

Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders

Results of the Annual Leadership Survey by Wilson Learning and *Training Magazine*

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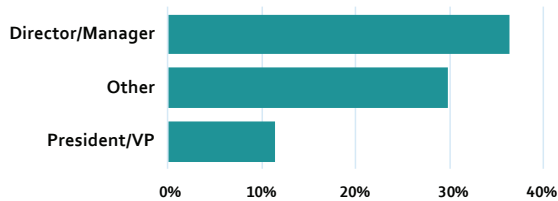
For the second year, *Training* magazine and Wilson Learning Worldwide have teamed up to conduct a survey focused on what creates effective leaders and what is being done to prepare the next generation of leaders.

The results of this survey indicate there is a great need to strengthen leadership development efforts. In particular, we need to focus our efforts on meeting the needs and expectations of the next generation of leaders.

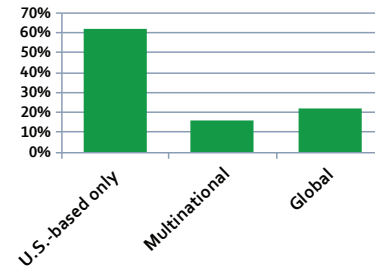
Who Participated in the Survey?

Over 500 leadership development professionals responded to the 2018 survey.

58% in Management Positions



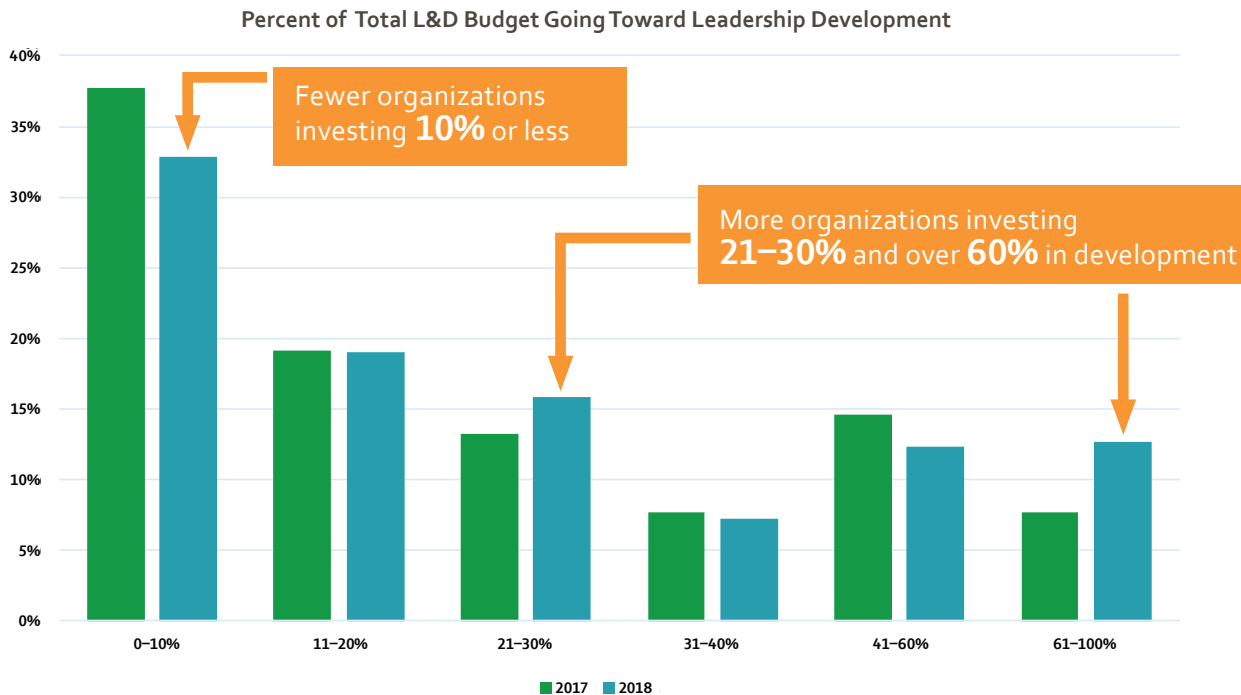
62% Operate Only in the U.S.

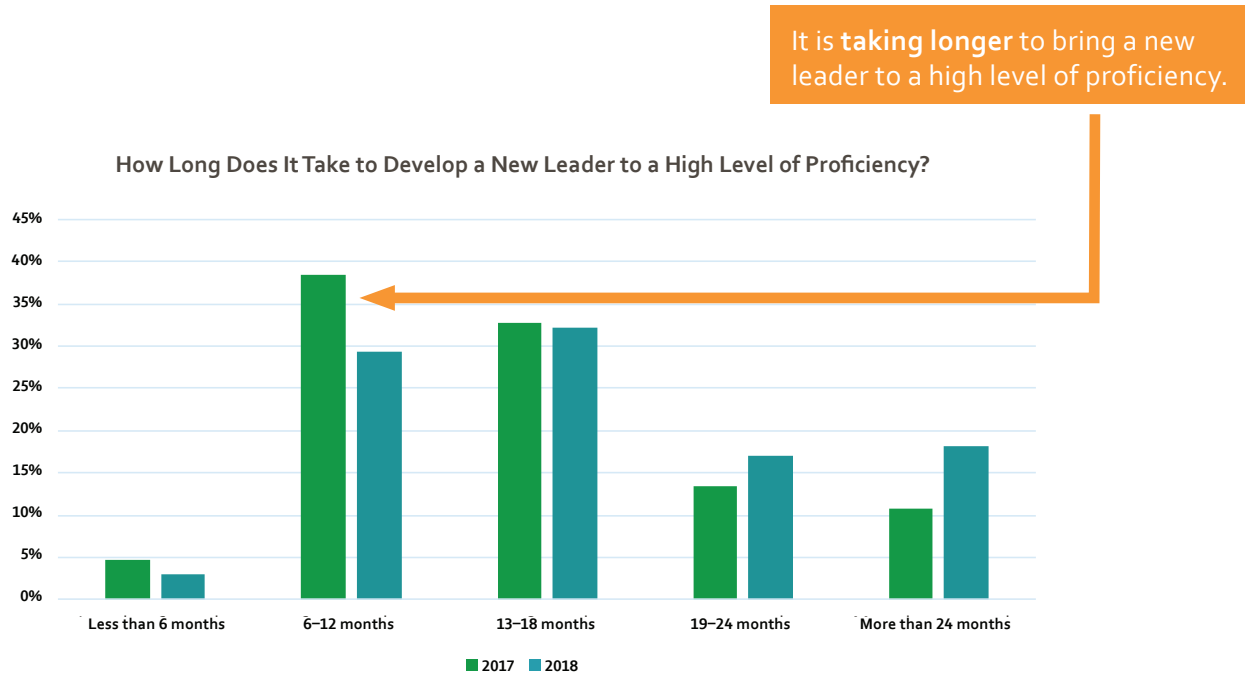


10,722
Average Number
of Employees



A larger percentage of the training budget is going to leadership development.

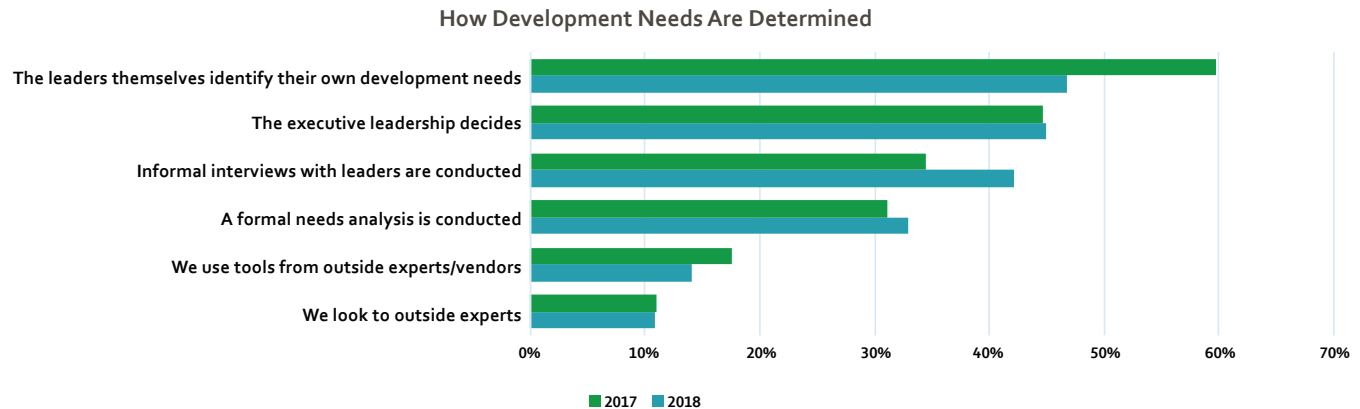




How are leadership development needs determined?

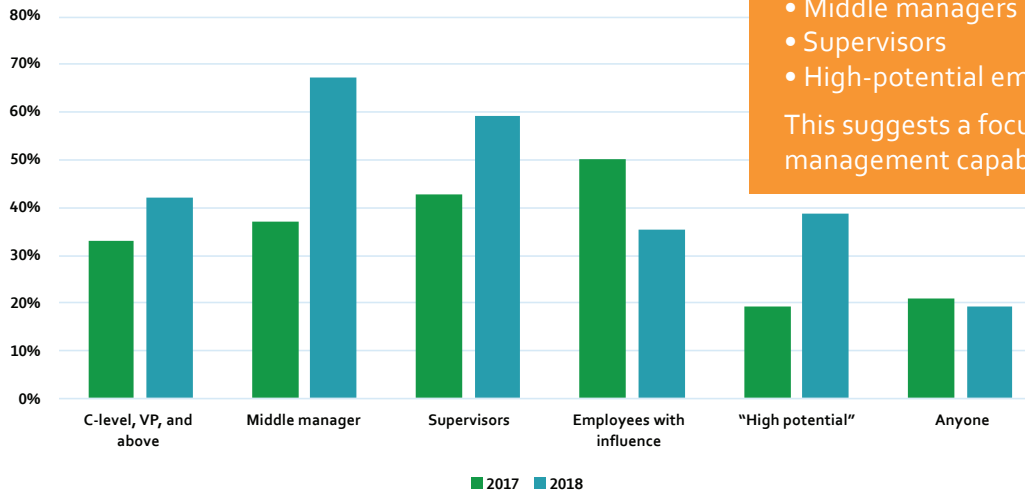
This year, fewer organizations are asking leaders to select their own development priorities and are instead moving toward the use of interviews and formal needs analysis processes to determine leadership development priorities. Is this a trend toward more structured approaches to determining leadership skill needs?

A movement **away** from self-selected development needs toward . . .
more formal needs analysis and interviews to determine needs



Who participated in leadership development programs?

Overall, there was a significant increase in the percent of organizations offering leadership development opportunities to their employees.



Increases in leadership development programs were targeted toward:

- C-level and VP leaders
- Middle managers
- Supervisors
- High-potential employees

This suggests a focus on growing effective management capabilities.

Leadership Skill Priorities

Leadership Skill Development Priorities from 2017 to 2018

2018 RESULTS

CHANGE FROM 2017

Communication skills	▲1
Developing and coaching others	▼1
Team leadership	▲2
Strategy development and alignment	▲3
Change leadership	▼1
Interpersonal relationship skills	▲2
Emotional intelligence skills	▼1
Motivating others	▲4
Performance management	▼6
Decision-making and problem-solving	▼1
Creating engagement	—
Providing feedback	▲1
Self-development	▼3
Influencing others	—
Taking accountability	—
Leadership character	—

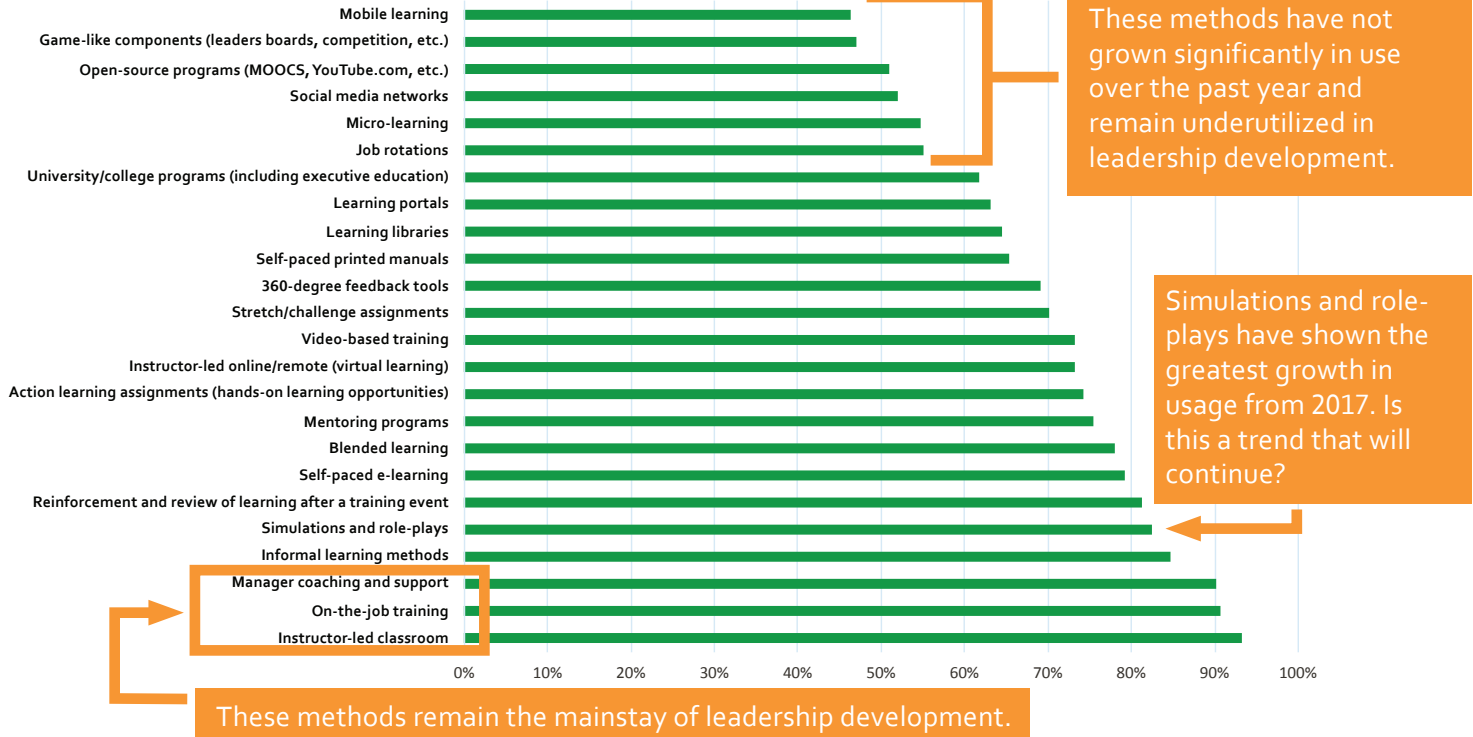


Survey participants selected their top five leadership skill development priorities. The chart shows how the rank order of the skills changed from 2017 to 2018, meaning how much skill areas moved up or down in priority. While most skills remained in the same place, there were some interesting changes.



Learning Methods Used

Percent of Organizations Using Each Learning Method



How Do You Measure the Impact of Leadership Development?

Actions and choices regarding leadership development are only meaningful if they drive performance improvement and impact. In this survey, participants were asked five questions that experts agree define high-performance leadership development:

1. Is leadership a source of competitive advantage?
2. Do we have best-in-class leaders?
3. Are there gaps in our leadership capabilities?
4. Do we have sufficient resources?
5. Do we have sufficient leadership bench strength?

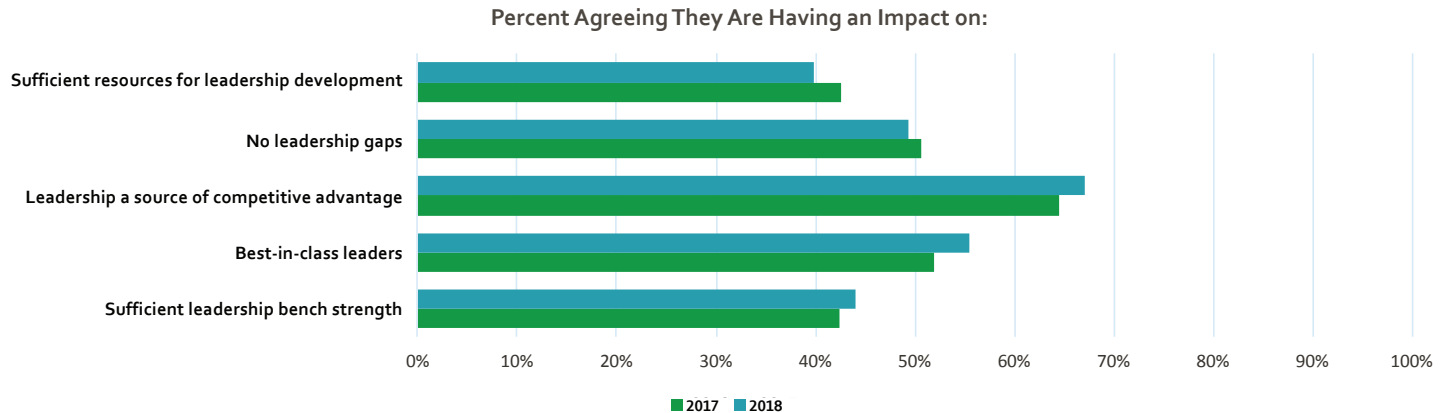
The responses to these five questions were averaged to create an overall Leadership Development Impact score for each organization. Organizations were then divided into three groups:

- **Low**-performing organizations
- **Moderate**-performing organizations
- **High**-performing organizations



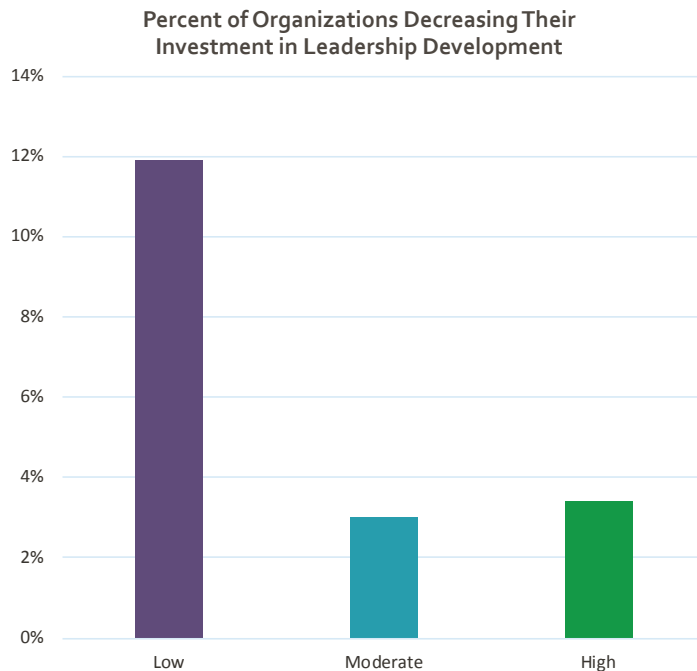
Impact of Leadership Development

The overall impact of leadership development did not increase from 2017 and, in fact, worsened in two critical areas: the lack of resources for leadership development and growing gaps in leadership capabilities.



Less than half the organizations feel:

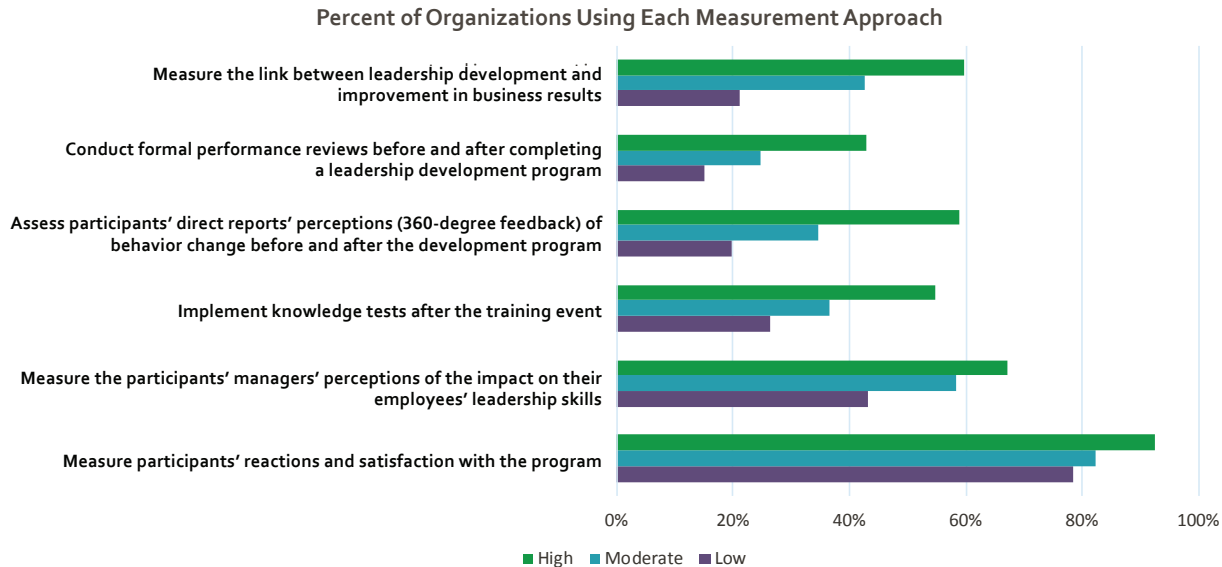
- They have sufficient resources to develop leaders effectively.
- They have no critical leadership skill gaps.
- They have sufficient leadership bench strength.



This graph shows why low-performing organizations are falling behind, and will continue to fall behind, in performance. Low-performing organizations were four times as likely to decrease their investment in leadership development than were moderate- or high-performing organizations. Overall, 12 percent of low-performing organizations indicated that their investment in leadership development is shrinking.

Measuring Leadership Development Efforts

This graph shows the percent of high-, moderate-, and low-performing organizations using different methods of measuring the effectiveness of leadership development. High-performing organizations were much more likely to measure business outcomes and behavior change than were low- or moderate-performing organizations.



Executive Involvement in Leadership Development

A clear difference among high-, moderate-, and low-performing organizations is the priority that executives place on developing the next generation of leaders. Executives at high-performing organizations clearly have a personal commitment to ensuring effective leadership for the future.

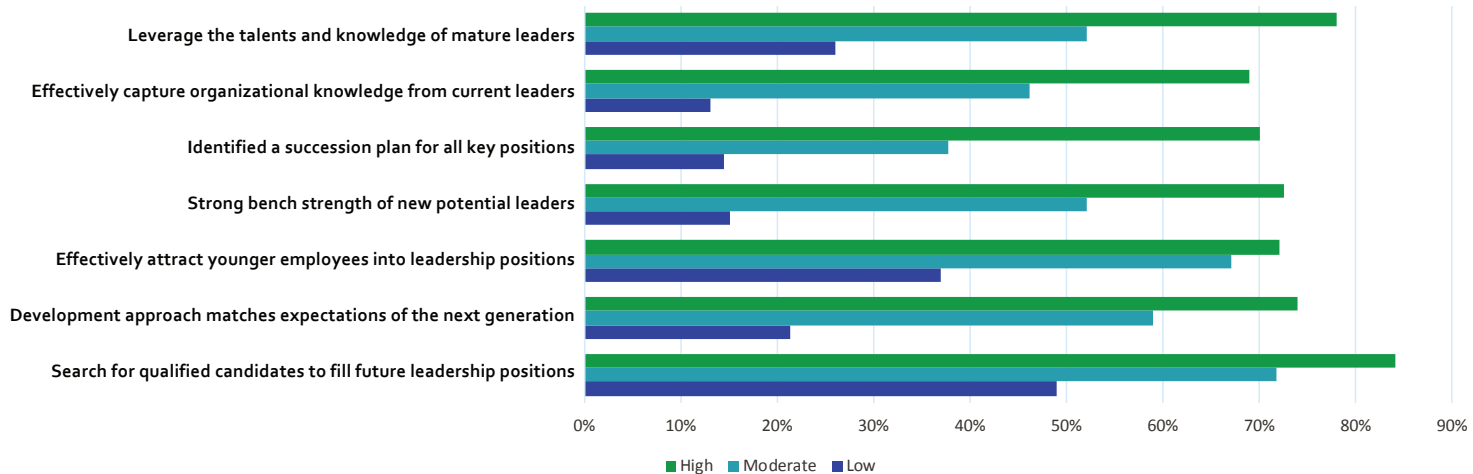


Executive Involvement in Leadership Development

Executives in high-performing organizations demonstrate their personal commitment to developing the next generation by actively participating in leadership development efforts.



Percent Agree and Strongly Agree



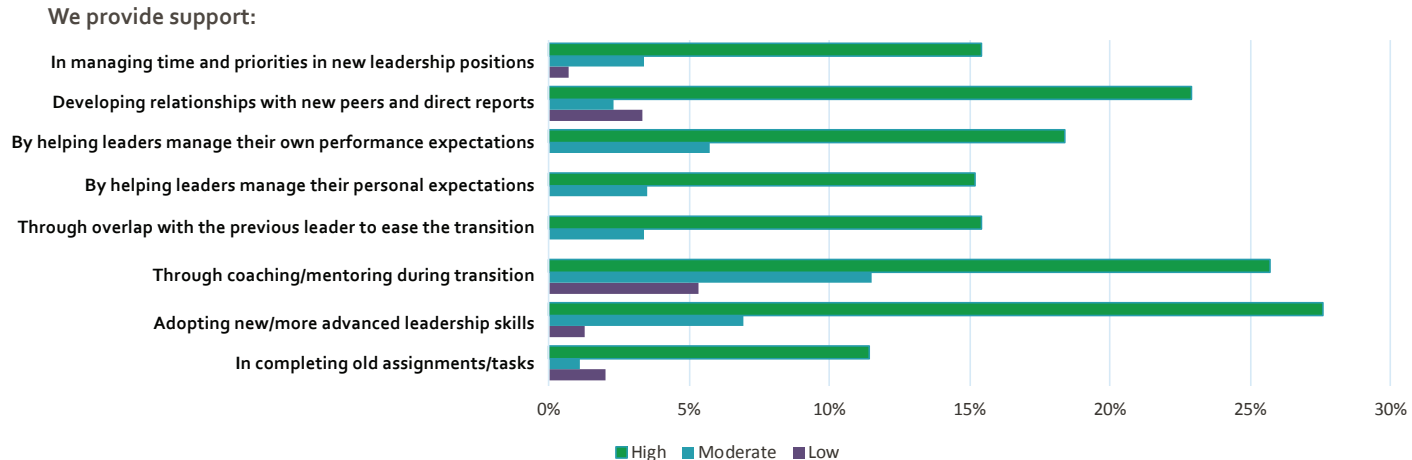
High-performing organizations are more likely to:

- Leverage talents of existing leaders and capture knowledge
- Have a succession plan and bench strength in place
- Search for and attract young employees into leadership positions
- Use a modern approach to training and development

Supporting New Leaders in Their Transition

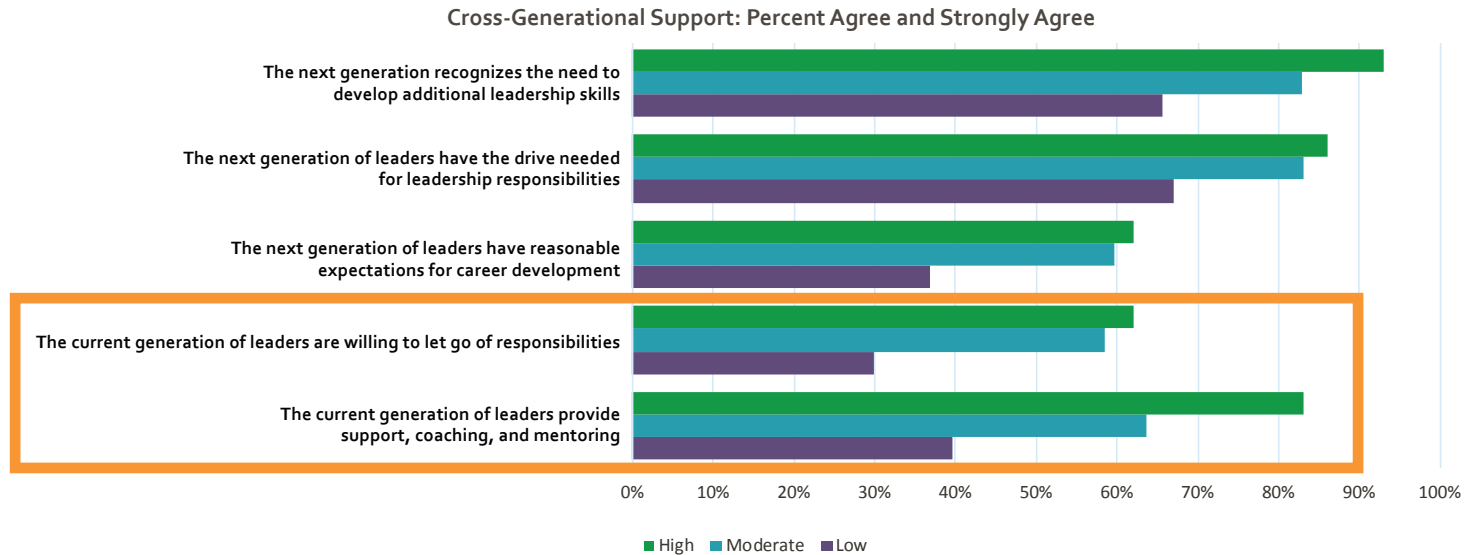
High-performing organizations are much more likely to support new managers in their transition to leadership positions.

Percent of Organizations That Strongly Agree

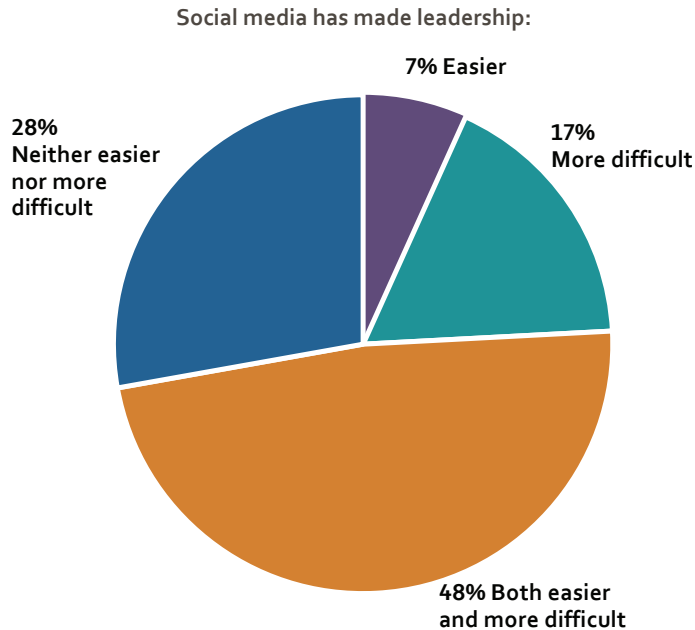


Cross-Generational Support for Leadership

High-performing organizations are more likely to have support from the current generation of leaders.



Social Media . . . Is a Problem



65%
of organizations say that social media
(Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) has
made leadership **more difficult**, or
both easier and more difficult.

Social Media's Greatest Benefits

- Greater sharing and interaction
- Easy access to information

Greatest Concerns About Social Media

- Blurring of personal and business boundaries
- Information overload
- Leaking of confidential information

How to Strengthen New Leader Development

The results of this survey suggest a number of actions that organizations can take to strengthen their leadership development efforts for the next generation.

Focus on effectiveness. Focus less on making learning less expensive/time-consuming and more on whether the leadership development effort is creating better leaders.

Get executives engaged. Senior executives need to see leadership development as a priority, communicate specific expectations, model desired behavior, and engage directly in leadership development activities.

Make speed to proficiency a KPI. Your Key Performance Indicator (KPI) should be how quickly you can create proficient leaders, not how quickly you can get leaders in and out of a program. Supporting new leaders in their transition is key.

Adapt learning methods. Newer generations have exposure to much more diverse and integrated learning approaches than did prior generations—make use of this experience and expand leadership development from an event to a journey.

Engage all generations. Develop your current generation of leaders into effective coaches and mentors.

Pay attention to social media trends. There is no question the growth of social media is affecting leadership behavior, for the positive and negative. What is not clear is how. It would be wise to engage leaders in discussions about the potential benefits and risks of social media.





About the Author

Michael Leimbach, PhD

Michael Leimbach, PhD, is Vice President of Global Research and Development for Wilson Learning Worldwide. With more than 25 years in the field, Dr. Leimbach provides leadership for researching and designing Wilson Learning's diagnostic, learning, and performance improvement capabilities. He has managed major research studies in sales, leadership, and organizational effectiveness, and has developed Wilson Learning's impact evaluation capability and ROI models. He has served as a research consultant for global clients, is Editor-in-Chief of the ADHR journal, and serves on the ISO Technical Committee on Quality Standards for Learning Service Providers. Dr. Leimbach is a published author and frequent speaker at global conferences.

About Wilson Learning

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For more than 50 years, Wilson Learning has been equipping organizations around the globe to drive productivity, solve problems, and increase revenue. We do this by developing leaders, the workforce, and sales and service organizations. Our unique blend of content, combined with state-of-the-art delivery technology and implementation expertise, ensures sustainable results. The result is high-impact, performance-driven solutions for your organization.

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About *Training* magazine

Training is a 54-year-old professional development magazine written for training, Human Resources, and business management professionals in all industries that advocate training and workforce development as a business tool. *Training* also produces world-class conferences, expositions, and digital products that focus on job-related, employer-sponsored training and education in the working world. *Training* is published by Lakewood Media Group.

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