# Leaders Developing Leaders:

Capitalizing on the Demographic Gift To Revive Your
Leadership Development Program

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   **HARRISON**
*More options. Better results.*

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HUMAN CAPITAL INSTITUTE

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# Leaders Developing Leaders

Capitalizing on the Demographic Gift
to Revive Your Leadership Development Program

## Executive Summary

The Human Capital Institute (HCI) and Lee Hecht Harrison (LHH) partnered to develop an original research report on the topic of "Leaders Developing Leaders," a critical component of any leadership development strategy in today's modern organizations, especially in light of the "Great Recession." "Leaders Developing Leaders" refers to the strategy by which organizations leverage the use of seasoned leaders as in-house coaches and teachers. "Leaders Developing Leaders" programs are built on the theory that senior leaders are uniquely positioned to espouse and teach the leadership values and skills of organizations. In this vein, "Leaders Developing Leaders" is a leadership development program aimed at building the talent pipeline by compelling senior leaders to become the teachers, coaches, and/or mentors for the organization's future leaders.

Especially since the Great Recession, there has been increasing scrutiny on the role and effectiveness of organizational leadership development programs. As the Great Recession thwarted many senior leaders' retirement plans, it has granted organizations a "Demographic Gift"—— companies now have more time with their senior leaders and are in a prime position to learn from their leadership experience. In particular, the emerging leader population in organizations can benefit from this extra time with senior management. However, this "Demographic Gift" comes at a price and with a deadline; the majority of these senior leaders will resume their retirement plans in the next three to five years. Organizations have an opportunity *now* to harness the power and knowledge senior leaders can provide, but must take this opportunity and find ways to integrate that knowledge effectively.

This research suggests that a powerful and compelling solution to this problem is the adoption and/or revamping of a leadership development program established with the concept of "Leaders Developing Leaders" as an essential and guiding principle. Among the benefits of incorporating a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program are the inexpensiveness, scalability, and efficiency it offers. When senior leaders are actively incorporated into the development of emerging leaders, companies reap the benefits. Profitability increases, productivity improves, and employee engagement and organizational culture grow considerably. The value of a well-implemented program is further explored and supported in this research report by several thought leader and Subject Matter Expert (SME) interviews from top leadership organizations.

A 35-item survey exploring current leadership development initiatives, and the specific role of "Leaders Developing Leaders," was developed and distributed to more than 10,000 HCI members to produce the foundational knowledge for this research. More than 400 responses were received from organizations around the world and the data reveal unique challenges facing the Learning & Development space as organizations grapple with the impending talent leadership crisis. Initial findings from the data identified contemporary barriers to effective implementation of a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program. Key findings include:

■ Senior leaders struggle with a lack of time to spend developing others

■ Most leaders are not held accountable for teaching or coaching their employees

■ Many leaders do not have the proper skills or information necessary to be effective mentors or coaches

■ Many organizations lack the appropriate infrastructure and access to information that leaders need in order to effectively participate in development activities

■ Many organizations have an unclear or inconsistent leadership development philosophy that does not properly support and promote a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program

In addition to identifying the barriers and setbacks organizations and leaders face in developing a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program, this research report presents actionable recommendations for overcoming these obstacles. It provides a framework for how to develop, implement, and administer a best practice "Leaders Developing Leaders" program by incorporating the following four important components:

- **Step 1:** Use a Selection Process to Identify Which Leaders Will Develop New Leaders

- **Step 2:** Prepare and Develop Your Seasoned Leaders to Effectively Teach, Coach, and Develop Future Leaders

- **Step 3:** Hold Leaders Accountable for Developing Others Through Assessment

- **Step 4:** Recognize those Leaders Who Do it Well

Including comprehensive *Selection*, *Development*, *Assessment*, and *Recognition* processes provides organizations with the structure to effectively develop the leadership pipeline using in-house seasoned leaders, and removes the barriers that most organizations face when it comes to leveraging senior leaders to actively participate in the development of future leaders.

## About this Research

The following research report was developed in partnership between the Human Capital Institute (HCI) and Lee Hecht Harrison (LHH) between September and October 2010. A survey of 35 items was distributed to approximately 10,000 HCI members. Four hundred and twelve surveys were received from 412 different organizations. The results of the survey form the basis of this research and are summarized in this paper. In addition, several in-depth interviews were conducted with Leadership Development thought leaders from top leadership companies. To supplement the primary research methods described above, HCI researchers also reviewed relevant information from a variety of secondary sources, including white papers, articles, books, interviews, and case studies. Many of these are cited in the report and all are referenced in HCI's *Talent Development Practice Area*, to which interested readers are encouraged to visit for additional reading and online events.

## Defining "Leaders Developing Leaders"

Organizations use a combination of leadership development strategies and programs to build and develop their future leaders. Senior leaders in organizations can play a vital role in the development of future leadership within their organizations by actively teaching, coaching, mentoring, and developing high-potential talent. For the purposes of this research report, we will use the term "Leaders Developing Leaders" to describe the strategy by which organizations leverage their senior leaders as one of the most powerful and effective leadership development tools.

# Introduction

For years, organizations have been concerned about the looming talent crisis, specifically as it relates to the next generation of leaders and whether they will be prepared to lead their respective organizations forward. In response, Learning and Development (L&D) practitioners have proactively designed a whole host of leadership development strategies, processes, and programs to meet the needs of their organizations. Over the past few decades in particular, organizations have implemented leadership development strategies called "Leaders Developing Leaders" programs. These leverage internal, seasoned leaders to teach, mentor, coach, and develop emerging leaders. Effective implementation of these programs has led to increased employee engagement, increased productivity, and a stronger network and supply of organizational leaders.[1, 2, 3] Additionally, succession planning, employee satisfaction, and company profitability have increased with the successful implementation of strong leadership development programs with "Leaders Developing Leaders" at their core.[4, 5]

The topic of leadership development and "Leaders Developing Leaders" has received increased interest of late due to the Great Recession that began in late 2007. This is mainly because it can provide organizations with a low-cost way to effectively build future leadership capabilities and position organizations for the future. However, despite the recognized benefits of such leadership development strategies, organizations continue to struggle with effective implementation and delivery of these programs.

The Human Capital Institute (HCI) and Lee Hecht Harrison (LHH) partnered to develop the following research to examine the state of Leadership Development at this critical economic inflexion point. Specifically, this research sought to uncover the role that "Leaders Developing Leaders" programs can play in providing organizations with an inexpensive opportunity to leverage the strong leadership talent they already have in-house to build and grow a talent pipeline for the future. This research first identifies the common barriers to successful implementation of "Leaders Developing Leaders" programs. It then provides a comprehensive set of actionable recommendations for how organizations can remove those barriers by creating a best practice program featuring four key components for success: *selection*, *development*, *assessment*, and *recognition*.

[1] See McAlearney, A.S. (2008). Using leadership development programs to improve quality and efficiency in healthcare. *Journal of Healthcare Management*, 53 (5), 319–331.

[2] See Wallace, L. & Trinka, J. (2009, June). Leadership and employee engagement. *Public Management*, 10–13.

[3] See Wiley, J.W. (2010). The impact of effective leadership on employee engagement. *Employee Relations Today*, 37 (2), 47–52.

[4] See Armitage, J.W., Brooks, N.A., Carlen, M.C., & Schulz, S.P. (2006). Remodeling leadership: Developing mature leaders and organizational leadership systems (an introduction to the Leadership Maturity Model). *Performance Improvement*, 45 (2), 40–47.

[5] See Kiger, P. (2010, May). Special report on training and development: The leadership formula. *Workforce Management*, 25–31.

*"Leaders as teachers, coaches, and mentors is actually an old, even ancient, concept met with new, vital importance for today's organizations. If you go back in history, the concept began with the earliest civilizations, then with the great philosophers, educators and religious leaders. In the middle ages there were artisans and apprentices. You can go back in history and find many professions practicing the adage of 'see one, do one, teach one.' The leaders as teachers, coaches and mentors concept has evolved through the centuries, but is even more crucial in today's fast-paced, "perform now," organizations.*

– Ed Betof, Author of
*Leaders As Teachers*

## THE SILVER LINING TO THE GREAT RECESSION: "A DEMOGRAPHIC GIFT"

To date, the Great Recession has been longer and deeper than any the U.S. has suffered since World War II. Most notably, in October 2009, unemployment reached a 26-year high of 10.1% and the national jobless rate continues to hover between 9.5% and 10% during this period of ongoing economic instability. The challenges associated with the Great Recession cannot be overstated — the collapse of large financial institutions, the bailout of banks by the national government, downturns in stock markets around the world, and the collapse of the housing bubble, resulting in record numbers of evictions and foreclosures.

One of the hallmark outcomes of the Great Recession was the wave of seasoned executives and leaders who postponed their retirement due to the collapse of the stock market.[6] More than half (55%) of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that current leaders in their organization postponed their retirement plans as a result of the recession. It is rare that we hear of a silver lining to the Great Recession, but with the delay of senior executive retirements comes a "Demographic Gift." This allows organizations to have additional time with seasoned executives and recruit them to actively participate in "Leaders Developing Leaders" programs before their retirement plans resume. As the need for strong leadership grows, taking advantage of this opportunity to tap into the wealth of institutional knowledge and leadership skills is paramount. Organizations must maximize the remaining time they have left with seasoned leaders to build and grow the organization's leaders of the future.

However, this "Demographic Gift" comes at a price and with a deadline. Although the current circumstances have changed, the talent crisis continues to approach. More than half (52%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that current leaders in their organization plan to retire in the next five years, and alarmingly, 79% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that emerging leaders within their organization are not yet prepared to lead. As a return to economic stability resumes, the retirement plans of those seasoned leaders will likely recommence, and a gap in the talent leadership pipeline will be revealed and will pose a risk to organizational success. These findings underscore the sense of urgency around the need for reinvesting in leadership development programs now, before it is too late.

In the past, leadership development initiatives have not fared well in poor economic times. More than half (55%) of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their organizations pared back on L&D programs during previous

[6] See Dickler, J. (2010, September 28). 'I'll work til I die': Older workers say no to retirement. CNN Money. Retrieved October 4 from: http://money.cnn.com/2010/09/28/retirement/older_workers_delay_retirement

recessions. However, something different has happened during *this* recession. Perhaps organizations learned the hard lessons associated with lowering the priority of L&D initiatives from previous recessions, because the data regarding this current recession show that only 44% of respondents' organizations cut L&D spending as a result of the economy, which is significantly less than in previous recessions. Conversely, 26% of organizations actually *increased* their L&D budgets and expanded their leadership development program since the recession began. Thus, it appears that there is a growing recognition on the part of organizations for the need for leadership development initiatives to continue to grow, no matter the economic climate.

Nigel Knowles, CEO of the law firm DLA Piper, elaborates on this shift when he said, "Life isn't quite going to be the same again, and [leaders] have now got to look at where they want to be and how they're going to get there based on 2009, 2010 and beyond, not what their strategy used to be before the downturn."[7]  Our survey data further illustrate this point; nearly half (45%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their organizations plan to increase L&D budgets and initiatives in 2011 in order to better prepare emerging leaders to pilot the economic recovery.

Organizations consistently recognized for their leadership practices, such as GE, Zappos, UPS, Southwest Airlines, and 3M, have bolstered their talent pipelines and increased their leadership development budgets in spite of the weak economy. These companies have continued to be profitable, while the Great Recession wreaked havoc on other industries and organizations.[8]  A *BusinessWeek* article comments, "Culturally, [the best leadership] companies just cannot do away with leadership development, even in a recession. They don't see it as a perk, but as a necessity. [9]

As the workforce population shifts generationally and the key to business success increasingly becomes focused on the talent organizations have and cultivate from within, we are witnessing an important revival in the relative importance that leadership development has in an organization's business strategy. Survey data further suggest this change; out of 38% of respondents whose organizations did not cut or add to their L&D budgets since the recession began, many continued to expand their leadership development offerings in other, inexpensive ways like leveraging the seasoned leaders they already have access to, and by increasing their internal education courses.

[7]  See Milne, R. (2009, September). Leadership beyond a downturn: With some economies beginning to emerge from recession, chief executives need to adjust their strategies for surviving the tough times and start to think about the upturn. *Financial Times, Business Life*, 12.

[8]  See O, Connell, P. (2010, February 16). How companies develop great leaders: Creating a culture of leadership even during crises, chaos, and an economic downturn. *Bloomberg Businessweek, Best Companies for Leadership*, 1–4.

[9]  Ibid.

[10]  See Kiger, P. (2010, May). Special report on training and development: The leadership formula. *Workforce Management*, 25–31.

[11]  See Chavez, M., Tharappan, S., & McWilliam, G. (2008, November). Business is the curriculum, and leaders are teachers. *Chief Learning Officer*, 1, 46–48.

[12]  See Hollis, R.B. (2007). Leader-as-teacher: A model for executive development success. *Organizational Development Journal*, 25 (1), P85-P91.

[13]  See Wiley, J.W. (2010). The impact of effective leadership on employee engagement. *Employee Relations Today*, 37 (2), 47–52.

[14]  See McAlearney, A.S. (2008). Using leadership development programs to improve quality and efficiency in healthcare. *Journal of Healthcare Management*, 53 (5), 319–331.

*"When leaders are really leading effectively, they're finding teachable, coachable and mentoring moments on a daily basis. I call this "in the moment" or "just in time" teaching coaching and mentoring. These are some of the most important opportunities for individuals to lead and for others to learn, grow, develop and perform for the better, and good and great leaders do not miss them."*

Ed Betof, Author of
*Leaders As Teachers*

The greatest benefits organizations hope to achieve through the implementation of a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program are: *"Instilling the leadership values and skills necessary for success at our organization,"* and *"Strengthening the organizational culture and communication."*

# Capitalizing on the Demographic Gift: Key Benefits of "Leaders Developing Leaders"

The need for robust leadership development initiatives has come to the forefront in light of the Great Recession and tentative, and sometimes still debated, economic recovery. An article in *Workforce Management* states, "While the importance of good leaders is apparent to most companies, many aren't clear on how to produce them."

A whole body of empirical research over the course of the past few decades consistently demonstrates that organizations with strong leadership development go farther, faster, and more efficiently.[11, 12, 13] And one researcher found in her study that effective leadership development programs with "Leaders Developing Leaders" as a central component, increase the quality of an organizations' workforce, improves the efficiency of L&D initiatives, reduces turnover, and re-focuses organizational attention on strategic priorities.[14]

Typical benefits that organizations enjoy through the use of a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program are: cost effectiveness, scalability, and greater alignment of L&D programs to strategic business goals. Survey respondents indicated a number of top benefits that they expect to achieve from incorporating "Leaders Developing Leaders" programs at their organization.

Figure 1.0: *What are the key benefits your organization hopes to achieve through the formal involvement of "Leaders Developing Leaders" in your Leadership Development program?*
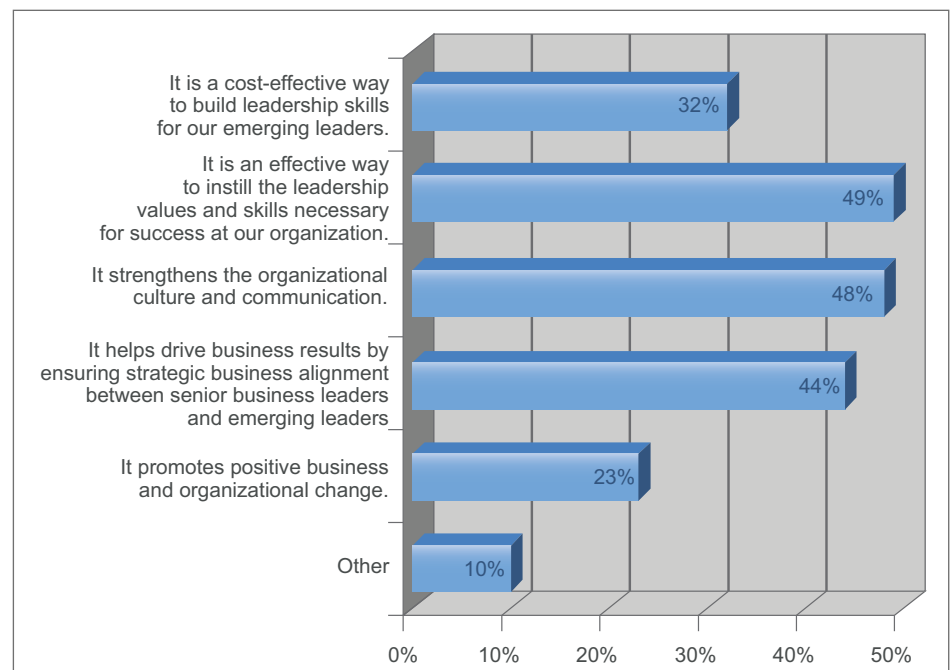
Interestingly, respondents point to the benefit of *"Instilling the leadership values and skills necessary for success at our organization"* as being the top benefit they hope to achieve by implementing a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program in their organization. Therefore, not only does this type of program make sense economically, but it also helps organizations accomplish other objectives equally as important for the business.

Ed Betof, a renowned expert in the field who crafted the nationally-recognized Leaders as Teachers program at Becton Dickinson, is adamant that tapping into the strength of current organizational leaders is the foremost way to build a strong talent bench. Among some of the elements that Betof implemented as part of the program was the use of role modeling, feedback models, network building, and reverse talent scouting. The business results since the implementation of the program nine years ago are staggering — BD's revenue and profit base has more than doubled, it has been awarded several honors by ASTD, Fortune Magazine, and the Center for Creative Leadership, among others, and the company has exceeded its own growth expectations for more than 30 consecutive quarters.[15]

Best practice organizations have "Leaders Developing Leaders" as a centerpiece to their overall leadership development program because it provides both a low-cost, and a highly effective solution to the impending leadership crisis. However, to truly achieve the benefits of a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program, organizations require a fundamental philosophical shift from a *learning* culture to a *teaching* culture. Noel Tichy's *The Leadership Engine*, explains this concept when he writes, "We have looked at winning companies — those that consistently outperform competitors and reward shareholders — and have found that they've moved beyond learning organizations to become teaching organizations…That's because teaching organizations are more agile, come up with better strategies, and are able to implement them more effectively…Teaching organizations do share with learning organizations the goal that everyone continually acquire new knowledge and skills. But to do that, they add the more critical goal that everyone pass their learning onto others…In a teaching organization, leaders benefit just by preparing to teach others. Because the teachers are people with hands-on experience within the organization — rather than outside consultants — the people being taught to learn relevant, immediately useful concepts and skills. Teaching organizations are better able to achieve success and maintain it because their constant focus is on developing people to become leaders."[16]

Investing in L&D initiatives, and specifically in "Leaders Developing Leaders," reflects a company's commitment to leadership development. In turn, this

*"Teaching organizations are more agile, come up with better strategies, and are able to implement them more effectively…"*

Noel Tichy,
*The Leadership Engine*

[15]  See Betof, E. (2009). *Leaders as Teachers: Unlock the teaching potential of your company's best and brightest.* ASTD Press: Alexandria, Virginia.

[16]  See Tichy, N. (2002). *The Leadership Engine.* HarperCollins: New York.

leads to increased employee satisfaction and engagement, resulting in up to 20% higher productivity and profitability.[17] When executed properly, this type of leadership development program simultaneously bolsters the talent pipeline and prepares the organization for future leadership.

## Barriers to the Effective Implementation of "Leaders Developing Leaders" Programs

The design, development, implementation and administration of a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program just makes good business sense. With the ability to achieve such important organizational and talent benefits — cost-effectiveness; instilling the right leadership skills and values necessary for success; strengthening the organizational culture and communication; driving business results by ensuring strategic alignment between leaders and emerging leaders; and promoting positive business and organizational change — one might wonder why all organizations do not have this program at the core of their leadership development strategies.

The greatest barrier to achieving full participation from leaders in a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program is *"A lack of time to teach or coach,"* followed by *"A lack of formally holding leaders accountable for teaching and coaching at their organization."*

Figure 2.0: *What are the top barriers that your organization experiences related to effectively involving Leaders as Coaches/Teachers?*
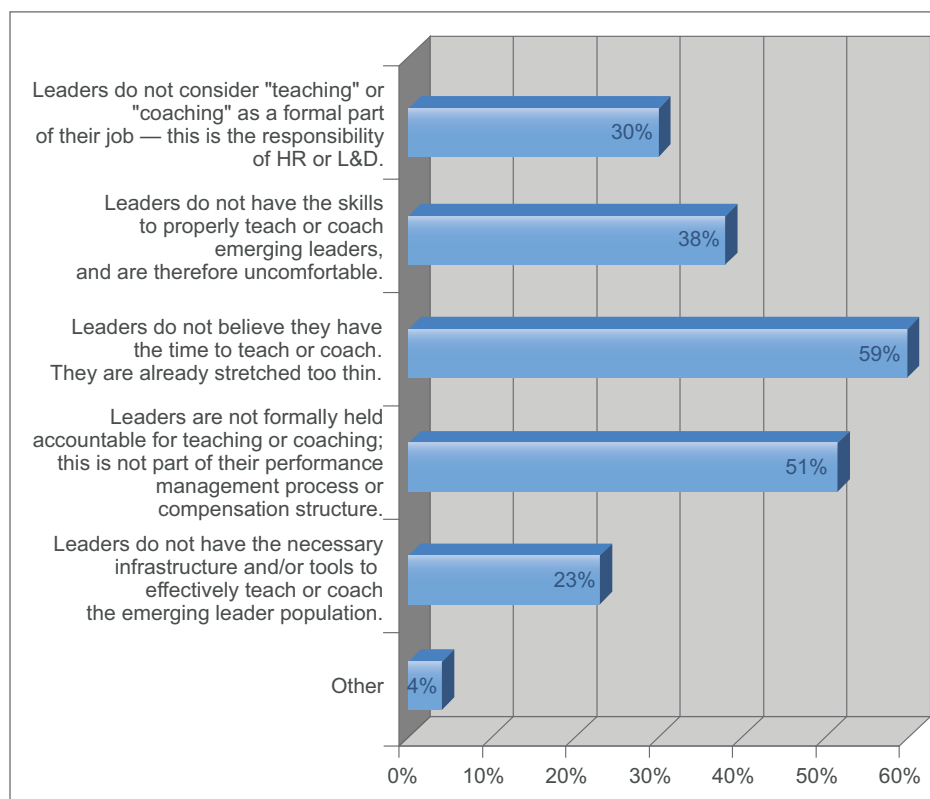


17  See Wallace, L. & Trinka, J. (2009, June). Leadership and employee engagement. *Public Management*, 10-13.

Unfortunately, implementing a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program is more complicated than it appears. Historically, organizations and L&D practitioners have faced challenges associated with truly incorporating seasoned leaders into the leadership development strategy and framework. Our research sought to identify those barriers and develop strategies to remove them once and for all. The following data demonstrate the key barriers that respondents face when it comes to involving an organization's seasoned leaders in the development of emerging leaders.

**Lack of Time.** Survey respondents reported that a *lack of time* (59%) is the primary obstacle that leaders face as it relates to participating in the development of emerging leaders. As a result of the Great Recession, all members of organizations are being asked to do more with less, leaving leaders feeling "stretched too thin" with limited time to spend on developing others and fostering new, emerging leaders. But, certain organizations that have the development of others embedded into their culture tend to prioritize *and* make time for this critical activity.

**Lack of Accountability.** More than half (51%) of survey respondents agreed that organizational leaders are simply not being formally held accountable for their contributions related to developing others. Survey respondents indicated that they expect seasoned leaders to spend a significant portion of their time helping develop the leadership pipeline in their organization, but recognize that the majority of them are not being held responsible for participating in those activities. Without the formal accountability, leaders will not make the time and will not contribute meaningfully to these types of programs — especially given all of their competing priorities.

**Lack of Skills.** In addition to a *lack of time* and *a lack of accountability*, 38% of survey respondents agreed that leaders do not have the skills to properly teach or coach emerging leaders and feel uncomfortable and unsupported to do the work of developing others effectively. A study in *Performance Improvement Journal* argued, "The most highly skilled leaders will fail in an environment that does not provide the infrastructure, culture, and support to realize their leadership objectives. Many organizations' leadership development processes and infrastructure are built on foundations of wet concrete."[18]

**Lack of Interest.** Nearly a third (30%) of survey respondents agreed that one of the top barriers to implementing an effective "Leaders Developing Leaders" program is the fact that leaders do not consider teaching or coaching others as part of their job and think it should be delegated to HR or L&D. This barrier signifies the need for a clearly communicated leadership development philosophy throughout the organization that emphasizes the role of current leaders in the development of new leaders.

*"When a person is in a leadership role at any level in the organization, it makes me wonder: if they are not teaching, coaching or mentoring, how is it that they are leading? Leaders in every organization are busy, but if they are not serving as role models, setting the ethical, strategic and business "tone at the top," passing on knowledge, they are not leading. A very major part of every leader's role is to teach and coach others to achieve high performance levels and to stimulate continuous learning and professional development."*

Ed Betof, Author of
*Leaders As Teachers*

[18] See Armitage, J.W., Brooks, N.A., Carlen, M.C., & Schulz, S.P. (2006). Remodeling leadership: Developing mature leaders and organizational leadership systems (an introduction to the Leadership Maturity Model). *Performance Improvement*, 45 (2), 40–47.

*"Organizations need to equip leaders to be able to share what's possible for employees at their organizations. We've found that employees aren't necessarily looking for a promotion, but they do want to know that their organization will provide them with the opportunity to learn, grow, and move. Employees want the ability to explore career options."*

Kristen Leverone,
Senior Vice President,
Global Practice Leader,
Talent Development,
Lee Hecht Harrison

40% of organizations subscribe to the philosophy that *"All leaders are expected to teach and coach emerging leaders."*

**Lack of Information and Infrastructure.** The development of emerging leaders is a broad concept that spans from developing technical and functional skills and leadership attributes, to advising and guiding emerging leaders' career development. When it comes to leveraging seasoned leaders to contribute to the process of emerging leaders' career development, organizations face similar barriers. In order for emerging leaders to be prepared for future leadership roles in the organization, they need to know what roles might be available to them, what steps in their career ladder (or lattice) they may need to consider, and what competencies are necessary for success. Seasoned leaders can be extremely valuable advisors from this perspective, but they need the information and infrastructure in order to do so effectively. According to the survey data, 23% of respondents indicated that *"Leaders do not have the necessary infrastructure and/or tools to effectively teach or coach the emerging leader population."*

These barriers represent significant obstacles that organizations face in truly incorporating their current leaders into the overall development process of their emerging leader population. While 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that seasoned leaders have a responsibility to play an active role in the development of emerging leaders, a disconnect exists between those expectations and the reality.

Why does this disconnect exist? Perhaps the leadership development philosophy isn't clear enough or hasn't been articulated properly.

**Lack of Consistent Leadership Development Philosophy.** When asked about the philosophy at respondent organizations as it relates to seasoned leaders and their active participation in the development of others, many survey respondents indicated that no clear philosophy exists. Generally, however, organizations tend to subscribe to one of two broad leadership development philosophies:

Figure 3.0: *What best represents the teaching and coaching philosophy related to leaders at your organization?*
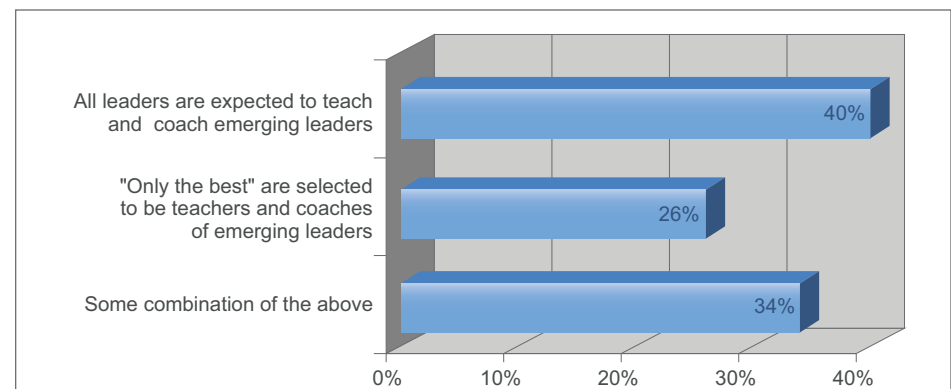
While 40% of survey respondents agreed that *"All leaders are expected to coach and teach"* versus 26% who agreed that *"Only the best are selected to coach and teach,"* more than a third (34%) indicated that their company used a combination of approaches. More than 100 respondents then took advantage of the optional text box and reported that the teaching/coaching philosophy at their organization was not embraced or understood by the whole organization, and more often than not, different teaching/coaching philosophies pertained to different departments and business units.

Without a straightforward, clearly communicated philosophy, it is no surprise that leaders do not necessarily associate the development of emerging leaders with their role expectations. It is difficult to prescribe a philosophy for all organizations as it relates to the leaders' role in developing others because this varies across organizational culture and core values. However, one common thread across top leadership organizations is the recognition that leaders promoting and participating in the development of others must become part of the organizational culture before it can be wholly embraced by participants. "If you really want to build a company that makes your customers more successful, then you have to grow your people," Carl Roetter, Manager of Leadership Development at 3M, said. "There is no alternative. If you acquire the best people and don't invest in them, then don't expect sustained performance."[19]

Top leadership companies have designed programs and processes to seize the opportunity to create more and better organizational leaders. When Jim McNerney became CEO of 3M in 2001, one of his first questions was what 3M was doing to develop leaders. By 2003, McNerney's goal to build leaders from within the company was realized and supported by an L&D program that operated systematically inside 3M and all of its business units. Today, 3M's leadership development program, the Accelerated Leadership Development Program (ALDP), is nationally recognized and uses 3M's own senior leaders as the primary teaching faculty for the program.[20, 21]

Setting a leadership development philosophy with "Leaders Developing Leaders" at its core is the first step in creating a business environment that supports leadership development programs and processes. Southwest Airlines HR Business Partner Peter Gulikers said the 'Southwest way' — having a Warrior Spirit, a Servant's Heart, and a Fun-LUVing Attitude—- is the driving force behind the company. "This philosophy is the essence of everything we do and who we are, but it wasn't until a few years ago that it was defined and added to our formal review process; starting with our senior leadership and naturally working its way down. None of our L&D initiatives work without the support of every level."

> *"If you really want to build a company that makes your customers more successful, then you have to grow your people. There is no alternative. If you acquire the best people and don't invest in them, then don't expect sustained performance."*
>
> Carl Roetter,
> Manager of Leadership
> Development at 3M

[19] See O, Connell, P. (2010, February 16). How companies develop great leaders: Creating a culture of leadership even during crises, chaos, and an economic downturn. *Bloomberg Businessweek, Best Companies for Leadership*, 1–4.

[20] Ibid.

[21] See Alldredge, M.E., Johnson, C., Stoltzfus, J. & Vicere, A.A. (2003). Leadership development at 3M: New process, new techniques, new growth. *Human Resource Planning*, 1, 1–16.

Similarly, GE embraces a leadership philosophy as a cultural imperative of the organization and promotes that vision consistently. CLO Susan Peters said, "All leaders are expected to develop others. And therefore, it is part of the way we will assess and talk about leaders within GE. Some are better than others, but everyone is expected to improve their skills. Even if you're not a direct manager, you are expected to coach and mentor other employees." This sentiment is echoed by Zappos' Senior Operations Supervisor of the Pipeline Team, Roger Dana. "We are big on team leaders building relationships with their team members outside of work because that time really reinforces the idea that leaders care about developing people into more and better leaders." Studies show that many leadership theories must account for the fact that productivity must be improved, but also relationships need to be cultivated in order for a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program to be effective.[22] Top leadership organizations like Southwest Airlines and UPS subscribe to a similar format in which leaders make a concerted effort to create authentic relationships with their employees through more than just formal performance reviews.

## Building a Best-Practice "Leaders Developing Leaders" Program

"Leaders Developing Leaders" is an important component of an overall leadership development strategy at any organization. As mentioned above, it provides an organization with a concrete way to leverage the existing institutional knowledge and leadership skills of seasoned leaders and builds the leadership population for the future. Barriers to successful implementation of a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program are prevalent in organizations today, making it difficult to have a fully-functioning, effective program. Based on an analysis of survey results, interviews with SMEs from leading organizations, and a thorough scanning of best practices in the field of leadership development, the following recommendations comprise a robust "Leaders Developing Leaders" program that can remove the historical barriers to success and achieve the benefits that organizations desperately need at this important inflexion point.

### Step 1: Use a Selection Process to Identify Which Leaders Will Develop New Leaders

Because all leaders are not naturally the best teachers, coaches, facilitators, and mentors —develop a selection process by which your organization can identify individual leaders to participate in the "Leaders Developing Leaders" program. Many "Leaders Developing Leaders" programs fall short because all leaders are not equally strong when it comes to developing others. And while it is important that there is an overarching developmental culture at an organization in which

[22]  See Gentry, W.A. & Leslie, J.B. (2007). Competencies for leadership development: What's hot and what's not when assessing leadership-implications for organizational development. *Organizational Development Journal*, 25 (1), 37–46.

all leaders are expected to develop others, not *all* leaders should be selected to actually teach leadership and technical skills to emerging leaders.

Current "Leaders Developing Leaders" programs tend to have a loosely defined process for selection. When asked whether their organizations currently have a formal selection process with specific criteria to determine which leaders should participate in a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program, 74% of survey respondents reported *"No."*

Establishing a standardized process for selection into the program as a teacher or coach can help to ensure that *"Only the best teach."* The selection process should include a combination of relevant competencies, capabilities, and other criteria that must be met prior to being selected to participate in such a program. Respondents provided a list of the most critical leadership

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Figure 4.0: *Which competencies and capabilities should be identified as necessary for leaders to demonstrate in order to participate in the "Leaders Developing Leaders" program?*
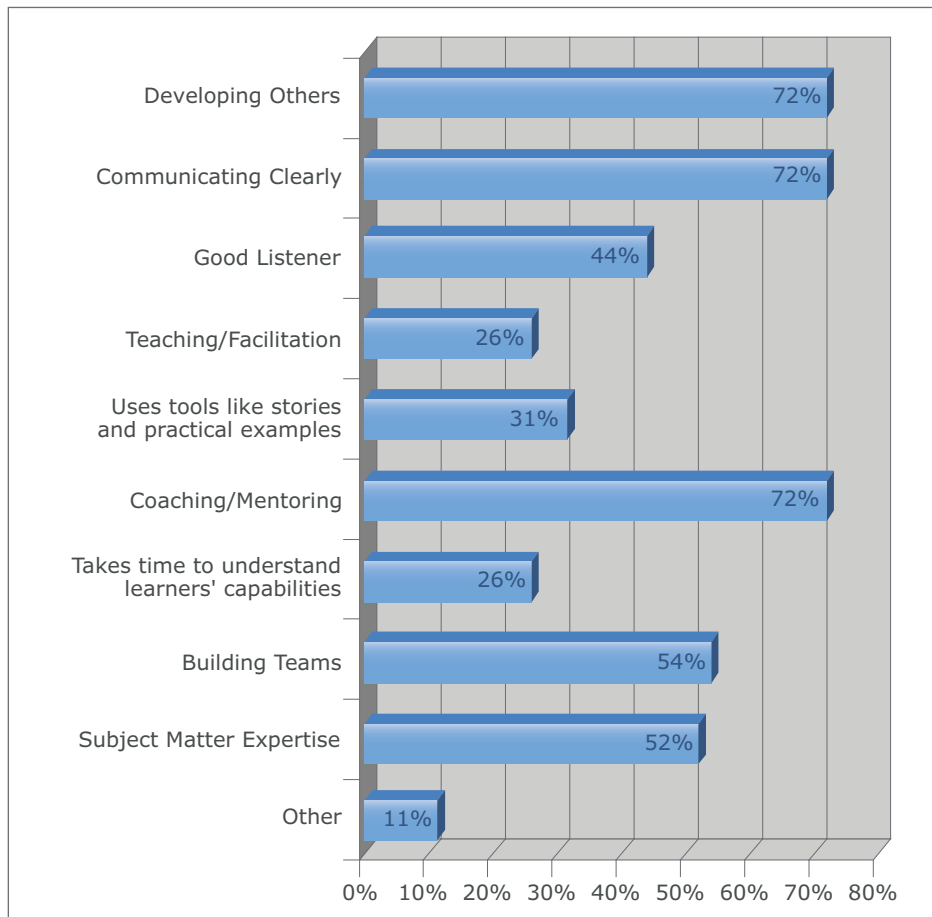


*"Developing Others," "Communicating Clearly," and "Coaching/Mentoring" were deemed the most critical competencies for leaders to demonstrate in order to be selected to participate in a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program.*

competencies necessary for selection and participation in a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program. (Figure 4)

In addition to competencies, respondent organizations were asked what other criteria should be used for selection into the program. (Figure 5)

81% of respondents indicated that the next most important criterion for selection into the "Leaders Developing Leaders" program is "*To be considered a role model in the organization.*"
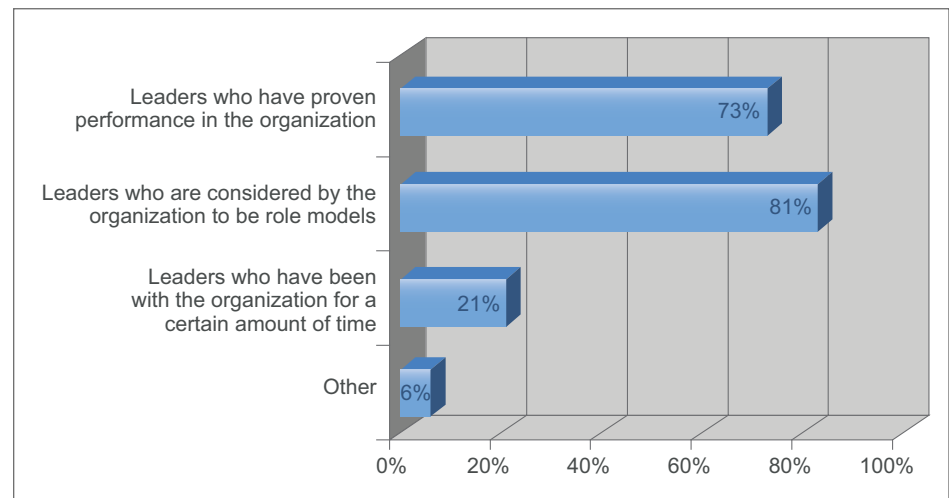
Figure 5.0: *In addition to the competencies and capabilities, what other criteria should be used for selection into the program?*



Part of leveraging senior leaders to teach emerging leaders is the ability of organizations to showcase their top talent and provide role models for emerging leaders. If organizations develop a robust selection process that includes core competencies (e.g., developing others, communicating clearly, coaching/ mentoring, etc.) and other critical criteria (e.g., demonstrates solid performance, is recognized as a role model, etc.), the leaders that participate in the "Leaders Developing Leaders" program will represent the organization's "best."

Furthermore, by implementing a robust selection process to determine which leaders will participate in the "Leaders Developing Leaders" program, an organization can remove the specific barriers described above — *Lack of Interest and Lack of Time.*

## Step 2: Prepare and Develop Your Seasoned Leaders to Effectively Teach/Coach/Develop

Once leaders are selected to participate in the "Leaders Developing Leaders" program, the organization has a responsibility to prepare and develop these leaders appropriately so that they can effectively teach, coach, and develop emerging leaders.

*"It's not just about selection: it's about development. Leaders of the future* must *be nurtured by* their *leaders, who need to make space and provide opportunities for their team members to grow and lead."*

Linda Hill, Professor, Harvard Business School

At 3M, for example, external teaching faculty meets with internal leaders to design a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program together. In this way, senior management has a role in the development of the program they will lead, and it offers them the opportunity to perfect their leadership and communication skills as they relate to developing others. "It's not just about selection: it's about development. Leaders of the future must be nurtured by their leaders, who need to make space and provide opportunities for their team members to grow and lead," Linda Hill, Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School, said.[23]  As referenced above though, one of the main challenges that leaders face when it comes to developing others is the lack of information and infrastructure to do so appropriately.  When asked what information and infrastructure are most important for leaders to have in order to effectively develop new leaders, respondents provided the following responses. (Figure 6)

Figure 6.0: *What information and infrastructure are most important for leaders to have in order to effectively develop new leaders?*
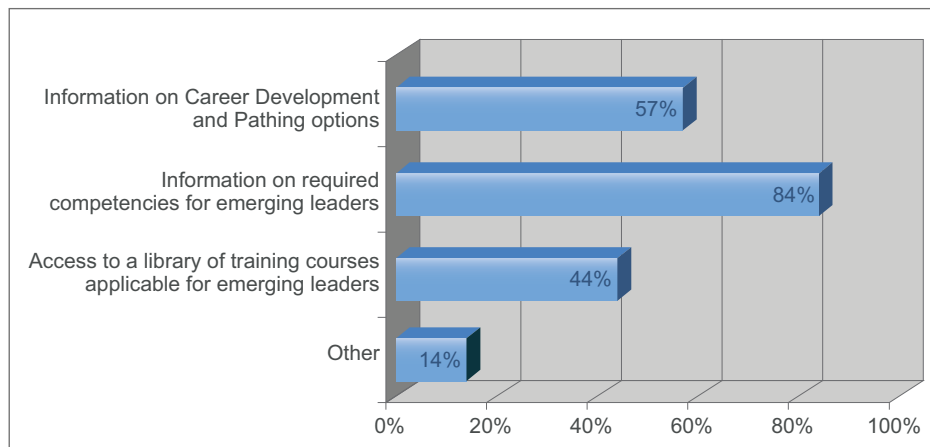


84% of respondents indicated that *"Information on required competencies for emerging leaders"* was the most important information and infrastructure needed for leaders to effectively develop new leaders.

If leaders do not have the tools and information to support the development of emerging leaders, they cannot effectively contribute to their development. L&D practitioners have a responsibility to prepare this information and provide organizational leaders access to it so that they can guide the development of others. Eighty-four percent of respondents reported that information on required competencies for emerging leaders is the most critical tool needed in order to effectively develop new leaders. Once leaders understand exactly what is required for emerging leaders to demonstrate from a knowledge, skills, and abilities perspective, they can coach, teach, and develop emerging leaders around those key areas.

[23]  See Fasten, L. (2008, January). Leadership and strategy: Where will we find tomorrow's leaders? *Harvard Business Review*, 123–129.

*[We] show our employees that they actually have the opportunity to influence their own career pathing and it is a reminder to us that helping people become leaders and develop their careers is just as beneficial for the company."*

Gary Steck,
Corporate Global Talent
Management Director, UPS

Similarly, if leaders are expected to have an active role in the career development of emerging leaders, then they must have the knowledge and tools available to provide specific information on career paths and developmental assignments that are relevant for emerging leaders. More than half (57%) of respondents indicated the need for career development and pathing options in order for leaders to be more effective in their responsibility of developing others.

UPS, which recently restructured its leadership development program, has refocused it so that career development and management is a central component. Career development and management is now a shared responsibility between managers and employees, and one-on-one meetings provide an opportunity for employees to discuss their long-term career goals and ways to best reach them.  As referenced above, nearly a quarter (23%) of survey respondents agreed that a lack of infrastructure is a significant barrier organizations face when trying to build an effective "Leaders Developing Leaders" program, and UPS removed those barriers with robust career management technology aligned to its L&D platform. As managers discuss competency gaps with employees, they can hyperlink to the UPS Learning Center and show employees learning opportunities like aptitude training and job shadowing available at UPS to help them improve those skills.

In addition, UPS built a company-wide model that defined every position within the organization and outlined the compensation structure and organizational incentives and attributes associated with each job. Those discussions occur between managers and employees up to four times a year. "This is a formal meeting where the employee and manager sit down and discuss the development plan created by the employee and produce a timeline to achieve those goals. This shows our employees that they actually have the opportunity to influence their own career pathing and it is a reminder to us that helping people become leaders and develop their careers is just as beneficial for the company," Gary Steck, Corporate Global Talent Management Director at UPS, said.

To address the barrier that current leaders face around *"lack of skills"* — organizations have a responsibility to prepare and develop their leaders to effectively develop future leaders. When asked how respondent organizations prepare and develop their leaders to teach and coach emerging leaders, the following results emerged. (Figure 7)

In terms of the development activities organizations use, 51% of survey respondents indicated that their organization relies on informal teaching and facilitation skills development and ongoing support from L&D professionals. Only 15% of respondents indicated that skill-specific certification programs

Figure 7.0: *How does your organization prepare and develop leaders to teach and coach emerging leaders?*
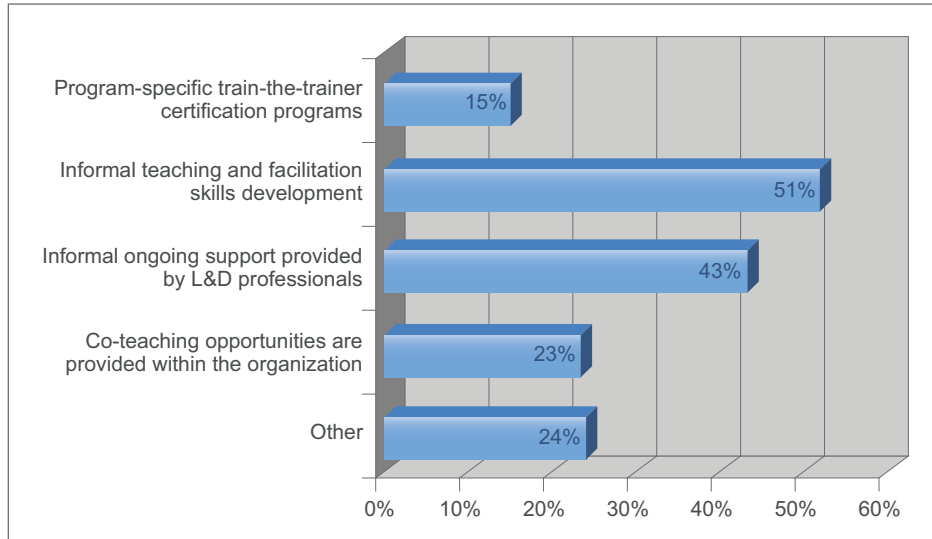


The most common way that organizations prepare their leaders to participate in "Leaders Developing Leaders" programs is through *"Informal teaching and facilitation skills development."*

are used. There are a variety of ways to prepare and train your organization's leaders who will be participating in the "Leaders Developing Leaders" program, but the key is to determine what will be most useful for leaders to make them comfortable and prepared to teach and coach.

Some companies like GE have created their own leadership campuses, like Crotonville, where leaders are fully immersed in an environment created to improve learning and leadership skills like time management, communication and engaging and motivating employees. Leaders cannot teach a leadership course at Crotonville, for example, until they have attended and passed the same course first. This serves as excellent preparation for their own teaching skills.

By contrast, UPS takes a mixed approach and uses third party coaches that help train leaders. "Our senior managers are typically trained by performance schools and they are sidelined by professional facilitators, Gary Steck, Corporate Global Talent Management Director at UPS, said. "Professional facilitators can bring a much better value to the group than someone who just went through training and might have been good or might have been bad at it. They can provide the individual attention to managers to make sure they are actually improving their leadership skills." Many organizations provide co-teaching opportunities within the organization similar to what UPS uses in order to provide the leaders with facilitation support while they deliver the actual teaching or training content.

*"Organizations need to strike the right balance between external and internal facilitators and coaches. Both models provide companies with unique benefits — the key is determining the right approach for a given situation."*

Kristen Leverone,
Senior Vice President, Global
Practice Leader, Talent
Development,
Lee Hecht Harrison

And at 3M, senior managers work with one another and external experts from institutions like Columbia, Wharton, Villanova, Penn State, and the University of Michigan, as well as professional coaches. At the end of the five-day ADLP session, senior leaders at 3M have learned the theory and application behind leadership development initiatives and have shared their own experiences and best practices with one another in a "leaders teaching leaders" format. Since 2003, more than two dozen senior executives from 3M have taught in ADLP because the infrastructure and tools of the program have helped them successfully navigate the task of developing emerging leaders.
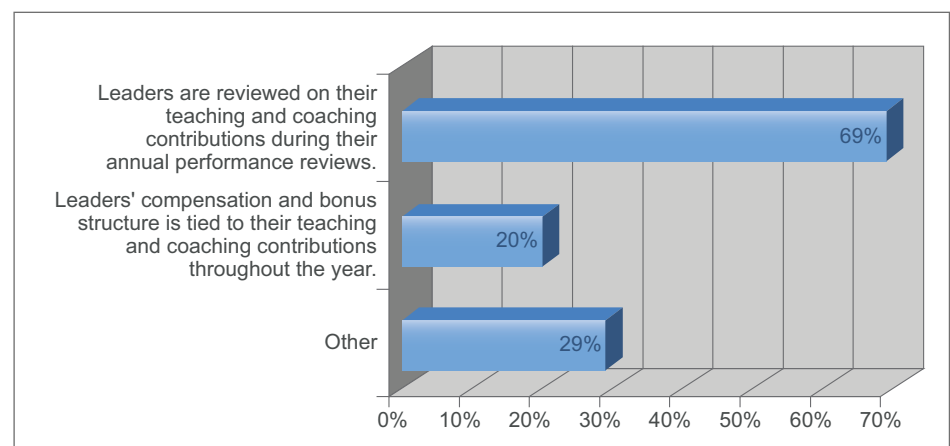
If leaders are provided with the required information and infrastructure, as well as some solid training and facilitation preparation, they will be better positioned to deliver on their role as "Leaders Developing Leaders."

## Step 3: Hold Leaders Accountable for Developing Others Through Assessment

As previously mentioned, 51% of survey respondents feel that their organizational leaders are not being held accountable for their contributions to a leadership development program. This speaks to the barrier around *Lack of Accountability*. If leaders don't see developing others as a critically important part of their role, they will not do it. One way to increase accountability for developing others is to weave this component into the performance review process and regularly assess progress toward fulfilling this expectation. (Figure 8)

Out of those organizations that do hold leaders accountable for the teaching, coaching and/or developing emerging leaders, the majority of them assess

Of those organizations that hold their leaders accountable for the development of others, 69% of respondents indicated that *"Leaders are reviewed on their teaching and coaching contributions during their annual performance reviews."*

Figure 8.0: *In what ways does your organization hold leaders accountable for teaching, coaching, and/or developing emerging leaders?*

leaders on this capability during their performance review. Other organizations have stressed the ability of leaders to effectively develop others in more acute ways. For example, Larry Mohl, Vice President and CLO of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, said 25% of manager bonuses are based on their ability to demonstrate leadership competencies, and, among those leadership competencies, the capability of *Developing Others* is double-weighted. "An effective [Leaders Developing Leaders] program needs structure to give it some intentionality. It is part of that movement toward capitalizing on the investments you have already made in your people," he said.

GE has been consistently recognized for its ability to develop strong leadership pipelines due to its history of investing in its people. CLO Susan Peters said the assessment/performance review component at GE is built into the leadership culture, and is therefore not a threatening proposition for leaders. "Most of the leaders want to do this. They understand that [building leaders, developing people] is what GE is about," she said. In a performance review setting, senior leaders meet with the CEO and CLO and discuss specific predetermined attributes such as their capability for developing others and their ability to apply learning and strategize actions using such information.

There are a variety of ways to hold leaders accountable for their contributions related to developing others, but it is imperative that leaders are assessed on clearly defined competencies and characteristics, and that those elements are made measurable and quantifiable. This concept reiterates the need for upfront, unambiguous information regarding leadership competencies and attributes so leaders can be fairly and accurately evaluated on their contributions to the organization.

## Step 4: Recognize those Leaders who do it well

The last critical component of a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program is to proactively and consistently recognize strong leaders who develop others. This involves the incorporation of meaningful methods of acknowledgement and appreciation to provide incentives for continued participation and high performance in the "Leaders Developing Leaders" program.

Recognition goes a long way in cultivating a culture of "Leaders Developing Leaders," and ensuring that the culture supports such efforts is vital to the program's longevity and effectiveness. A decade-long study reported reported in the *Washington Post* said that 65% of North Americans indicate that they didn't receive recognition at work at all in the previous year, and 79% of employees who quit their jobs cite a lack of appreciation as a key reason for leaving. Organizational psychologist Joyce Russell writes, "When employees know their

*"An effective [Leaders Developing Leaders] program needs structure to give it some intentionality. It is part of that movement toward capitalizing on the investments you have already made in your people."*

Larry Mohl,
Vice President and CLO,
Children's Healthcare of
Atlanta

*"Leaders recognize that the success of the company is predicated on their employees' success and we recognize and celebrate the employees who drive those accomplishments."*

Peter Gulikers,
HR Business Partner,
Southwest Airlines

Of those organizations that recognize leaders for their developing others, the most common method of recognition is through *"Internal organization-wide announcements"*

strengths and potential will be praised and recognized, they are more likely to produce value."[24] These lessons can be applied to a "Leaders Developing Leaders" program as well. The more public recognition associated with "Leaders Developing Leaders," the more leaders will be interested in participating in the program and find value from their participation through recognition on the broader organizational stage.

Survey respondents were asked whether their organization publicly recognizes leaders who effectively coach, teach, and/or develop emerging leaders and surprisingly, 75% indicated that they do not. However, of those that did, we asked which recognition methods have been used:

Figure 9.0: *How are strong leaders who develop emerging leaders recognized in your organization?*
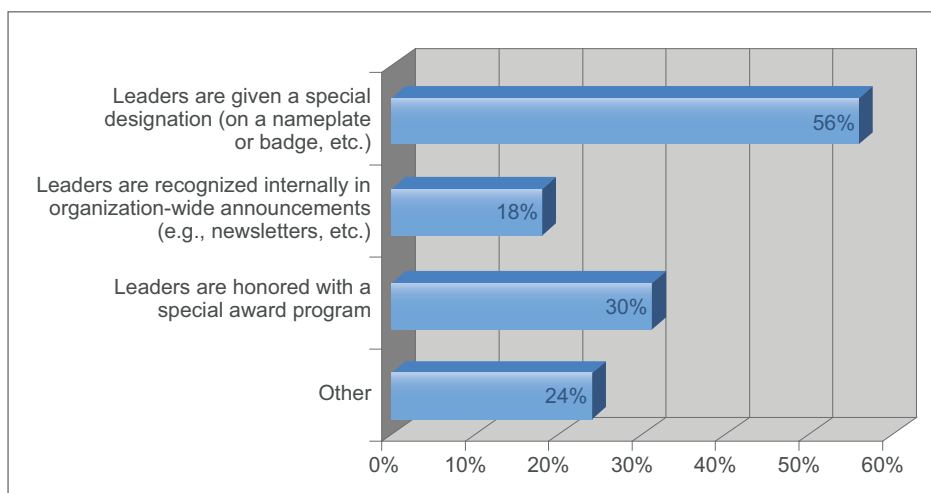


Survey respondents indicated that leaders are most often recognized through internal organization-wide announcements. Thought leaders shared some innovative techniques around recognizing strong leaders in the area of developing others. At UPS, L&D initiatives include an online forum and virtual UPS Learning Center where employees can share their experiences and improve their leadership skills. In addition to recognizing leaders who are adept at developing others and illustrating the six leadership attributes the company emphasizes, UPS also uses recognition to encourage employees to take advantage of the UPS Learning Center. "We are fortunate as a large organization to be able to use recognition, such as free tickets to events, Ipad giveaways and the like, to create awareness of our learning platforms. The message we are sending is that people should feel comfortable with going in and using the Learning Center and some of our other leadership development programs.

[24] See Russell, J.E. (2010, October 25). Career coach: Recognition not only boosts employees, but can also give a lift to the bottom line. *The Washington Post*, 23.

Recognition is helping us grow a leadership culture at UPS," Corporate Global Talent Management Director Gary Steck said.

Recognition plays an imperative role in building an organizational culture that values the individual input of employees. Southwest Airlines acknowledges the contributions of its employees by celebrating their achievements with them. "Leaders [here] recognize that the success of the company is predicated on their employees' success and we recognize and celebrate the employees who drive those accomplishments," Peter Gulikers, an HR Business Partner at Southwest, said. Consider designing a recognition program that is performance-based and ensuring alignment with the rest of your company's values and leadership culture, and then training managers to provide recognition to employees who are doing a good job.

At GE, great leaders are formally recognized by being given the opportunity to teach at Crotonville and are honored at company dinners. Above-and-beyond recognition does not have to occur as frequently as informal means of recognition, but it represents a company-wide perspective on how good leadership is rewarded, and is therefore equally necessary to building an effective "Leaders Developing Leaders" program.

## Conclusion

The talent and leadership crisis is still looming, although it has been postponed due to the delay of senior leaders' retirement. Organizations have been given a "Demographic Gift" to leverage the strong, experienced leaders they have internally to help create a leadership pipeline for the future. As we enter into a slow and steady economic recovery, one thing is for sure — leadership development needs attention now more than ever.

"Leaders Developing Leaders" programs can provide organizations with a low-cost, highly effective opportunity to teach, coach, mentor, and develop the leaders of tomorrow. The benefits associated with these programs include the ability to instill the leadership values and skills necessary for success in the organization; strengthen the organizational culture and communication; drive business results by ensuring strategic business alignment between senior business leaders and emerging leaders; and promote positive business and organizational change.

In order for organizations to design, develop, implement, and administer an effective "Leaders Developing Leaders" program — they must remove the historical barriers associated with developing others that leaders commonly

*"We are fortunate as a large organization to be able to use recognition, such as free tickets to events, Ipad giveaways and the like, to create awareness of our learning platforms. The message we are sending is that people should feel comfortable with going in and using the Learning Center and some of our other leadership development programs. Recognition is helping us grow a leadership culture at UPS."*

Gary Steck,
Corporate Global Talent
Management Director, UPS

face. These barriers include: a lack of time; lack of formal accountability; lack of skills needed for facilitation and teaching; lack of interest and understanding of how this element is a critical part of leadership role expectations; the lack of necessary information and infrastructure; and the lack of a consistent leadership development philosophy across the organization.

"Leaders Developing Leaders" programs can indeed be successful if they are developed with four key components in mind: *selection, development, assessment,* and *recognition*. By incorporating these four elements into the overall program, organizations can reap all of the aforementioned benefits and continue to build a strong and enduring leadership pipeline for the future.

# Leaders Developing Leaders

Capitalizing on the Demographic Gift to Revive Your Leadership Development Program

## Appendices

## Appendix A: About the Research Partners

### The Human Capital Institute

The Human Capital Institute (HCI) is a catalyst for innovative new thinking in talent acquisition, development, deployment and new economy leadership. Through research and collaboration, our global network of more than 138,000 members develops and promotes creativity, best and next practices, and actionable solutions in strategic talent management. Executives, practitioners, and thought leaders representing organizations of all sizes, across public, charitable and government sectors, utilize HCI communities, education, events and research to foster talent advantages to ensure organizational change for competitive results. In tandem with these initiatives, HCI's Human Capital Strategist professional certifications and designations set the bar for expertise in talent strategy, acquisition, development and measurement. www.hci.org

### Lee Hecht Harrison

With over 270 offices worldwide, Lee Hecht Harrison is the global talent development leader in connecting people to jobs and helping individuals improve performance. LHH assists organizations in supporting restructuring efforts, developing leaders at all levels, engaging and retaining critical talent, and maintaining productivity through change. Lee Hecht Harrison is a part of Adecco Group, the world leader in workforce solutions with over 6,000 offices in over 70 countries and territories around the world. For more information, please visit LHH.com.
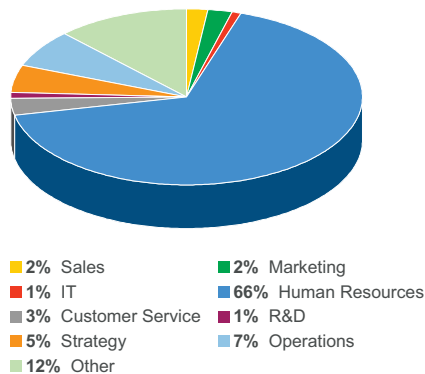
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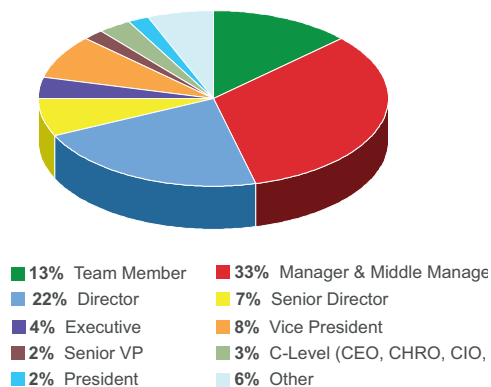
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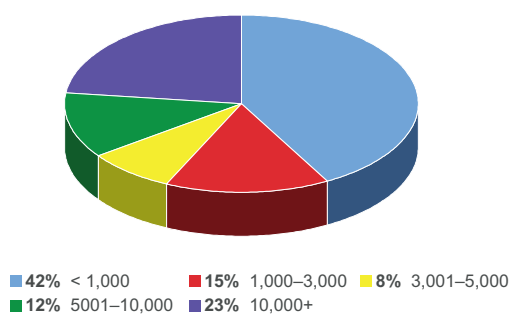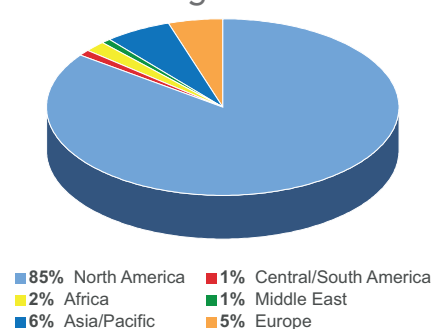
# APPENDIX B: RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

## Function



- **2%** Sales
- **1%** IT
- **3%** Customer Service
- **5%** Strategy
- **12%** Other
- **2%** Marketing
- **66%** Human Resources
- **1%** R&D
- **7%** Operations

## Level



- **13%** Team Member
- **22%** Director
- **4%** Executive
- **2%** Senior VP
- **2%** President
- **33%** Manager & Middle Manage
- **7%** Senior Director
- **8%** Vice President
- **3%** C-Level (CEO, CHRO, CIO,
- **6%** Other

## Size



- **42%** < 1,000
- **12%** 5001–10,000
- **15%** 1,000–3,000
- **23%** 10,000+
- **8%** 3,001–5,000

## Global Region



- **85%** North America
- **2%** Africa
- **6%** Asia/Pacific
- **1%** Central/South America
- **1%** Middle East
- **5%** Europe

## Industry

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aerospace & Defense | 2% | Personal & Household Goods | 1% |
| Automobiles & Parts | 1% | Pharma/Life Sciences | 2% |
| Chemicals | 1% | Professional Services | 12% |
| Construction & Materials | 1% | Real Estate | 1% |
| Financial Services | 8% | Retail | 4% |
| Food & Beverage | 2% | Utilities | 3% |
| Government | 8% | Technology | 9% |
| Healthcare | 12% | Other | 17% |
| Industrial Goods & Services | 4% | | |
| Insurance | 5% | | |
| Media | 1% | | |
| Non-profit/Charity | 2% | | |
| Oil and Gas | 3% | | |

## Revenue

| | |
|---|---|
| < $10 million | 13% |
| $10-50 million | 15% |
| $50-100 million | 7% |
| $100-500 million | 11% |
| $500-750 million | 4% |
| $750 mill-1 billion | 7% |
| $1-10 billion | 18% |
| $10-50 billion | 7% |
| $50-100 billion | 3% |
| >$100 billion | 1% |
| N/A — Government or Non-profit | 14% |

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