



# The Aura Leadership Model

Complete Implementation Guide for Practitioners

# Introduction: Understanding the Aura Leadership Model

---

The Aura Leadership Model represents a next-generation coaching framework specifically designed to help senior leaders cultivate their distinctive leadership aura—the field of presence and influence that shapes their environment and impacts others. Unlike traditional coaching approaches that focus primarily on skills or performance, this model moves beyond surface-level behavior change to foster deep, sustainable shifts in a leader's mindset, perspective, and presence.

This comprehensive implementation guide provides coaches with everything needed to effectively apply the Aura Leadership Model with clients, from initial assessment through successful transformation outcomes. The framework addresses critical gaps in modern leadership development by moving beyond the horizontal trap of adding new skills to upgrading entire worldviews, expanding from individual myopia to systemic awareness, and evolving from rigid processes to fluid, generative practices.

# The Three Foundational Pillars

---

The Aura Leadership Model stands on three integrated pillars that inform every coaching conversation.



## Vertical Development

Vertical Development focuses on upgrading how a person makes sense of the world—an evolution in cognitive and emotional complexity rather than just adding new skills. This pillar is grounded in proven neuroscience showing that our brains can form new neural pathways throughout our lives, allowing fundamental rewiring of responses and perspectives.



## Systems Thinking

Systems Thinking recognizes that no leader operates in isolation and helps clients understand and influence interconnected patterns within their team, organization, and market. Through system mapping exercises and stakeholder analysis, coaches help clients see beyond linear cause-effect relationships to identify leverage points for sustainable change.



## Presence-Based Partnership

Presence-Based Partnership positions the coaching relationship itself as the most powerful tool, creating profound psychological safety where clients can access their innate creativity and resourcefulness. This requires coaches to develop deep listening capabilities and mindfulness practices that enable strategic silence and somatic awareness.

# Coach Competency Requirements and Self-Assessment

---

Implementing the Aura Leadership Model requires specific competencies across multiple domains. The competency development process follows a structured progression from foundation skills through advanced applications.

## Foundation Competencies

All Aura coaches must demonstrate mastery of core ICF competencies at the PCC level or above, including maintaining ethical guidelines, embodying a coaching mindset, establishing agreements, cultivating trust and safety, maintaining presence, listening actively, evoking awareness, and facilitating client growth. Additionally, coaches must maintain consistent centered presence throughout sessions, demonstrate cultural competence across diverse contexts, and adhere to highest ethical standards with appropriate boundary management.

## Aura-Specific Competencies

The model requires specialized competencies in vertical development, including understanding adult development theories from Kegan, Torbert, and Cook-Greuter, assessing clients' developmental stages appropriately, and facilitating vertical developmental shifts. Systems thinking competencies involve identifying and mapping systemic patterns, creating system maps and causal loop diagrams, and working effectively with stakeholder dynamics.

Domain fluidity represents the ability to move skillfully between the four

moment and maintaining dynamic responsiveness to client needs. Somatic awareness competencies include incorporating body wisdom and somatic techniques, noticing clients' embodied responses, and using one's own somatic awareness as a coaching tool.

# Six-Month Implementation Roadmap

---

The implementation of Aura Leadership coaching follows a structured six-month development path across three distinct phases, each building upon previous learning while introducing increasingly complex applications.

## Phase 1: Foundation Building (Months 1-2)

The foundation phase focuses on developing core competencies and establishing personal practices essential for Aura coaching. Month 1 begins with self-assessment and foundation work, including completing a personal vertical development assessment and establishing a daily mindfulness practice of 15-20 minutes. Coaches simultaneously engage in core theory mastery, studying Kegan, Torbert, and Cook-Greuter theories while mastering the Aura whitepaper and learning basic somatic techniques. Month 2 emphasizes presence practice development and systems thinking foundation. Coaches develop presence-based listening skills, practice strategic silence averaging 2.7 seconds, and learn trauma-informed approaches. Concurrently, they practice systems mapping on personal challenges, study organizational dynamics, and learn to create causal loop diagrams.

## Phase 2: Practice Development (Months 3-4)

The practice development phase involves applying the framework with actual clients while refining assessment and intervention skills. Month 3 introduces client practice with 1-2 clients, using all assessment templates and documenting sessions thoroughly. Coaches also master assessment protocol application, particularly the CTI framework, and practice 360-degree feedback protocols.

Month 4 focuses on domain integration practice, developing the ability to move fluidly between the four domains while creating domain-specific questions and integrating somatic awareness. This month emphasizes supervision and feedback, with weekly supervision sessions, session recording for review, and processing of complex cases.

## **Phase 3: Mastery and Scaling (Months 5-6)**

The final phase develops advanced applications and prepares coaches for independent practice. Month 5 involves complex systems applications, working with organizational systems, applying the framework to cultural transformation, and handling stakeholder dynamics. Coaches also develop advanced interventions, create customized assessment protocols, and master complex facilitation skills.

Month 6 completes the roadmap with practice optimization, including optimizing client outcomes, establishing measurement systems, and planning for scaling practice. Appropriate coaches may begin mentoring others, developing training materials, and sharing best practices within the coaching community.

# Client Assessment and Readiness Evaluation

---

Successful Aura coaching begins with thorough client assessment to ensure readiness for the depth and complexity of developmental work. The assessment process evaluates multiple dimensions of client preparedness and organizational context.

## Leadership Context Assessment

Client readiness evaluation begins with assessing the leadership context, including current challenges requiring systemic solutions, influence level within the organization (typically director level or above), and stakeholder complexity with competing demands. High-readiness clients provide clear examples of systemic challenges while recognizing the limitations of individual solutions, demonstrate director-plus level influence across multiple functions or teams, and articulate specific multi-stakeholder complexity with concrete examples.

## Developmental Readiness Indicators

Developmental readiness encompasses comfort with psychological depth and self-exploration, previous experience with personal development work, and openness to challenging existing worldviews. Coaches should look for clients who demonstrate self-awareness and curiosity about deeper patterns, have extensive development experience with clear insights gained, and explicitly state openness to fundamental perspective shifts.

## Systems Awareness and Presence Readiness

The assessment evaluates clients' recognition of interconnected

systems, and willingness to work with stakeholder dynamics. Additionally, coaches assess clients' ability to sit with uncertainty and ambiguity, interest in somatic/embodied approaches, and capacity for mindfulness and reflection.

# Session Structure and Facilitation

---

The Aura Leadership Model employs four distinct session types, each with specific structures, purposes, and expected outcomes. Understanding these session types enables coaches to select the most appropriate format based on client needs and developmental stage.

## Initial Assessment Session (90 minutes)

The initial assessment session establishes the coaching relationship and developmental baseline through a structured 90-minute format. The session begins with opening and grounding (10 minutes), followed by initial assessment tools (30 minutes), reality mapping (25 minutes), values exploration (15 minutes), and next steps planning (10 minutes).

Key questions for this session include exploring patterns in leadership challenges, identifying what matters most in current situations, and connecting challenges to deepest values. The coach maintains a stance as developmental partner and clean mirror, aiming to establish a clear developmental baseline, shared reality map, and initial experiments.

## Domain-Based Session (60 minutes)

Domain-based sessions focus on exploring specific domains of practice through a structured 60-minute format including opening and presence (10 minutes), domain exploration (35 minutes), integration and synthesis (10 minutes), and experiments design (5 minutes). These sessions use questions about unseen realities, meaning revelation, and 5% shift experiments while the coach serves as resonance partner and creative collaborator.

## Integration Session (75 minutes)

Integration sessions emphasize systemic understanding and cultural

minutes), multi-domain integration (45 minutes), ecosystem planning (15 minutes), and closing practice (5 minutes). Key questions address transformation effects on teams, necessary conversations, and sustainability beyond coaching, with the coach functioning as strategic thought partner and integration catalyst.

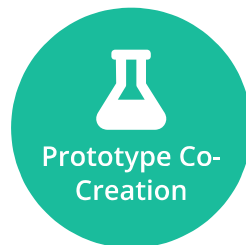
## **CTI Review Session (60 minutes)**

CTI review sessions measure transformation impact through a 60-minute format: opening and reflection (10 minutes), CTI assessment review (30 minutes), progress analysis (15 minutes), and future focus (5 minutes). These sessions explore observed changes, others' experiences of leadership differences, and organizational impact creation, with the coach serving as measurement partner and transformation witness.

# The Four Domains of Practice

---

The Aura Leadership Model operates through four fluid, interconnected domains of practice rather than following rigid, linear processes. These domains represent different facets of coaching work that flow naturally between each other based on what emerges in each session.



## Contextual Illumination

**Purpose:** To create a crystal-clear, non-judgmental awareness of the client's current reality, both internal and external.

**In Practice:** In this domain, coaches facilitate reality mapping exercises that illuminate patterns and connections, ask questions about noticed patterns in leadership challenges, and help clients recognize automatic responses and habitual patterns. The coach's stance is that of a clean mirror and deep listener, helping clients see their situation without judgment or defensiveness.

**Key coaching questions for this domain include:** "What patterns do you notice in your leadership challenges?" and "What systemic forces are influencing this situation?" The domain uses system mapping exercises, values-based 360-degree feedback, and mindfulness practices to ground subsequent conversations in shared understanding of reality.

## Meaning Exploration

**Purpose:** To connect current reality to deeper sources of meaning, values, and identity, evoking profound awareness that directly informs business decisions.

**In Practice:** Coaches explore values alignment through questions like "What matters most to you in this situation?" and "How does this challenge connect to your deepest values?" This domain facilitates identity and purpose work while helping clients access embodied wisdom about their situations.

The coach's stance in this domain is that of a resonance partner, using narrative techniques to evoke the client's own wisdom while tying it to real-world applications. Activities include values clarification through narrative techniques, deconstructing limiting beliefs, exploring identity, and applying somatic inquiry to understand emotional triggers in business contexts.

## Prototype Co-Creation

**Purpose:** To translate deep insights into tangible experiments with new

actions that build momentum and gradually become second nature. The focus is on "5% shifts" that create sustainable change rather than dramatic transformations that don't last.

**Key questions include:** "What would a small, doable shift look like in this area?" and "How can you embody this new approach in your daily leadership?" The coach serves as a creative partner and accountability ally, championing courageous experimentation while designing experiments with built-in learning loops based on habit formation science.

## Ecosystem Integration

**Purpose:** To ensure that client transformation is sustained, integrated, and amplified throughout their team and organization. This domain explores how transformed leadership presence neurologically influences teams, fostering brain states associated with trust, psychological safety, and collaborative innovation.

**Coaching questions focus on systemic impact:** "How is your transformation affecting your team?" and "What conversations need to happen to support this shift?" The coach functions as a strategic thought partner and catalyst for integration, helping clients embed new ways of being into organizational culture and practices.

# Client Transformation Impact (CTI) Framework

---

The CTI framework provides a comprehensive approach to measuring transformation that goes beyond traditional ROI to track deeper developmental changes across three interconnected dimensions. This measurement approach ensures ethical data collection while providing quantifiable evidence of systemic leadership impact.

## Three Dimensions of Measurement

The CTI framework measures transformation across Personal Growth, Relational Ripple, and Systemic Influence dimensions. Personal Growth tracks ego development stage progression, complexity handling improvements, self-awareness enhancement, and emotional regulation development. Measurement methods include the Washington University Sentence Completion Test, complex problem-solving scenarios, self-assessment with coach observations, and HRV biofeedback with behavioral indicators.

Relational Ripple assesses communication effectiveness, trust building, psychological safety creation, and conflict resolution improvements. This dimension uses 360-degree feedback surveys, team trust assessment tools, team climate inventories, and conflict resolution frequency tracking. Target improvements range from 20-30% improvement in communication clarity to 50-70% reduction in escalated conflicts.

Systemic Influence measures decision velocity, cultural transformation, team performance, and innovation culture development. Assessment methods include decision timeline analysis, cultural assessment surveys, team performance metrics, and innovation frequency and quality measures. Expected improvements include 20-40% faster decision-making and 25-50% improvement in cultural health.

# CTI Framework Radar Chart: Measuring Transformation Across Three Dimensions



## Measurement Timeline and Implementation

The CTI framework utilizes a structured timeline for comprehensive assessment across the coaching engagement. Baseline measurements at Month 0 include completing all assessment tools and establishing development plans. Regular progress tracking occurs monthly with comprehensive reviews at months 3, 6, 9, and 12.

Mid-point evaluations at Month 6 provide comprehensive assessment across all three dimensions, enabling course correction and refinement of development focus. Final transformation evaluation at Month 12 demonstrates complete impact across personal, relational, and systemic dimensions. Sustainability follow-up at 6 months post-completion assesses long-term maintenance and continued integration.

# Ethics and Boundaries in Aura Coaching

---

Working with the depth and complexity of the Aura Leadership Model requires rigorous attention to ethics and boundaries throughout the coaching relationship. The ethical framework encompasses competency requirements, consent and boundary management, confidentiality protocols, dual relationship avoidance, and safety and wellbeing considerations.

## Competency and Professional Development

Coaches must assess their competency in vertical development theory before beginning Aura coaching work, completing competency self-assessments and obtaining required certifications. Ongoing professional development includes establishing monthly supervision and attending 32+ hours of annual continuing professional development. Red flags include working beyond competency level, lack of supervision, avoiding professional development, and working in isolation.

## Consent, Boundaries, and Confidentiality

Clear agreements about confidentiality in organizational contexts are essential, using organizational confidentiality agreement templates and written consent forms for all stakeholder interactions. Coaches must maintain appropriate boundaries between coaching and therapeutic work while establishing clear distinctions in contracts. Confidentiality protocols require secure systems for session notes and client communications, documented reporting relationships, and emergency protocols for safety concerns.

The depth of Aura coaching work requires specific attention to client safety and wellbeing, including monitoring client wellbeing and adjustment to developmental challenges. Coaches must recognize signs of overwhelm, adjust pacing accordingly, and maintain updated referral resources for specialized support needs. Dual relationship management involves avoiding business partnerships and social relationships with active clients while disclosing potential conflicts of interest.

# Troubleshooting Common Implementation Challenges

---

Implementing the Aura Leadership Model can present various challenges for both coaches and clients. Understanding common issues and having strategies to address them enhances coaching effectiveness and ensures positive outcomes.

## Client Resistance to Deep Work

Some clients may resist the depth of exploration required in the Aura approach, deflecting to surface-level issues, avoiding somatic or emotional exploration, or focusing only on tactical solutions. Interventions include slowing down to build more psychological safety, explaining the value of deeper exploration using business-relevant language, and starting with smaller experiments that feel safer.

## Coach Overwhelm with Complexity

The multidimensional nature of the Aura model can sometimes overwhelm coaches, leading to feeling lost in sessions, taking on clients' emotional states, or constantly second-guessing interventions. Interventions include returning to basics by focusing on presence first, using supervision to process complex cases, and practicing grounding techniques before sessions.

## Organizational Resistance to Change

Individual development often faces resistance from organizational systems, with clients making progress but systems pulling them back, stakeholders questioning the coaching approach, or organizational culture undermining

understanding the development process, providing education about vertical development in organizational contexts, and documenting measurable outcomes using the CTI framework.

# Supervision and Continuing Professional Development

---

Ongoing supervision and professional development are essential for maintaining competency and ethical practice in Aura coaching. Supervision provides support, guidance, and accountability while ensuring coaches continue developing their capabilities throughout their practice.

## Supervision Requirements and Structure

Aura coaches require monthly supervision sessions with qualified supervisors who understand vertical development and systems thinking approaches. Supervision sessions use structured frameworks like the GROW-Supervision model, addressing goals, reality exploration, options generation, and way forward planning. Group supervision provides additional peer learning opportunities while maintaining individual supervision for case-specific guidance.

## Continuing Education and Skill Development

Professional development requires 32+ hours annually of coach-specific education, including advanced training in adult development theory, systems thinking applications, and presence-based coaching techniques. Coaches benefit from attending conferences, workshops, and specialized training programs while maintaining active participation in professional coaching organizations.

## Mentor Coaching and Peer Consultation

Mentor coaching provides structured feedback based on observed sessions to refine skills and style in alignment with ICE Core Competencies. The

group mentoring components. Peer consultation arrangements offer ongoing support and learning opportunities outside formal supervision relationships.

# Resources for Ongoing Development and Mastery

---

Continuing development as an Aura Leadership Coach requires ongoing learning and resource utilization to deepen practice and maintain professional competency.

## Essential Reading and Theoretical Foundation

Core texts supporting mastery include Kegan's "In Over Our Heads" and "Immunity to Change," Cook-Greuter's developmental assessment work, and Torbert's "Action Inquiry." Systems thinking resources include Senge's "The Fifth Discipline," Meadows' "Thinking in Systems," and Wheatley's "Leadership and the New Science." Presence-based coaching development benefits from Silsbee's "The Mindful Coach," Siegel's "Mindsight," and Van der Kolk's "The Body Keeps the Score."

## Professional Training and Certification Programs

Formal training enhances coach competency through Institute of Coaching programs, Integral Coaching Canada certifications, and developmental assessment training with Cook-Greuter & Associates. Systems coaching training includes Center for Creative Leadership programs, Organization and Relationship Systems Coaching, and Taos Institute offerings. Presence-based approaches benefit from Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction training, Somatic Experience International programs, and Co-Active Training Institute courses.

# Assessment Tools and Professional Instruments

Professional assessment tools support Aura model implementation including the Washington University Sentence Completion Test, Leadership Development Profile, and Global Leadership Profile for vertical development assessment. Systems thinking assessment uses Systems Thinking Inventory, Organizational Culture Inventory, and causal loop diagram software. Leadership assessment employs Leadership Circle Profile, EQi 2.0 Emotional Intelligence Assessment, and comprehensive 360-degree feedback tools.

# Conclusion: The Journey to Mastery

---

Implementing the Aura Leadership Model represents both a professional journey and personal development process for coaches. As practitioners develop mastery in this approach, they not only transform their clients but also experience their own vertical development through the integration of sophisticated frameworks, presence-based practices, and systems thinking applications.

The comprehensive nature of this model—integrating vertical development, systems thinking, and presence-based partnership—creates a powerful framework for fostering conscious, systemic, and transformative leadership. Through the four fluid domains of practice, coaches can help leaders cultivate their unique leadership aura, creating ripple effects throughout their organizations and contributing to the evolution of leadership consciousness in our complex world.

This implementation guide provides the structure, tools, and resources needed to begin using the Aura Leadership Model effectively while recognizing that true mastery comes through practice, reflection, and continuous learning. By following the six-month implementation roadmap and utilizing the provided templates and frameworks, coaches can develop the competencies necessary to facilitate profound transformation in their clients while contributing to the larger movement toward conscious, developmentally-informed leadership coaching.

**Ready to transform your leadership?**

Contact us at [info@auramodel.com](mailto:info@auramodel.com) | [www.auramodel.com](http://www.auramodel.com)