Operations at the 50-person software startup. This role presented her with new agency to address the

organization's culture and development needs. Two major employee development priorities quickly surfaced.

→ Middle managers were seeking more career direction and growth opportunities.

→ The CEO wanted employees across the company to be more equipped to give & receive feedback.

## THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

In January 2024, Kilpatrick was handed the following initiative: Develop a leadership program for middle management by the end of Q1. This task, while deeply exciting to Kilpatrick—who received her MBA with a concentration in leadership and managing organizational change—also presented a challenge: she recognized that,

given her existing HR responsibilities, she simply didn't have the bandwidth to develop an effective L&D program on her own, especially within the expected quick turnaround.

Kilpatrick explored several potential options, including content libraries and other off-the-shelf solutions, but each seemed to fall short in one capacity or another.

"I did my research. I saw what was out there," Kilpatrick said. "But, it's hard to trust the people and the content. So, you're paying a ton of money upfront for something you feel like you're blindly entering, which was scary for me. I also didn't feel like any of those options would be tailored to what I wanted to do, and I was going to be reliant on someone else shaping our culture, which I didn't love."

## THE DECISION TO CHOOSE COHD

After industry analysis, Kilpatrick opted to partner with Cohd, choosing the ElevateX program to create a customized leadership development solution tailored to her organization's specific needs. Her decision was driven by three key factors:

### → Effectiveness of the Content

As a participant, Kilpatrick was impressed by the simplicity and practicality of Cohd's tools, as well as the small-cohort methodology. "Learning amongst others made me feel like I wasn't nuts for not having learned certain things."

### → Quick Turnaround Time

With the goal to have the first cohort of leaders entering the program by Q2, the ability to work quickly and collaboratively was an importance balance to strike for Kilpatrick.

### → Customization

Kilpatrick valued the ability to tailor an ElevateX Program to her organization's needs by selecting the tools her team members would find most valuable and applicable for where they were at in their careers, and the types of leadership challenges they were facing.

## IMPLEMENTATION & SUCCESS

Within one quarter, Cohd and Kilpatrick successfully launched the customized leadership development program, with the first cohort kicking off their journey. At the conclusion of the program all of the graduate survey

respondents cited they felt more equipped to handle difficult leadership or interpersonal challenges, and agreed that the program offered an important opportunity to learn with and alongside their team members.

One participant explained, "I appreciated that we had opportunities to practice the different tools we were learning, and that we had the opportunity to hear from our coworkers about their perspectives or experiences with the topics."

## COMPANY-WIDE WORKSHOPS

In parallel with the ElevateX program, Kilpatrick and Cohd also rolled out a series of corporate workshops focused on delivering effective feedback. These workshops aligned with the themes of the ElevateX program, reinforcing key leadership principles across the organization.

Kilpatrick noted how cohesive it felt to integrate Cohd's approach and framework across the organization.

"My CEO called and said, 'I want to work on feedback', and I knew exactly where to start," she said. "I'd worked with other feedback tools before, so I had a point of comparison. And I knew how much simpler yours was. And it made it really easy to confidently stand behind Cohd's approach."

Her CEO praised the workshops: "I really enjoyed the workshop today. The framework is great, and the breakouts gave a good opportunity to see what good and not-so-good use of the framework looked like. I think everyone in my group benefitted even when they weren't sharing. Thanks for putting it together!"

## CONCLUSION

Starting as a participant in the ElevateCollective Program, Kilpatrick quickly became a decision-maker who recognized the value of Cohd's approach and chose to bring it into her organization. The result was not just the successful implementation of a leadership program but a broader cultural shift towards more effective feedback and leadership practices. In partnership with Cohd, Kilpatrick was able to deliver to her key stakeholders — executive leadership & the broader team.

Cohd's partnership with Kilpatrick and her organization underscores our commitment to providing leadership solutions that are both practical and customizable, ensuring that leaders at all levels are equipped to meet the challenges faced throughout the day-to-day of business with confidence.