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Foreword

Today's business leaders are strikingly different to those of yesteryear. With more attention on business leaders and their ability to operate globally than ever before, today's business heads are publicly received in ways previously reserved for pop stars and the Hollywood elite.

A decade ago, only a small group of business leaders had earned themselves household-name status on a global level. This included the likes of Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Warren Buffett and one Donald Trump. Today, however, dozens of names come to mind, including the likes of Zuckerberg, Musk, Sandberg and Wojcicki to name but a few.

Global business leaders need to be inspirational and charismatic, particularly in today's digital world where they will be scrutinised by the public for every decision they make. They must also be able to do the job.

“ As global businesses become increasingly characterised by the public perception of their figureheads, they are forced to consider not only who will lead the business in the future, but how they will lead ”

In this report, we surveyed 100 HR professionals in the UK on how they grow future leaders and discovered the challenges faced in rolling out leadership training programmes.

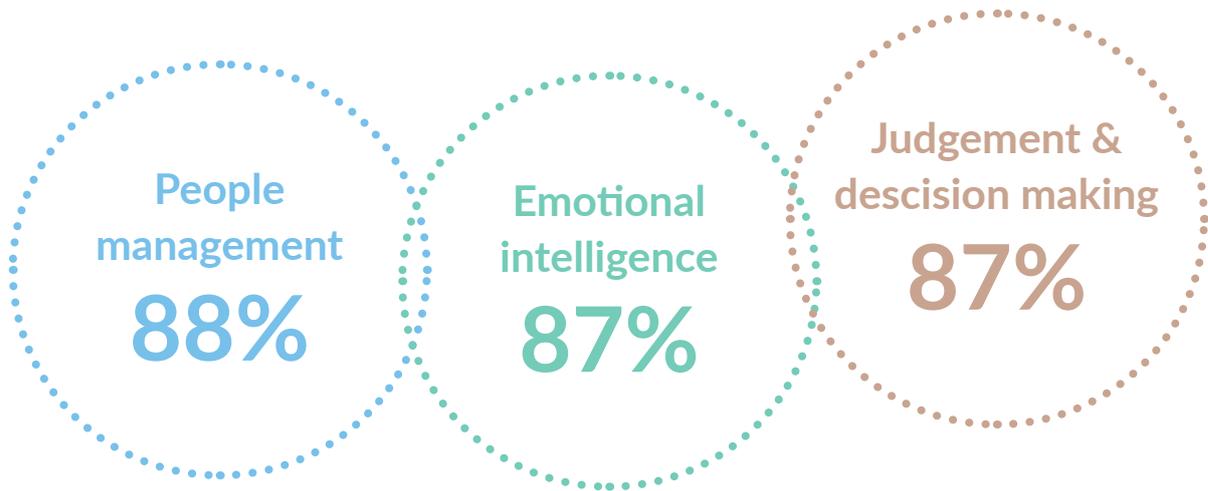
In conclusion, we provide solutions to the roadblocks faced and recommend that by taking a global approach to leadership training, HR professionals can help grow leaders more successfully.

Samantha Caine
Managing Director

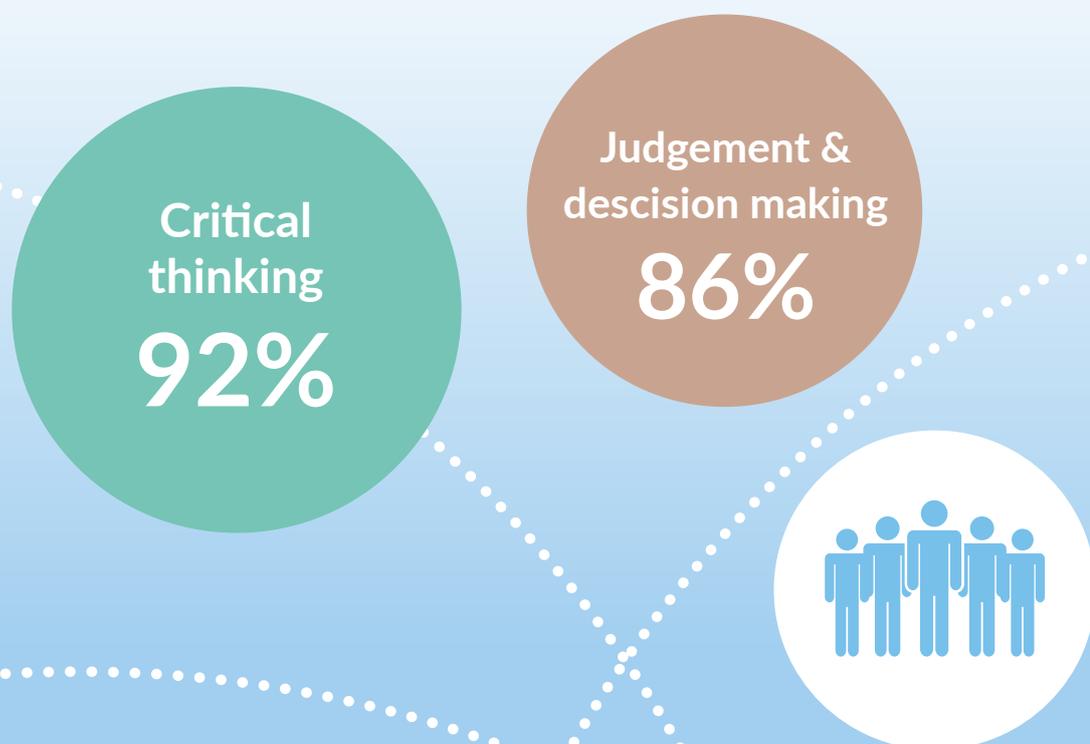


What makes a great leader?

When it comes to agreeing on what makes a great leader, the respondents agreed that the most important qualities were;



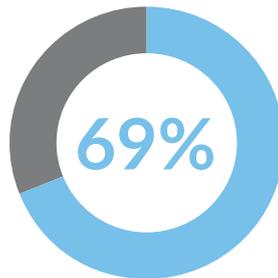
In the future, respondents think that the most important qualities a leader will need are;



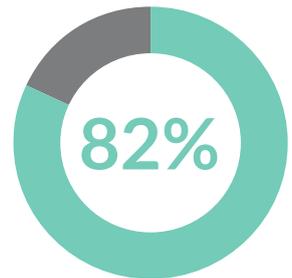


Leadership On-Demand

Identifying potential candidates with the intention of developing them into future leaders is becoming a growing priority for businesses – more so in larger organisations.



69%
of large organisations are prioritising the identification and development of future leaders from within the workforce

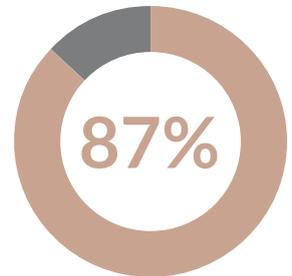


82%
of HR decision makers say development of future leaders will become a greater priority in 3-5 years' time

Organisations are clearly recognising that rather than searching externally for the most suitable replacement when an existing leader eventually steps aside, they can instead nurture the best possible replacements from within their own workforce and this has untold benefits.

Developing leadership from the talent pool that exists right under their noses means organisations can essentially grow future leaders on-demand. Ensuring that future leaders are provided with relevant training over a sustained period and are given the opportunity to experience every element of the business is essential. They can then eventually approach a position of leadership with a strong, in-depth knowledge of the business that no external candidate could possibly match, with the appropriate skills, behaviours and cultural understanding in place.

Identifying and developing leaders looks set to become an even bigger focus among businesses in the coming years.



87%
say it will become a greater priority in five years' time

As organisations continue to be seduced by the benefits of globalisation, they must ensure that they start to spot and grow future leaders in each new location and market as they begin to expand globally. For organisations already operating on a global scale, this should also become a serious priority.

The Challenges

While for the majority of businesses, succession planning is seen as a priority – 89 percent of HR decision makers and 92 percent of organisations currently have a leadership programme in place, it's not all plain sailing.

As a result, training has become more



Business Leads v Line Managers

Organisations are struggling with the practicalities of rolling out leadership programmes. Many appear to lack a cohesive approach. The survey reveals that one of the more significant challenges is that the responsibilities for developing future leaders gets segmented between business leads and line managers and this is why.

When it comes to creating the leadership strategy within an organisation,

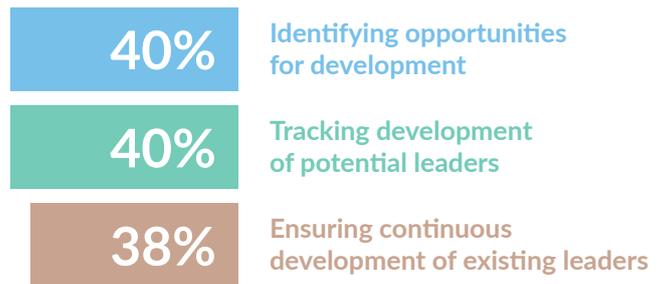
36% believed it is the responsibility of the business lead

32% stating it should be HR's responsibility

But when questioned on who should be identifying potential future leaders,

45% considered it to be the responsibility of the individual's line manager

The other areas the HR decision makers felt that line managers are responsible for included;



There appears to be a gap between those who create the organisation's leadership strategy and those who are seen to be responsible for growing future leaders.

However, this isn't the only issue. The respondents identified five other challenges in creating leadership development programmes.

Five challenges in creating leadership development programmes

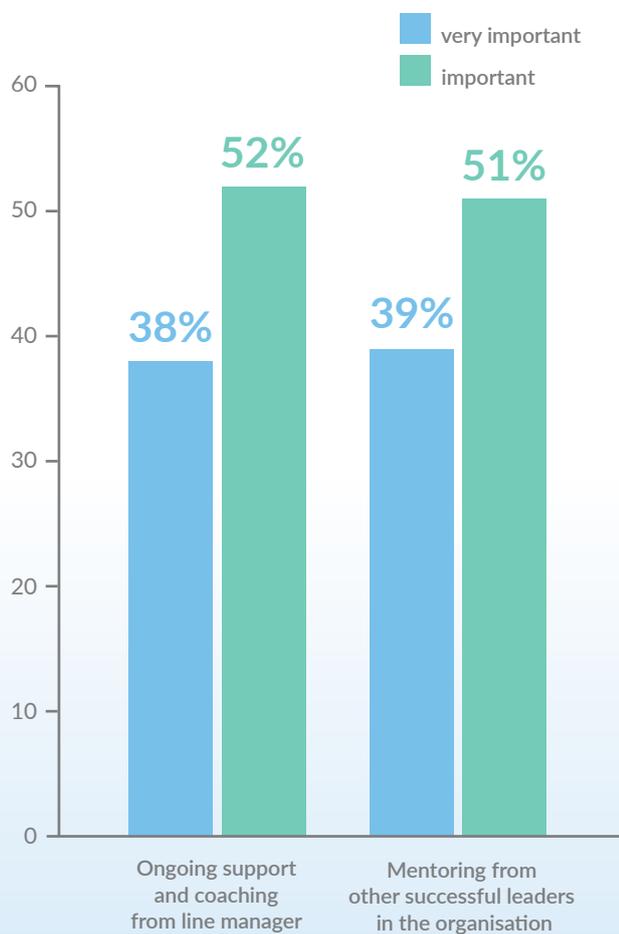
1	Arranging the practicalities	38%	2	Identifying content that is equally applicable across all functions /front lines	37%	3	Identifying the right tools and resources	31%	4	Finding participants for mentor schemes and peer coaching	31%	5	Getting sponsorship from senior individuals	30%
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For all the challenges cited, the respondents provided valuable insight on what works well in leadership development programmes.

What Works Well

The most important elements of a successful leadership development programme are ongoing support and coaching from an individual's line manager.

The most important elements of a successful leadership development programme



Clearly, there is a lot for line managers to grapple with on top of their existing responsibilities. So where should line managers look for support?

Large organisations often employ hundreds – sometimes even thousands – of line managers across the business. Expecting each and every one of these line managers to identify and oversee the development of leadership requires a cohesive, well managed approach to be successful. Yet HR managers could be placing too much expectation on them without providing the correct support.

HR managers should look at developing a strategy and leadership development plan centrally that can be customised and rolled out to support local business needs and cultural differences.

Steps need to be taken to ensure line managers have the right skills and tools themselves to take on the responsibilities of growing future leaders.

HR in the driving seat

To guarantee the successful rollout of an effective leadership development programme, HR leaders need to carefully consider if their approach is meeting the challenges faced by line managers. As much as getting the content and the practicalities are important in developing the leadership programme, training the line managers to play their part is critical to the success of the programme.

Line managers need their own training and support to ensure they can perform their roles in developing future leaders within their own teams or departments. Essentially, their own roles need to be developed in order to satisfy the development of those that they have identified as potential leaders.

37%

of those surveyed recognised that a structured, individual personal development plan was very important

51%

believed that face to face workshops were key elements to a leadership development programme

Not only is it vital that HR leaders get this right in an organisation's HQ, it is prudent that this approach is repeated in each different region or market where the leadership development programme is being rolled out. While this best practice approach should be followed, it is important to ensure that the programme is tailored to each different market or region, taking into account various local and cultural factors.

When asked what resources they used to create leadership training programmes, **53% of the respondents stated they collaborated with external training experts**. What they deemed most important when selecting those external experts, **88% stated that a proven track record within their particular industry was very important along with good customer service**.

However, it is surprising that – despite the rise of globalisation – only 16 percent of HR decision makers say they have a global strategy with localised leadership training programmes.



Conclusion

Growing your own leaders requires a leadership development strategy that has buy-in from business leads and line managers across an entire organisation globally.

To make this a reality, HR professionals must ensure that line managers are fully on-boarded and not simply delegated the task of identifying leaders and expecting them to do the rest. Line managers must be instilled with relevant skills and behaviours to take a global approach to growing future leaders. Furthermore, they must be provided with continued support from both HR leaders and senior functions along the development journey.

As leaders in global leadership training, Business Linked Teams has over 20 years experience delivering training programmes that include multilingual trainers with relevant local knowledge for each given market or region as well as content that is tailored for different global regions and different markets.

Based on the research findings, where 84 percent of those surveyed do not currently have a global strategy in place for training future leaders, it is the opportune moment to open their minds to working with a global training expert who can identify the challenges and overcome the roadblocks to help them grow their own future leaders.



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To discuss the ways in which Business Linked Teams can help you to develop a truly blended learning experience for your business, please visit our website or contact us at **info@businesslinkedteams.com** to talk to one of our experienced team members.



At Business Linked Teams, we specialise in the training and development of people to achieve outstanding business results.

We work internationally to provide a portfolio of training programmes and custom built solutions that will help you to improve your business performance and to unlock the full potential of your people resource.