

# DEVELOPING A RETURN ON LEADERSHIP

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## RESEARCH SUMMARY WHITE PAPER

Based on a study by HarperCollins Leadership and the John Maxwell Company

With excerpts from *The Leader's Greatest Return* © 2020 John C. Maxwell

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The document you're holding in your hands is the result of a partnership between my team and my publisher, HarperCollins Leadership. When we first sat down to discuss ways to launch my book, *The Leader's Greatest Return*, one of the things we wanted to do was get some data from the people who were in the trenches leading day to day. The results were very informative.

One of the key themes—and key reasons—for *The Leader's Greatest Return* is the acknowledgement of our current leadership deficit. Simply put, we don't have enough leaders! Not in business, or politics, or any of the streams of influence within culture.

As you'll see in the study results, we have a lot of formal processes in place for developing new leaders, and yet we're still feeling the leadership gap. That's the bad news.

The good news is that leadership gap is closing.

It won't happen overnight, and it won't happen easily, but when you look at the study data you see that there are plenty of young leaders who are already doing the work of developing other leaders. **42% of survey participants have been leading for less than five years, and yet over 80% of the participants are currently mentoring someone else in leadership!** We are answering the call to develop more and stronger leaders, and I am excited for the opportunity to keep the momentum rolling.

Our hope is you'll use this study to inform and inspire your leadership development—both as a student and as a teacher. We want you to do your part to close the leadership gap, and we're thrilled to offer you some of *The Leader's Greatest Return* to help kickstart your motivation.

Thanks for reading, and thanks for being willing to be a leader who develops other leaders.

Your friend,

John C. Maxwell



## Organizations that stop growing leaders, stop growing.

If you want to be a great leader, you need to start leading your leaders. Intrinsic in great leaders is an intentional identifying, equipping, and empowering of people who have the potential for leadership roles in their organizations. Great leaders know that any organization's success, whatever its calling or business-type, is dependent upon utilizing the maximum potential and skills of all their team members. Our organizations need new leaders who perform above and beyond their call, new leaders that can take our organization's daily challenges and, with wisdom and measured rationale, make decisions that will benefit bottom-line things like profits, goals, and impact. We need new leaders who value our organization enough that they too will follow us in raising up other new leaders among their ranks.

But where do we find these new leaders? Well, they don't just come about. New leaders need the help of experienced leaders like you. To be an effective leader, they must be forged in the fires of strong mentoring, instruction, and advice. They must practice the art of leadership through relationships and model wiser, more experienced leaders who are willing to help shape them into what they can become. As the saying goes, good leaders aren't born, they're made.

"Making" these new leaders yields significant benefits to our organizations too. This intentional mentoring of new leaders not only creates a legacy of leadership in an organization, but it also can help the organization increase its productivity, efficiency, and overall effectiveness. Most importantly, when we intentionally cultivate a culture of leadership, it can help the organization grow into the ultimate vision that it has for itself. In fact, it is the only thing that truly can.

## Our world needs good leaders. Just managing is not enough.

Here's the problem: our world lacks good leadership. What we have a lot of in our fast-pace, high-stress world is management. Managers many times are chosen for a variety of reasons—how long they've been at the company, their knowledge, and their backgrounds, but often leadership is not a deciding factor. The cultivation of good leadership skills takes time and intention, and unfortunately many organizations have not taken the time to help cultivate these skills in their managers. In a September 9th, 2018 article in *Forbes* entitled "The Real Crisis in leadership", Rasmus Hougaard cites a revealing Gallup poll. The poll, from 2016, found that more than 80% of managers in the US lack the ability to effectively lead. The estimated cost for this deficiency in corporate leadership? According to Gallup, every year this costs businesses in the US an estimated \$550 billion dollars.

The very nature of leadership is to influence relationships, to lead people to do their utmost for their organization. It is a mistake to assume that leaders solely need followers to fulfill their vision for their company. Instead, what they need is other subordinate and complementary leaders that have the potential and the willingness to sit at the table with them and help guide their company to do great things. As a leader, the time you take to bring people to this leadership table will compound. You'll see leaders that you mentored grow into mentoring other leaders, and as these new leaders help grow your organization, you'll see a shift from an organization that merely manages to an organization that leads.

## A guide to help you lead your leaders

At the beginning of the year, HarperCollins Leadership surveyed several leaders from around the world from ages 25-59. These leaders came from small businesses and large businesses. They operated for-profit and non-profit organizations. They had an annual revenue of under 1 million to revenue that is over 250 million. We wanted to find out who was mentoring new leaders, how they were mentoring them, and how effective their direct and indirect mentoring strategies were.

What follows is a guide that visually portrays the data from the nearly fifty survey questions that we asked our respondents. In addition to these data charts, several insightful articles are peppered throughout that we hope will deepen your understanding on how necessary it is to seek out and cultivate new leaders in your sphere of influence. The articles can be found on the following pages:

**Page 5 – Identifying and Attracting Leaders: Find Them So You Can Develop Them**

**Page 7 – Understanding Leaders: Connect with Them Before You Lead Them**

**Page 9 – Motivating Leaders: Encourage Them to Give Their Best**

**Page 11 – Equipping and Empowering Leaders: Train Them to Be Great at Their Job and Release Them to Reach Their Potential**

**Page 20 – Positioning Leaders: Team Them Up to Multiply Their Impact**

**Page 22 – Mentoring Leaders: Coach Them to the Next Level**

**Page 29 – Reproducing and Compounding Leaders: Show Them How to Develop Leaders to Receive the Highest Return Leadership**

**Page 32 – Return on Leadership Influence**

**Page 38 – About the Participants**

Many of these articles are abridged versions of passages from John Maxwell's new upcoming book, *The Leader's Greatest Return*. This book serves as a deep dive into how to strategically identify, attract, motivate, equip, empower, reproduce, and compound these leadership qualities in new leaders in order to yield the highest possible returns.

We hope this guide will help you as you seek to locate potential leadership candidates in your ongoing work as a leader. Seeing how other leaders are mentoring those up-and-coming leaders in their organizations and how they're helping them to grow in their experiences and responsibilities, we hope will serve as a call to all experienced leaders to seek out these rich mentoring relationships. We believe that this is a many-times untapped but vital role that leaders need to perform to better their organizations. As leaders, our concern should be for the continued vitality and growth of our organizations, and there is no better way to accomplish this than to cultivate and grow the potential leaders in our midst.





## Identifying and Attracting Leaders: Find Them So You Can Develop Them

One of my favorite activities when I speak is answering specific questions from the leaders in the audience. Recently, at a conference, someone asked how I developed good leaders. “First,” I responded, “you need to know what a good leader looks like.”

I know that may sound simplistic, but it’s true. And I’ve found that most people have a difficult time describing what a good leader— or good potential leader—looks like. How can people find something they can’t identify? As speaker, I do a lot of traveling. And often my host will send a driver to pick me up from the airport. Over the years, I’ve found there are two types of people who look for me. The first stands near baggage claim, holding a sign or iPad showing my name. I have to go over and find that person and identify myself. The second type of person comes over and finds me as I step off the escalator and says, “Hi, Mr. Maxwell. I’m here to take you to your hotel.”

I’ve never met either of these people, yet the second type is able to find me. How? They recognize me from a photograph they’ve found in one of my books or on a website. They took the time to be proactive and know who they’re looking for.

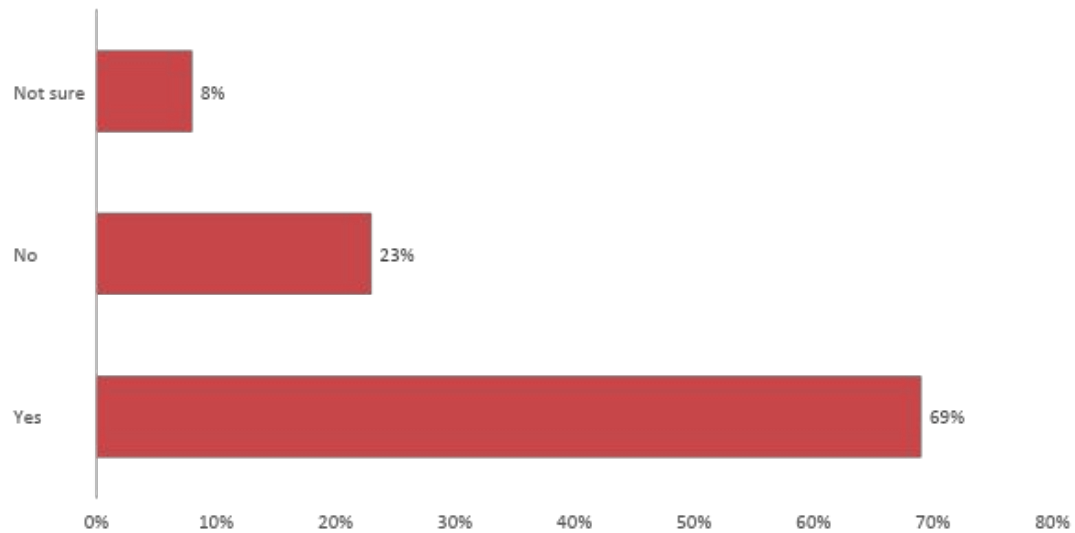
As you prepare to develop leaders, which type of person do you want to be? Do you want to know what you’re looking for in potential leaders and be able to find them? Or do you want to hold up a sign and hope somebody comes and finds you? It’s your choice. Every person you bring onto your team will make you either better or worse. And every leader you develop will do the same.

Many of the richest experiences I have enjoyed in my life occurred around a table. That started when I was a kid and my parents, brother, sister, and I ate dinner around the table at home. That was always a gathering place of joy in my life. And as I’ve gotten older, tables have been places where transformation occurs for myself and others.

One of my favorite tables is the leadership table because it can be a community of growth for future leaders. Obviously in this case, the leadership table doesn’t have to be a literal table. Having a leadership table means creating a place in your organization or on your team where people have a place to learn, an opportunity to practice leadership with its successes and failures, and a chance to shine.

Having a leadership table with open seats is perhaps the best way to attract leaders, not only within an organization, but also from outside. Why? Because nothing is more attractive to a potential leader than to be asked to sit at the leadership table. People with leadership potential want to spend time with leaders. They want to observe good leadership. They want to talk about it. They want to experience it. It fires them up. A true leadership table is a place where anyone with the desire to lead and the willingness to learn can sit and become part of your leadership team.

**Does your organization have a formal, consistent process for identifying and inviting new leaders into leadership roles?**





## a

In 2004, the Coca-Cola Company was in trouble. Seven years before, Coke chairman and CEO Roberto Goizueta died, ending his sixteen-year leadership of the organization. Under his leadership, the company had risen in market value from \$4 billion to more than \$150 billion. Goizueta had been only the ninth chairman since its founding. But after his death, Coke had not done nearly as well. And in the seven years leading up to 2004, two CEOs had failed to lead the company successfully.

On May 4, 2004, Coca-Cola announced that Neville Isdell would be its new chairman and CEO. Isdell had not expected to be recruited for the position. In all his years at Coke, despite his success, he had not been considered for the CEO position. Experts, investors, and the Wall Street Journal were skeptical. They did not believe Isdell could return the company to consistent growth.

But others who knew him well had confidence. “Neville knows the business backwards and forwards, inside and out, and he is the best person to run Coke, bar none,” said Emanuel Goldman, a beverage industry consultant in Hillsborough, California. “And his interpersonal skills are fantastic, he makes everyone who meets him feel good.” On his first day back at Coca-Cola headquarters in Atlanta, Isdell told the employees, “It’s all about you. It’s all about the people.” They were glad to hear it, but he wasn’t sure they believed it. In an interview several years later, Isdell said, “We had not been making our goals for a number of years. We had to deliver, but I needed to invest as well; I needed to regain the commitment of our people. I made it clear that I was here to take long-term action, and that I wanted to go out and listen and communicate before making a lot of changes.” He decided to go on a listening tour. He had been gone from Coke for only three years, but he was not going to take anything for granted. He wanted to connect with key leaders and understand them and their problems firsthand. He said, “We joked that the company had become a ‘feedback-free zone,’ and we knew that had to change.”

The first thing he did was travel to Chicago to repair the relationship with McDonald’s, which another executive had damaged. He then flew to the West Coast to meet with Coca-Cola board member Peter Ueberroth to get his advice. He then flew to India and China. Then to Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro. Then to Spain. Most of what he heard wasn’t good. Relationships with bottlers and partners were not good. There were lawsuits. Coke’s reputation with the public was tarnished.

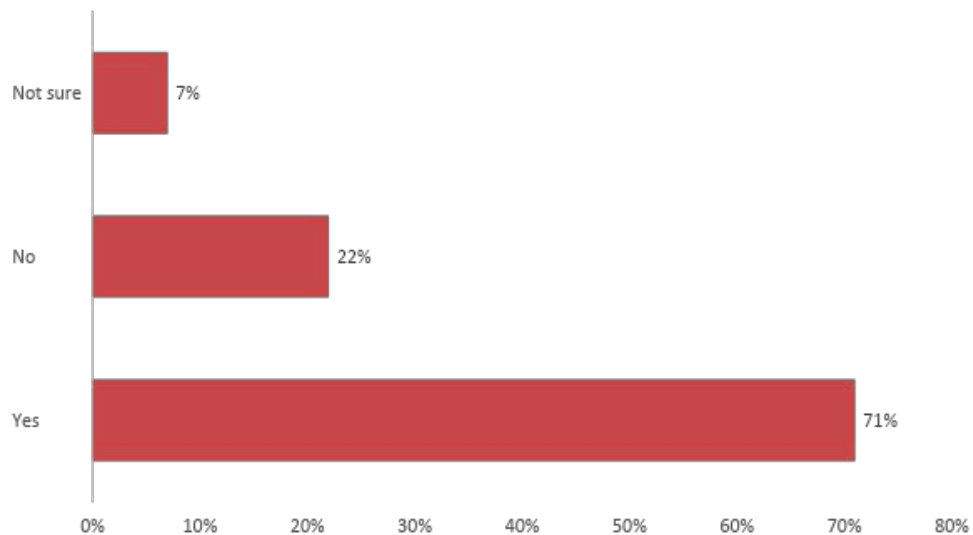
In August of that year, Isdell gathered his direct reports and the top 150 executives of Coca-Cola in London, determined to get their input for a plan to take the company forward. Isdell said:

**“We were going to develop a total growth plan for the company, not just new strategies and a mission statement. . . . It would not be dictated from on high but developed organically by the company’s top leaders who had been disheartened by layoffs, lawsuits, a game of musical chairs in the CEO’s office, and a lingering slump in profits.”**

After their meeting in London, Isdell said, “Now, we had that at Coca-Cola . . . For the first time, our allies were

the employees we needed most to achieve our goals. It became their plan; they owned it and believed in it.” After getting Coke going in the right direction, Isdell actively worked to prepare his own successor, Muhtar Kent, to take his place. Gregory Kesler reported, “Isdell’s leadership, along with that of Muhtar Kent, the successor he helped identify and develop, has enabled the business to meet its growth targets 11 quarters in a row.” According to Isdell, all of this wouldn’t have occurred if he didn’t take the time to listen to his employees. He went on to say, “A company can’t succeed unless it has its employees behind it. They have to be convinced that the leadership truly has their best interests at heart and can win for them.”

## **Does your organization have a formal, consistent process for capturing feedback from leaders and potential leaders?**







## Motivating Leaders: Encourage Them to Give Their Best

One of the questions leaders ask me most is, “How can I motivate my people?” There’s a good reason for that. Every leader’s organization or team possesses people who seem to lack motivation. It’s difficult to get them moving, and if you do succeed, it’s only a matter of time until they slow back down again. If getting them to move isn’t a big enough challenge, keeping them moving is. It can be exhausting.

Daniel Pink has written an excellent book on motivation, called *Drive*. He opens the book by recounting an experiment with rhesus monkeys conducted in 1949 by psychology professor Harry F. Harlow and two colleagues at the University of Wisconsin. Harlow; his wife, Margaret; and Donald Meyer wanted to gain insight into how the primates learned, so they conducted an experiment in which the monkeys were given a puzzle to solve. But the three behavioral scientists learned something unexpected about motivation.

At that time, the scientific community attributed motivation to either biological needs or external incentives. They believed internal biological motivation came down to the desire for food, water, or sex. The external motivations came from rewards and punishments. But what they discovered was that the monkeys in their experiment solved the puzzle they were given simply for the enjoyment of completing the process.

Pink says Harlow’s conclusion, which was a radical notion at the time, was that primates, including humans, possessed a third driving factor in motivation. Performing a task could provide its own intrinsic reward: “The monkeys solved the puzzles simply because they found it gratifying to solve puzzles.”

Human motivation also seems to operate by laws that run counter to what most scientists and citizens believe. From the office to the playing field, we thought we knew what got people going. Rewards—especially cold, hard cash—intensified interest and enhanced performance. But what researcher Edward Deci found, and then confirmed in two additional studies he conducted shortly thereafter, was almost the opposite of what we assume. “When money is used as an external reward for some activity, the subjects lose intrinsic interest for the activity,” he wrote. Rewards can deliver a short-term boost—just as a jolt of caffeine can keep you cranking for a few more hours. But the effect wears off—and, worse, can reduce a person’s longer-term motivation to continue the project. . . . One who is interested in developing and enhancing intrinsic motivation in children, employees, students, etc., should not concentrate on external-control systems.”

I think anyone who has ever enjoyed doing a task for its own sake—playing golf, learning to play a song, building a ship in a bottle—would think this makes sense.

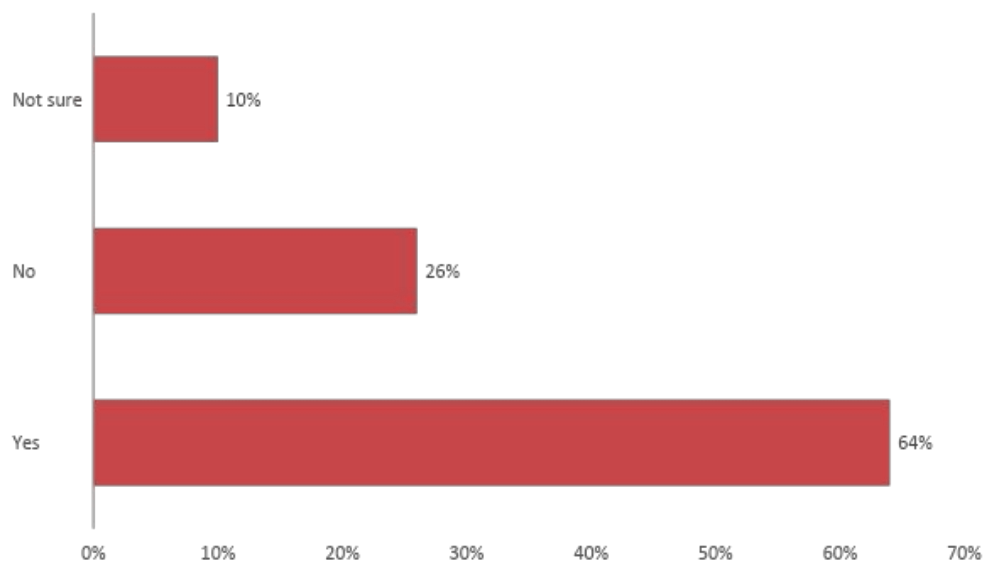
Now, back to the question I mentioned at the beginning. When people ask me how I motivate my people, my answer is that I don’t. I don’t try to push or pull people. Instead, I try to inspire people and help them find their own motivations. That means I must first find my own motivations and model the behavior I want to see in the people I lead. Good leaders inspire others only to the extent that they inspire themselves. Then I work to help them discover their own internal motivation. I encourage them to fan that spark into a roaring fire. Finally, I try

to coach them to a place where tapping into their own internal motivation is a habit.

This process depends on knowing your team members individually. You must connect with them, understand them, and know what makes them tick. You may even have to help them better understand themselves. That can't be done impersonally. Inspiring others comes as a result of earning their attention, and that happens when you pay close attention to what inspires them. As business coach Dominique Anders says, "The need for individual attention is crucial. Gone are the days when leaders could enforce blanket policies and expect results.

Acknowledging the differences in each team member goes a long way when leaders are trying to communicate, motivate and inspire."

## **Does your organization have a formal, consistent process in place for identifying and acting up on the motivations of your leaders?**





## Equipping and Empowering Leaders: Train Them to Be Great at Their Job and Release Them to Reach Their Potential

The steps of identifying, attracting, understanding, and motivating leaders are essential to the process of developing leaders, but they're really only the beginning. Only good leaders take the process that far, and unfortunately even many of them make the mistake of stopping there. But it's at the equipping stage that multiplication happens. This is where the leader's greatest return really kicks in. Why? Because when you start equipping leaders and helping them become great at their jobs, you begin experiencing the compounding of influence, time, energy, resources, ideas, money, and effectiveness.

As a leader, it's one thing to ask people to join your team and take the journey with you. It's another to equip them with a road map for the trip. Good leaders provide a means for people on the team to get where they need to go. Not only that, they help them rise up to who they can be. Strategic leaders who receive the highest return from their people equip and empower them. They position them and mentor them. They teach them how to reproduce leaders. The results compound, providing the leader's greatest return.

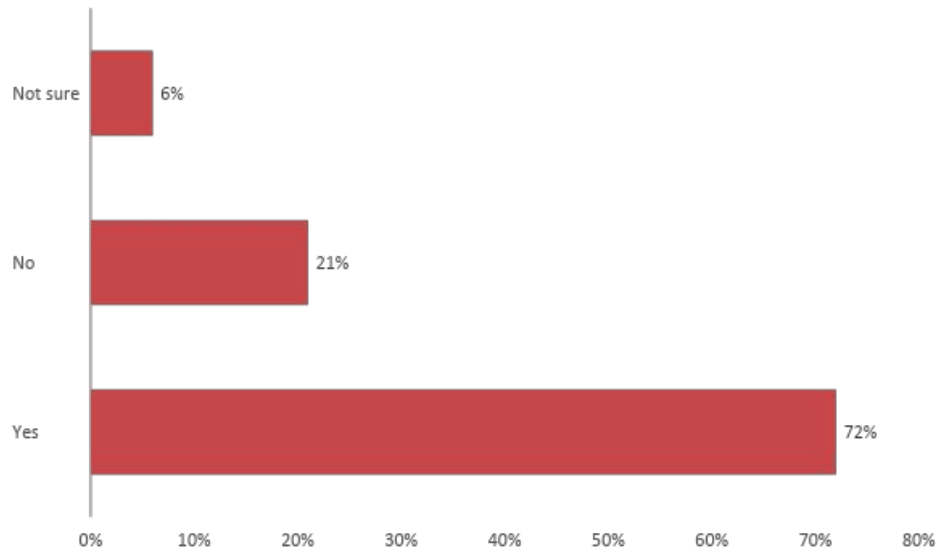
If you've read Gallup's statistics on employee disengagement, then you probably recognize that the majority of people working today are not close to reaching their potential. Why? Because they feel they're not in the right job, they're not using their strengths, and they're not excited about the work they do. Empowering people can change that. And if those you empower are leaders, it has a multiplying effect, because every leader you empower can help empower the people they lead to reach their potential too.

Does this empowering always work? Not always, but the wins eclipse the losses. In my early leadership years, I had an experience that threatened to derail me in this area. I hired a staff member whom I loved mentoring. He was gifted with great potential, and I invested in him wholeheartedly and released him to lead. But then he broke my trust.

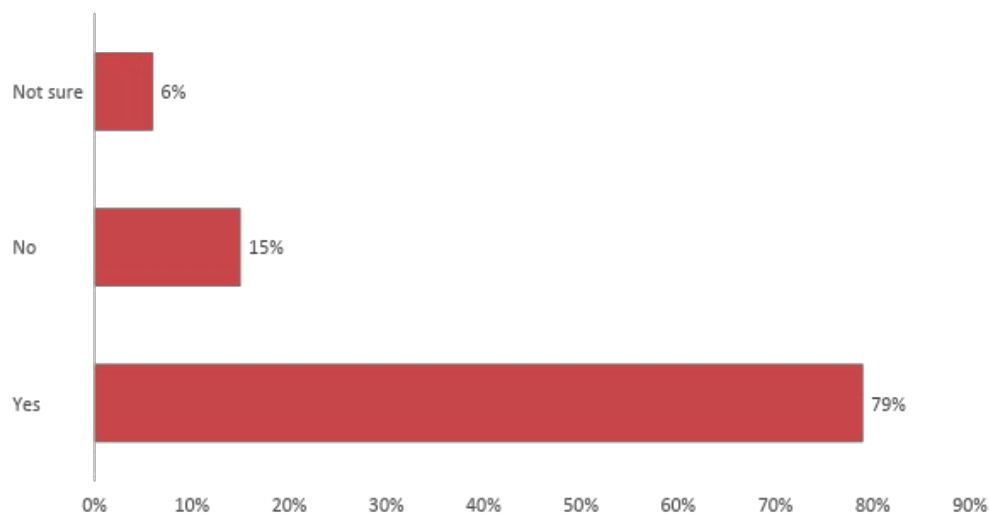
I had to let him go. I was hurt, because all the time we worked together, he was more than just a protégé. I felt he was also a friend. But what felt just as bad was the pain of losing everything I had put into developing this young leader—and the expectation of all he could do for the organization. All my time, effort, and hope—gone. I chalked it up to making a poor leadership decision, and because of the pain I felt, I decided to distance myself from everyone on my small team. I was afraid to empower anyone. I stopped investing in people emotionally and professionally. I changed from engaged empowerer to disengaged employer.

After six months of this, I became miserable. Not only that, my leadership became ineffective. It's very difficult for people to rise up if their leader refuses to put the wind of empowerment under their wings. Those were hard months. But I finally realized that disconnecting was an even bigger mistake than empowering someone and failing. And over the years, I've discovered that developing other leaders can be hit-and-miss. Trial and error can't be avoided. And that's okay, because the downside of not empowering is much greater than the relatively small losses that come from giving people a chance to really lead.

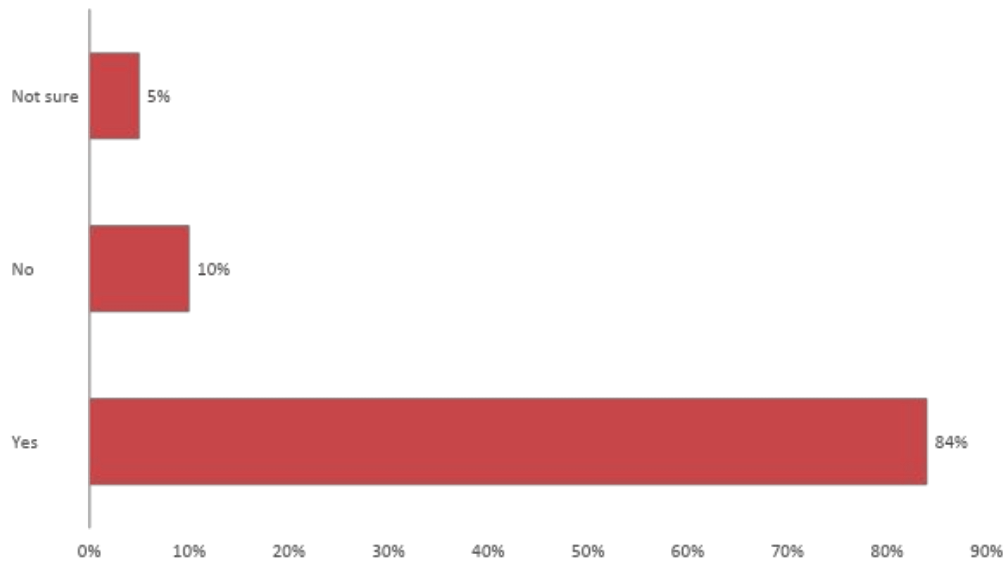
**Does your organization have a formal, consistent process in place for developing the leadership knowledge and skills of your leaders?**



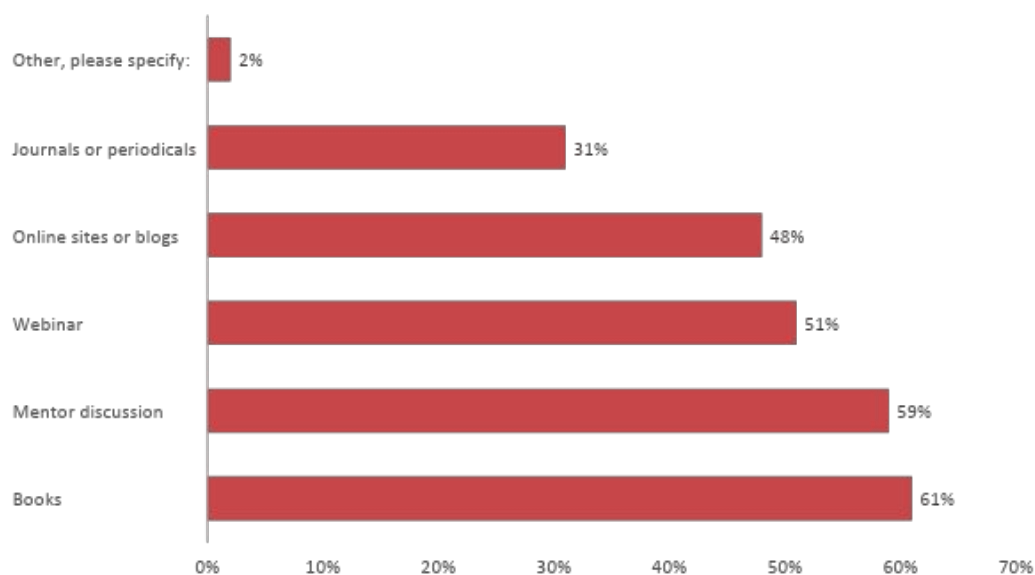
**Are leaders in your organization asked to develop and act upon leadership development goals?**



## Do leaders in your organization have a clear understanding of the vision, mission and values of the organization?

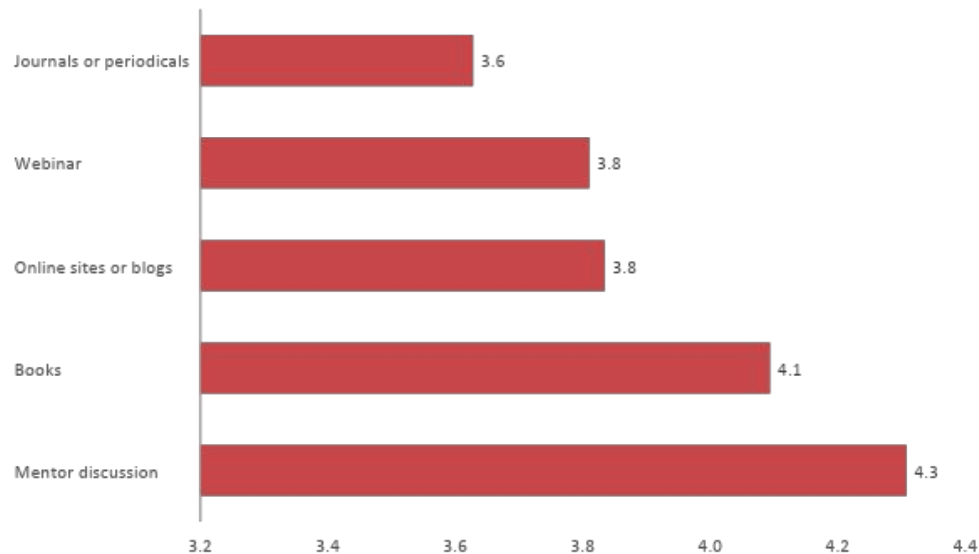


## What type of unstructured leadership development or training have you participated in during the last two years? (Check all that apply)

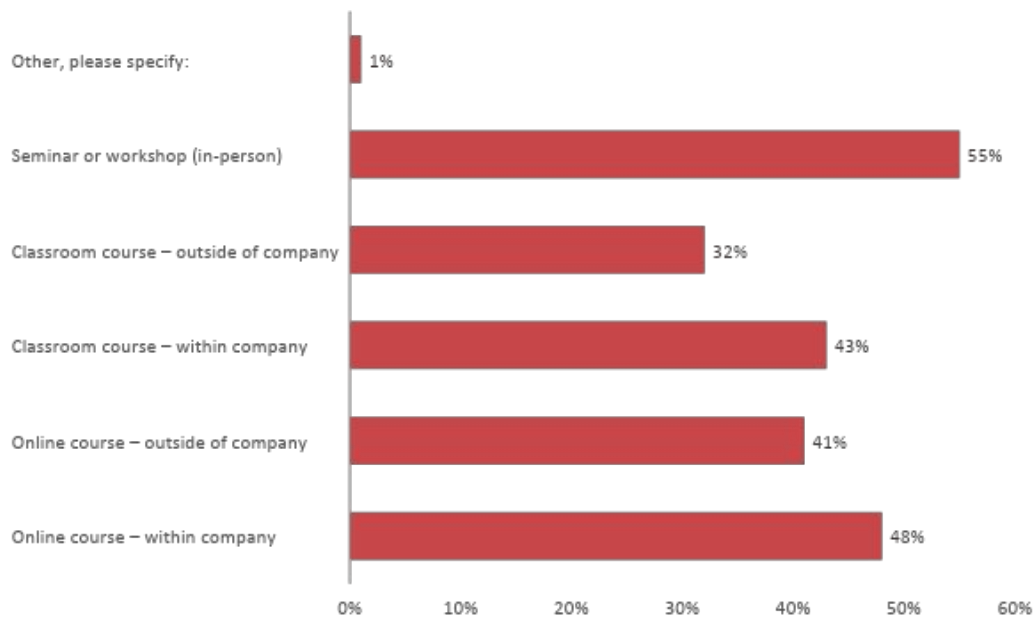




## How effective would you rate each of the following unstructured leadership development resources in advancing your leadership knowledge and skills?

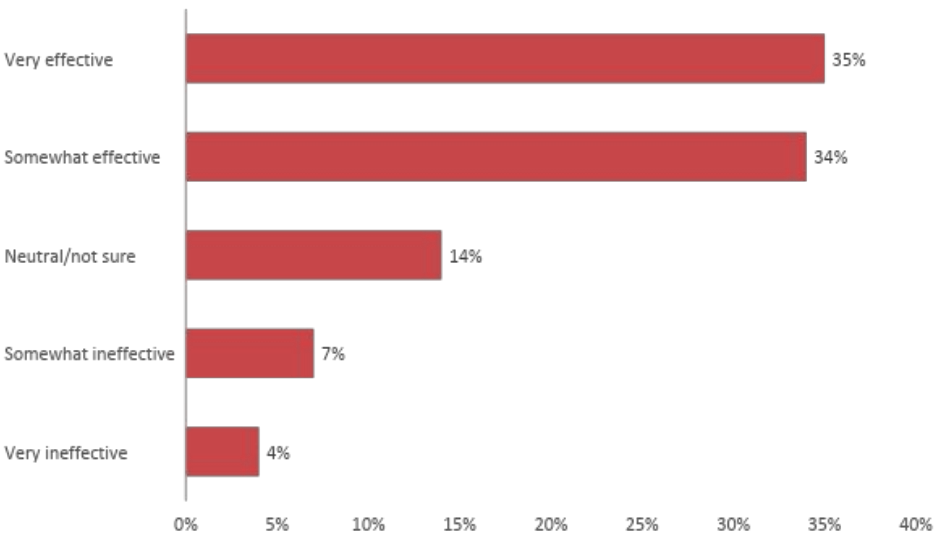


## What type of structured leadership development or training have you participated in during the last two years? (Check all that apply)

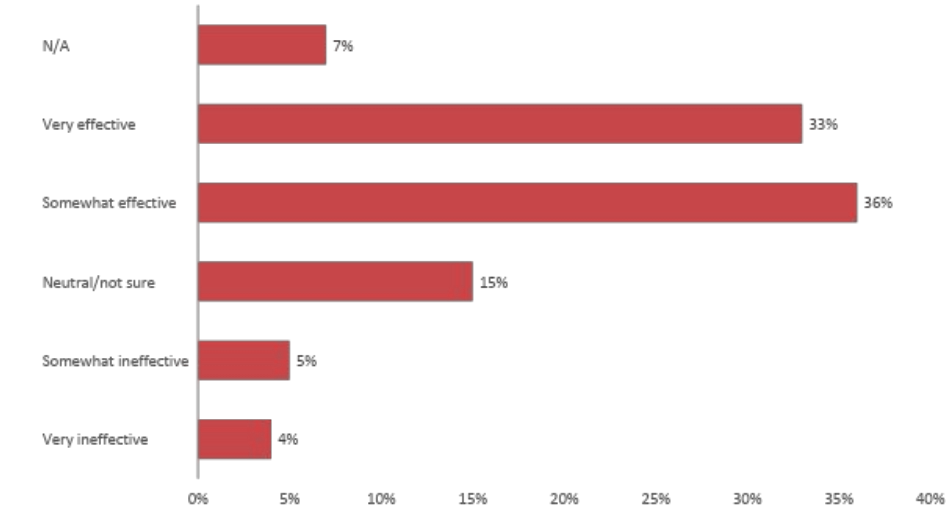


How effective would you rate each of the following structured leadership development resources in advancing your leadership knowledge and skills?

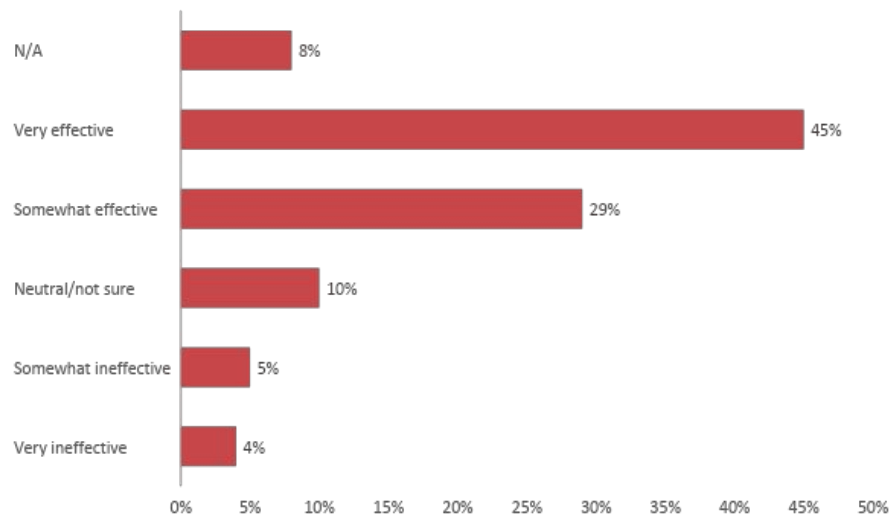
Online Course – Within Company



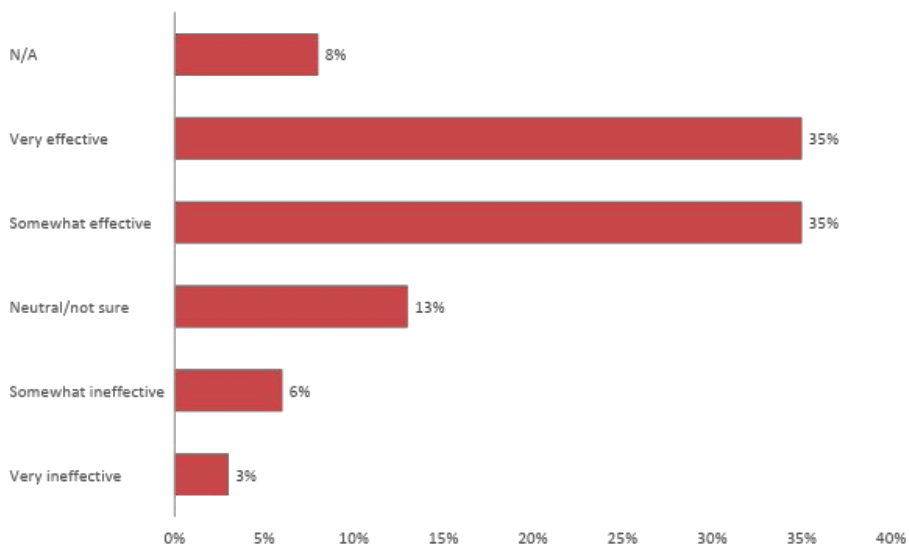
Online Course – Outside of company



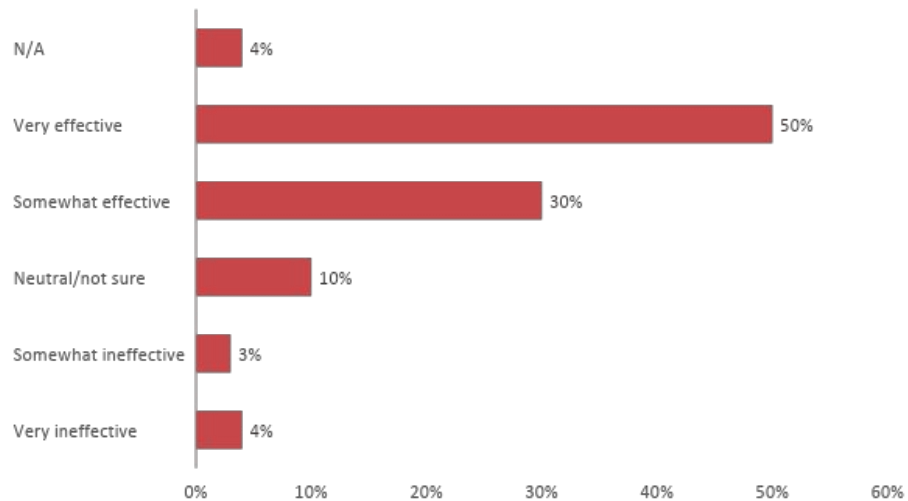
### Classroom course – within company



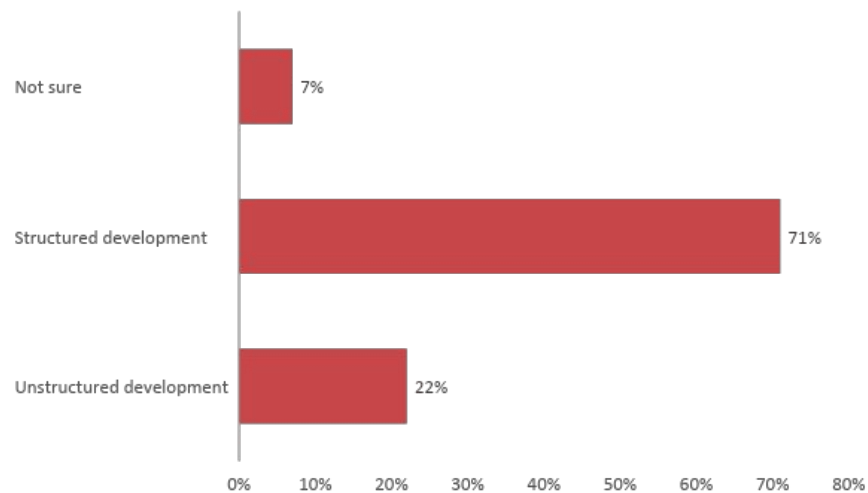
### Classroom course – outside of company



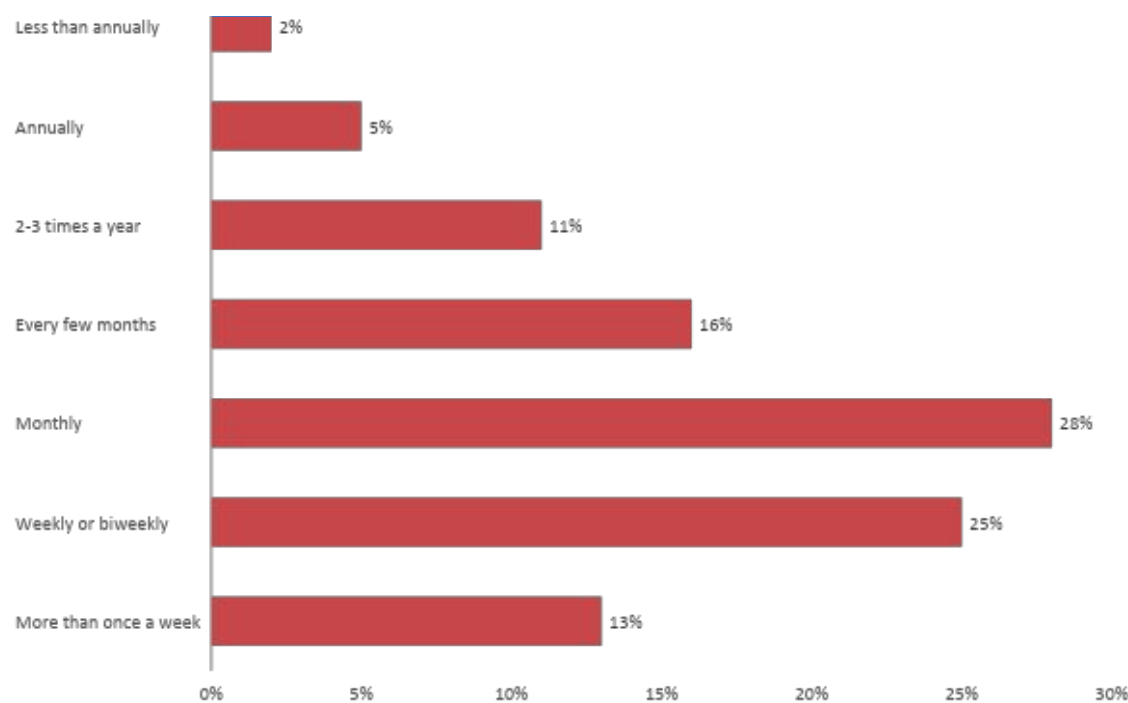
#### Seminar or workshop (in-person)



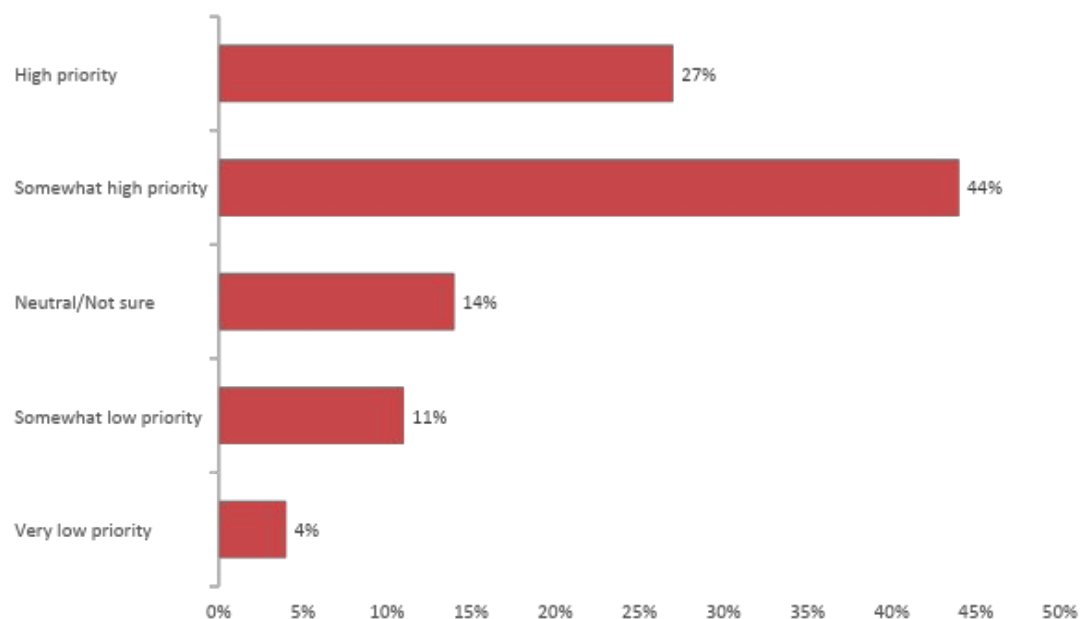
### Generally speaking, which do you consider most effective in advancing your leadership knowledge and skills?



**How often do you participate in leadership development activities?**

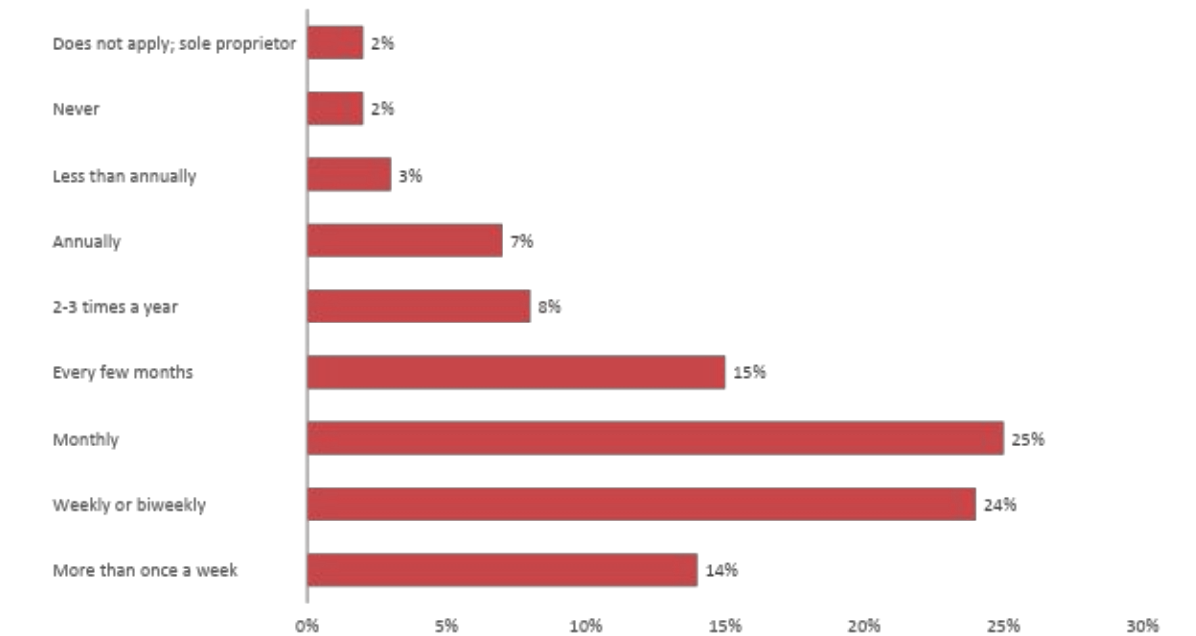


**How high of a priority do you perceive it is for your organization to provide leadership development resources and opportunities for you?**





## How often do you have a conversation with your direct manager (including board or chairperson if a top level executive) about your leadership and influence skills?





## Positioning Leaders: Team Them Up to Multiply Their Impact

What's more powerful than a motivated, equipped, and empowered leader? A group of motivated, equipped, and empowered leaders. What's more powerful than that? That same group of motivated, equipped, and empowered leaders working as a team! When good leaders are gathered together, motivated by a leader, focused on a vision, and working together as a team, there's almost nothing they can't do.

Teams of leaders are powerful. But they are difficult to create. Why? Leaders are hard to gather. And it can be a challenge to get them to work together. They all have their own ideas, and they would usually rather gather a team than be on one.

How well you've developed yourself as a leader will determine the caliber of leaders you will be able to invite onto your leadership team. People won't buy into your leadership and want to be part of your team until they buy into you. And they won't follow you if they are better leaders than you are. If your leadership ability is a 5 (out of 10), then you cannot expect people with leadership ability of 6 or higher to follow you. The best people you will be able to attract will be 3s and 4s. So, keep improving. If you want to develop a good team, you need to be a better leader.

A good team is always greater than the sum of its parts. A good team of leaders has the potential to accomplish great dreams. My friend Chris Hodges defines a dream as "a compelling vision you see in your heart that is too big to accomplish without the help of others." Look at the impact a team has on a dream:

**If you have a dream and no team— the dream is impossible.**

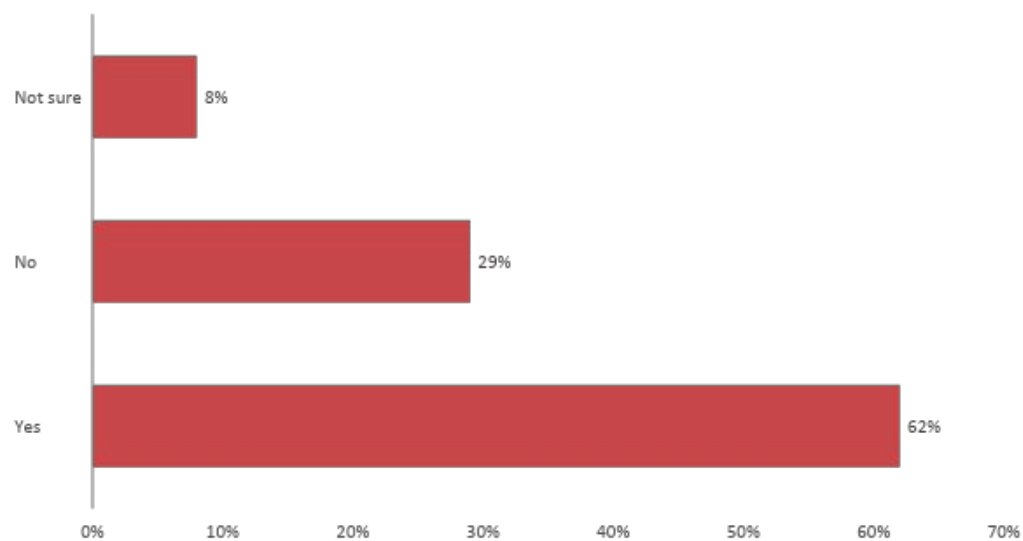
**If you have a dream and a bad team— the dream is a nightmare.**

**If you have a dream and are building a team— the dream is possible**

**If you have a dream and a good leadership team— the dream is inevitable.**

Whenever you invite leaders onto a leadership team, make it clear they haven't reached a destination. They've been given an invitation— to work just as hard, if not harder, but to make a greater impact doing it. By joining the team, they will gain greater influence, and be able to make a larger contribution. They can add more value to the people they lead, and they can make a greater impact for the organization. It's a start to something bigger, not an ending. Let them know it's not the time to rest. It's the time to make a difference.

**Does your organization have a formal, consistent process for connecting leaders with each other in a peer community?**





## Mentoring Leaders: Coach Them to the Next Level

### What is the value of a good mentor? Sheri Riley knows.

When Sheri enrolled in the business administration program at the University of Louisville, she dreamt of working in the entertainment industry. Soon after she began classes, faculty members started encouraging her and all the other students to seek out mentors. Sheri had already been taught by her father, Charles Huguely, how to live with integrity and handle personal finances, but she'd never had a professional mentor in business.

"They told us that executives are always willing to give college students fifteen minutes," Sheri said. So, with high hopes and dreams of working in the entertainment industry, she sought out executives she could talk to about her business aspirations. She started making calls and making requests. In the process, she developed great relationships with many executive assistants, but not one executive said yes to her request for an interview— not once in her four-and-a-half-year college career.

That disappointment didn't stop Sheri from pursuing her career. But it did prompt her to make a decision. She vowed that when she got in the entertainment business, she would never be like the executives who had dismissed her when she was a student. Even though she missed out on having a professional mentor in the business, she would mentor others.

Right out of school, Sheri was hired by Trevel Productions, the management company of singer, songwriter, and producer Gerald Levert. And a few years later, LaFace Records in Atlanta hired her as a senior director of marketing.

Sheri took her first step as a mentor at LaFace with her very first assistant, a young woman named Tashion Macon. After working with Tashion for only two months, Sheri called her into her office one day and sat her down. She said, "You need to get another job."

"What?! You're firing me?" Tashion gasped.

"No. You're too brilliant to be working as my assistant," Sheri explained. "I want to mentor you and help you to succeed. Find and train your replacement. Then I'll give you another job." Tashion found Billy Calloway, trained him, and six months after her conversation with Sheri, Tashion became a product manager. By the way, Billy followed Tashion's model, found and trained his replacement, and he became a product management coordinator. He's now a sales and marketing executive. And Tashion went on to earn a PhD in psychology and become a principal in her own marketing agency.

Sheri's next investment was in the first artist she was assigned to work with at LaFace— a fifteen-year-old kid who had just been signed to the record label. She had no way of knowing how successful he would become,

but she quickly saw that he had extraordinary talent. And what really blew her away was his charisma. She remembers a day when she took this young man to a high-end mall in the Atlanta area while he was still under the radar nationally. As they walked around, lots of young men in their late teens—who usually go out of their way to play it cool—recognized him and went out of their way to tell him how much they loved his music and get his autograph. Not only that, but as Sheri traveled with this young man, she often found herself chasing away women in their thirties and forties who were flirting with him.

At that time, Sheri made a decision. She had heard plenty of horror stories about young people in the music business whose lives were wrecked by early fame and fortune. She didn't want to see that happen to him. She told him she was more concerned with him as a man than as a brand. She determined to be like a big sister to him, someone who would mentor him and tell him the truth—not what he wanted to hear, and not what would only help the business at his expense. She wanted to help him build a firm foundation for a long and successful career.

You're probably wondering, who was that fifteen-year-old kid? His name is Usher. And he's had a respected, highly successful career. He has sold more than 75 million records, multiple dozens of his songs have made it onto the Billboard charts, and nine songs have gone to number one. When Sheri left LaFace records, Usher tried to hire her. She declined, telling him she would rather be his friend and supporter, and she wouldn't be able to be that if she was financially dependent on him. Usher said of Sheri:

**“I immediately sensed something unusual about her. Her humanity. She was interested in me not just as a marketing project but as a whole person. She asked me questions and really listened to my answers, with no hidden agendas.”**

Sheri soon became my friend and life consultant. Sometimes she was like a mother to me, like a big sister, sometimes like a coach. But she always had my back, and I always trusted her implicitly.

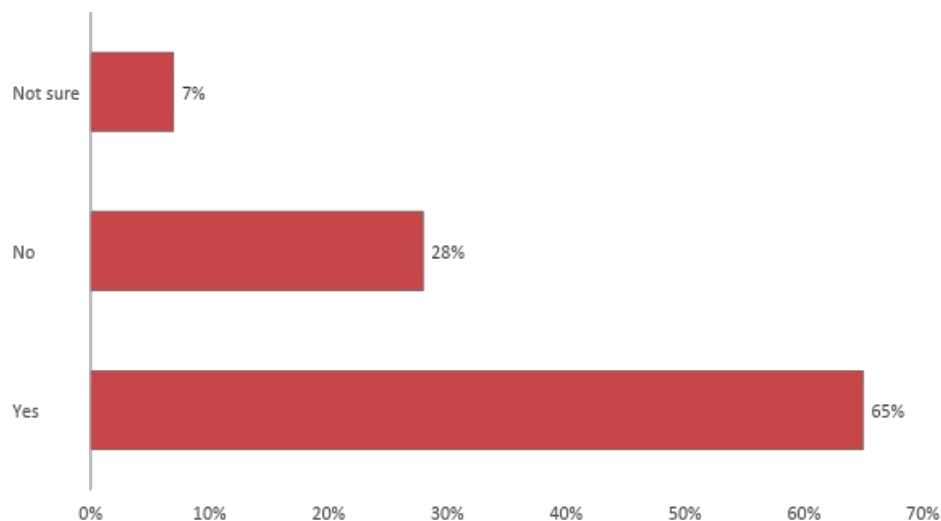
Today Sheri is working as an empowerment speaker, life strategist, and author. She speaks to corporate audiences in the United States and internationally, but her greatest passion is still mentoring and coaching people, especially young achievers. Her primary focus today is on helping successful athletes and entertainers. She works closely with players in the NBA and NFL, teaching them how to bring success to every area of their lives, not just their sports careers.

We cannot reach our potential without the help of others. Self-evaluation is valuable, but the perspective and assistance of mentors are essential. We all have blind spots where we lack self-awareness, and only another person can help us by providing another perspective. Mentoring helps us go farther, faster, and more successfully than we could ever travel on our own.

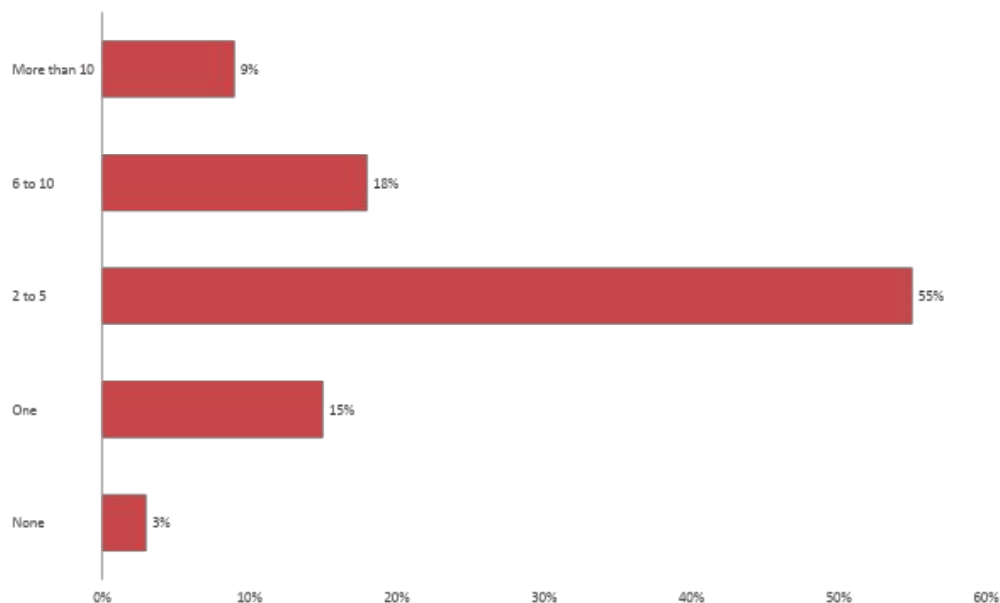
For mentors, like Sheri, nothing is more fulfilling than developing other leaders. Not only is it personally rewarding, but it gives the biggest bang for the buck when it comes to personal investment. Why? Because every leader that a mentor impacts can then positively impact other people. Adding value to one leader through mentoring is much more valuable than leading a dozen followers, because leaders have the ability to multiply that value you have given them as they, in turn, mentor others.



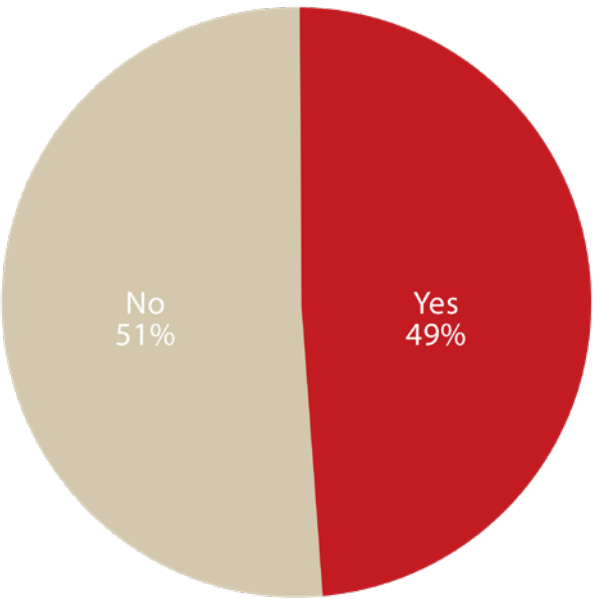
**Does your organization have a formal, consistent process for connecting leaders or potential leaders with mentors?**



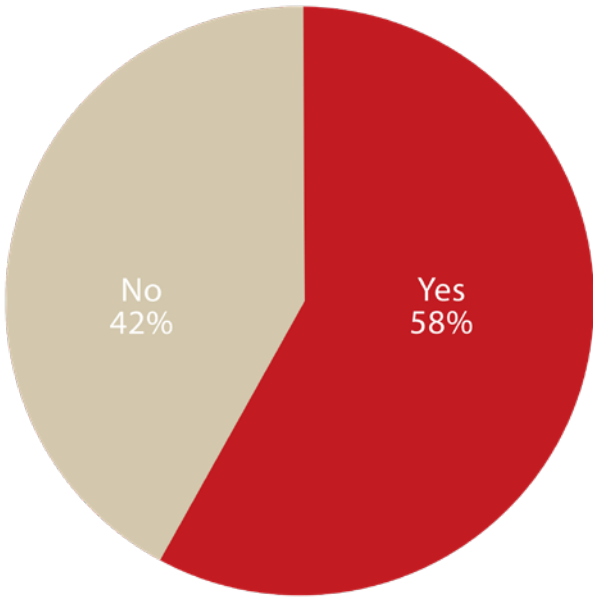
**How many total formal or informal mentors have you had in your career?**



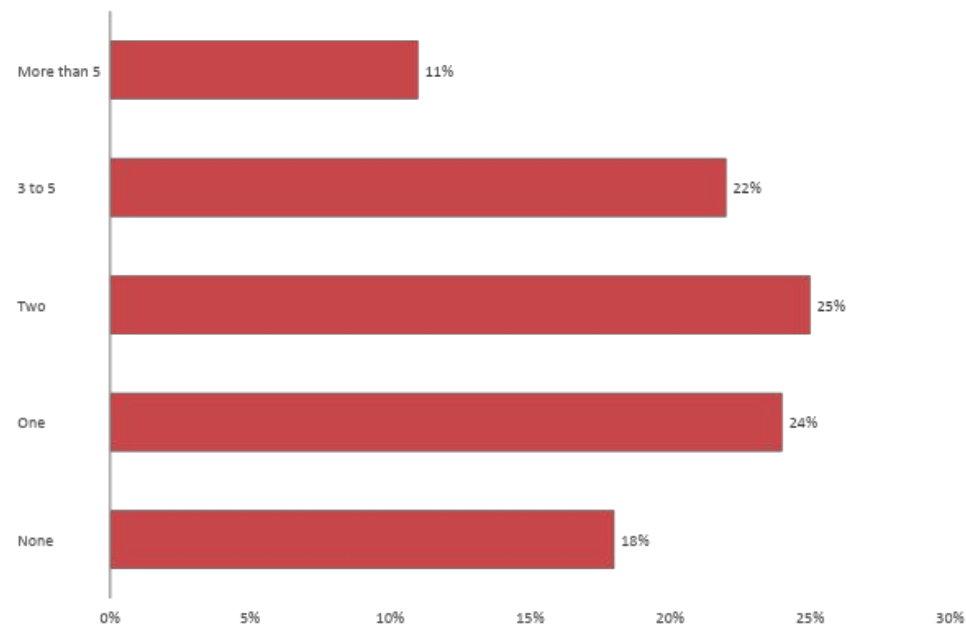
**Do you currently have a formal mentor?**



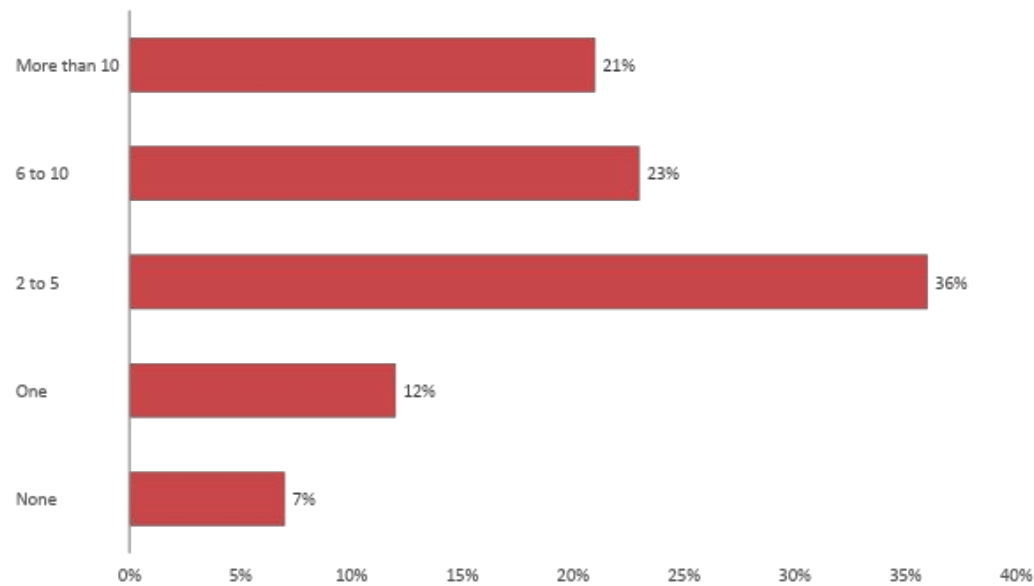
**Do you currently have an informal mentor?**



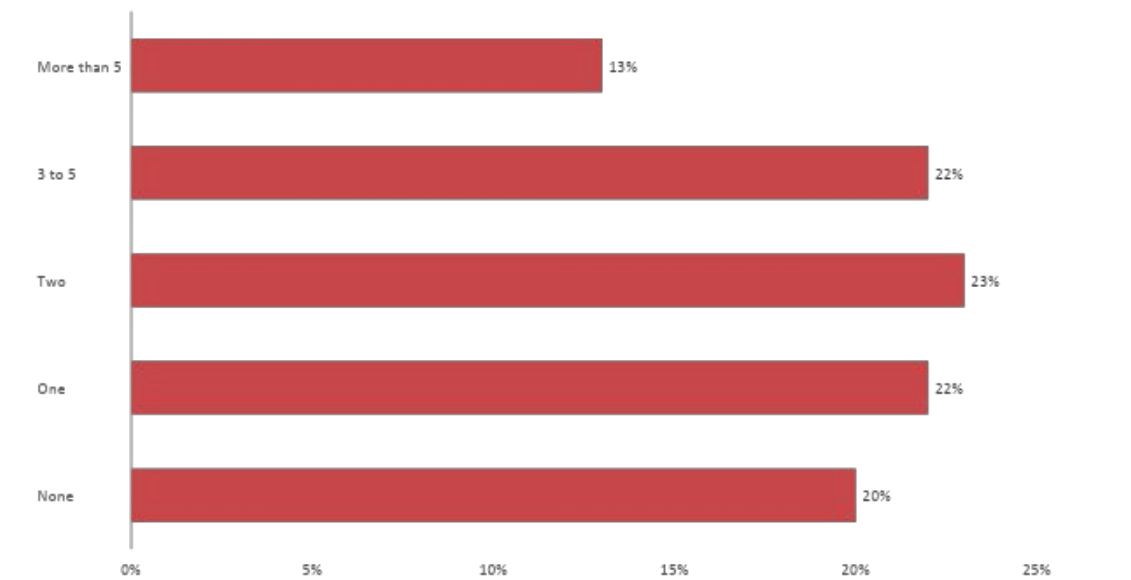
How many people are you formally mentoring now?



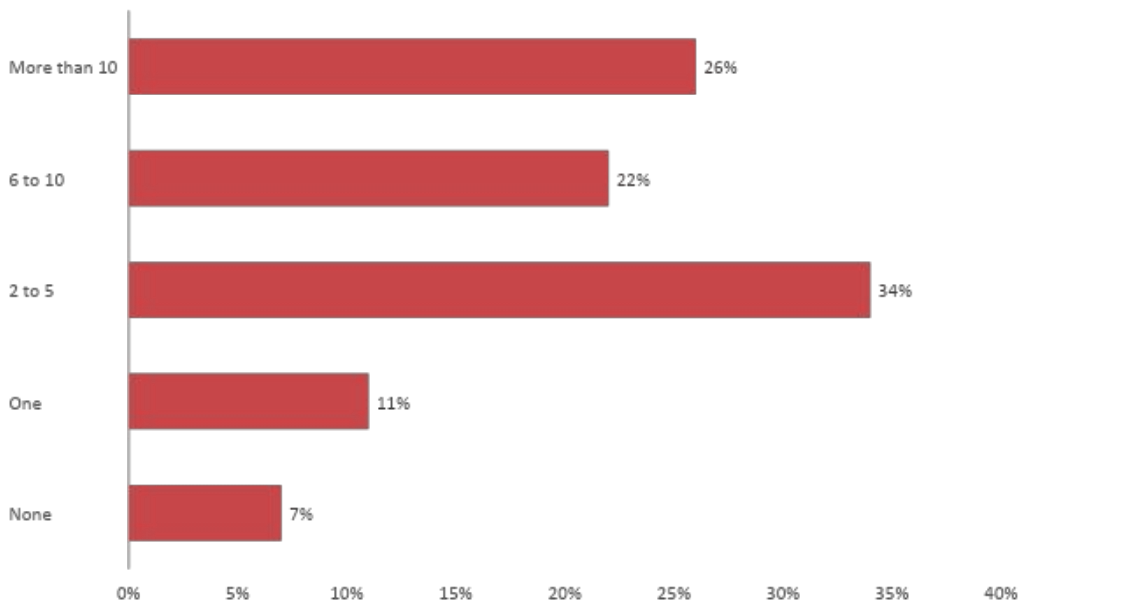
How many total people have you formally mentored in your career?



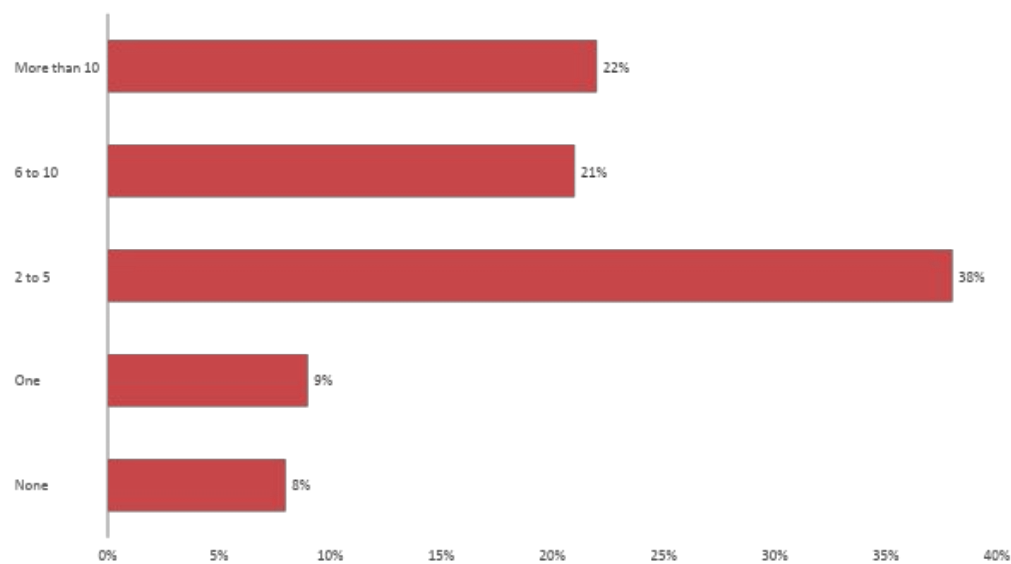
How many people are you informally mentoring now?



How many total people have you informally mentored in your career?



**How many people whom you have mentored have gone on to formal managerial or leadership roles?**







## **Reproducing and Compounding Leaders: Show Them How to Develop Leaders to Receive the Highest Return Leadership**

What is essential to keep an organization running and profitable? A good leader. What is essential to grow an organization? A good leader. And what is essential to bring positive change to an organization? Again, the answer is a good leader. Every organization needs more and better leaders. The only thing limiting the future of any organization is the number of good leaders it develops.

I had to learn these lessons the hard way because I received very little leadership training in my formal education. When I led my first organization, I didn't initially understand the importance of leadership. As a result, when I left, no one carried on what I'd started, nor did they build anything new. Everything just petered out.

My first introduction to the concept of reproducing leaders came when I finally understood something in the Bible written by Paul, who was a world-class leader, to Timothy, a young man he was mentoring. Paul instructed Timothy, "Pass on what you heard from me . . . to reliable leaders who are competent to teach others." Paul had equipped Timothy to lead and was continuing to mentor him. In this letter, he made it clear that Timothy was responsible to equip and mentor other leaders. And what were they to do? Keep it going by teaching and equipping others. If you think about it, the implication just in this one passage was that the reproduction of leaders would continue until it reached at least a fourth generation: from Paul (1) to Timothy (2), from Timothy to reliable leaders (3), and from reliable leaders to others (4). That's how reproduction occurs. From one leader to another.

That passage changed my focus and gave me a new goal: reproducing leaders. For fifty years my vision has been to reproduce leaders who will continue that process with others. Once I started investing in people with high potential, I never stopped. And after I become competent at developing leaders, I worked on emulating Paul, whose vision was to produce leaders who reproduced other leaders. That has been a development process in itself, because I had to grow into that ability.

There's a very real temptation for leaders who achieve a level of success to rest on their laurels. The climb to leadership can be strenuous, and some people want to enjoy the view from the top. They want to stop and smell the roses. But that's not the best purpose of leadership achievement. The best purpose is to use everything you've learned to give a hand up to others, helping them become leaders, and then teach them to do the same for other leaders.

This in my mind is the highest level of growth--when you develop generations of leaders. When you can develop a leader, who in turn develops other leaders without your direct involvement, it can have a multiplying effect for generations.

One of my favorite success stories illustrating this compounding return of developing leaders comes from Kevin

Myers. When I moved to Atlanta in 1997, I started mentoring Kevin on a regular basis and developing him as a leader. Kevin has been like a river, not a reservoir, when it comes to leadership development. Whatever I have poured into him, he has continually poured out to others. He doesn't receive it just for his own benefit; he blesses others, giving them his best.

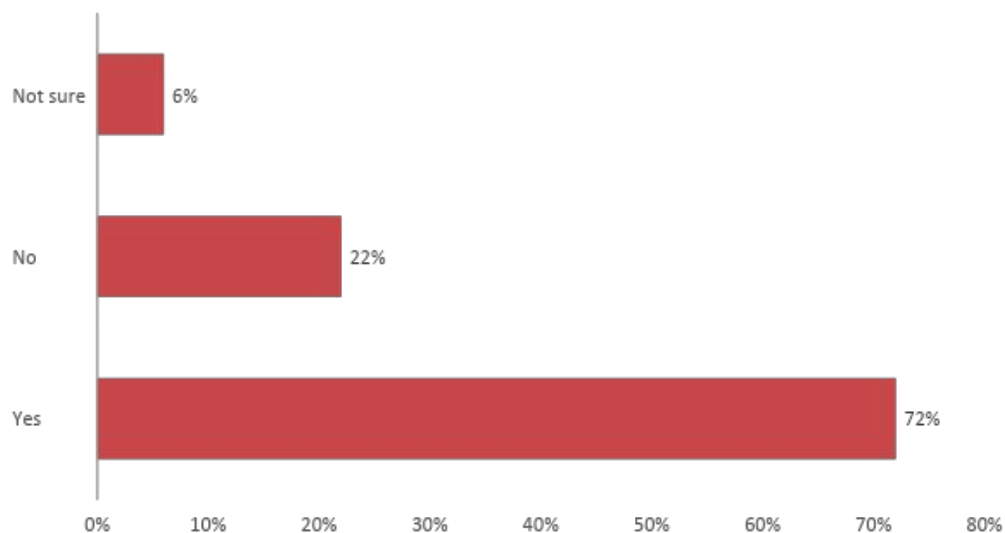
Everything I have poured into Kevin to develop him has compounded. And the way he is living and leading, everything he is pouring into other leaders is compounding. It's one of the most rewarding things I've experienced as a leader. Little did I know when I began developing leaders that it would give me such an incredible return. I didn't do it for that reason. I developed leaders for what they could bring to others. That is still my motive for mentoring others. But I have discovered that

**Developing leaders gives a return to others**  
**Developing leaders gives a return to the leaders**  
**Developing leaders gives a return to the developer**

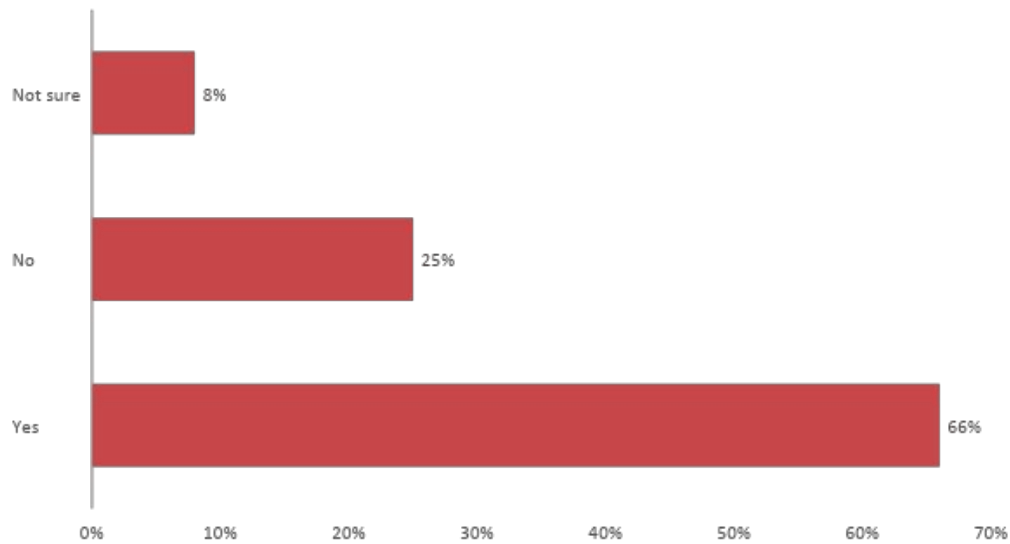
And what's wonderful is that you can have that same experience. You can develop leaders and experience your own greatest return. Will it be challenging? Yes. Will it take a long time to achieve? You know it. Will you make mistakes? Undoubtedly. But will it be worth it? Absolutely! No matter what it costs you, the return you receive will eclipse the price. Developing leaders is the most impacting and rewarding thing you can do as a leader. If you haven't already gotten started, what are you waiting for?

There's no time to lose. Start today.

## **Are leaders in your organization required to have a development plan for each of their direct reports?**



**Does your organization have a formal, consistent process for providing leaders/potential leaders with more visible opportunities to influence a larger audience within the organization?**





## Return on Leadership Influence

Everywhere you look, there is a leadership deficit. In countries all around the world, there are not enough good leaders. That is certainly true in the United States. I think Americans of every party would agree that there are not enough good leaders. The same is true at the state and local levels: we need more and better leaders. And in businesses, nonprofits, and families— there are not enough good leaders!

The good news is that leaders can be developed, and everyone wins when leaders develop other good leaders. If you are a leader—at any level or of any capacity—your organization will benefit when you start developing leaders. And you can do that beginning today.

I want to help you develop leaders. I want to show you the pathway to receiving the leader's greatest return. There is nothing in this world that gives a greater ROI to a leader than attracting, developing, and multiplying leaders. It's the key to success for any country, family, organization, or institution.

The answer is so straightforward. Grow a leader— grow the organization. A company cannot grow throughout until its leaders grow within. The strength of any organization is a direct result of the strength of its leaders. Weak leaders equal weak organizations. Strong leaders equal strong organizations. Leadership makes the determination.

If you want to grow or strengthen your organization, start by developing those closest to you, because they will determine the level of success your team will achieve. How well you lead determines how well you succeed. That's true not just for an individual, but also for a group. How well they lead will determine how well the organization succeeds. A group of average leaders cannot build an above-average company. The potential leaders on your team are either an asset or a liability.

People too often overvalue their dream and undervalue their team. They think, If I believe it, I can achieve it. But that's simply not true. Belief alone is not enough to achieve anything. It takes more than that. Your team will determine the reality of your dream. A big dream with a bad team is a nightmare.

If you want to develop leaders, it's certainly easier to do when you have a leadership culture. And that kind of culture can only be created by the leaders within the organization.

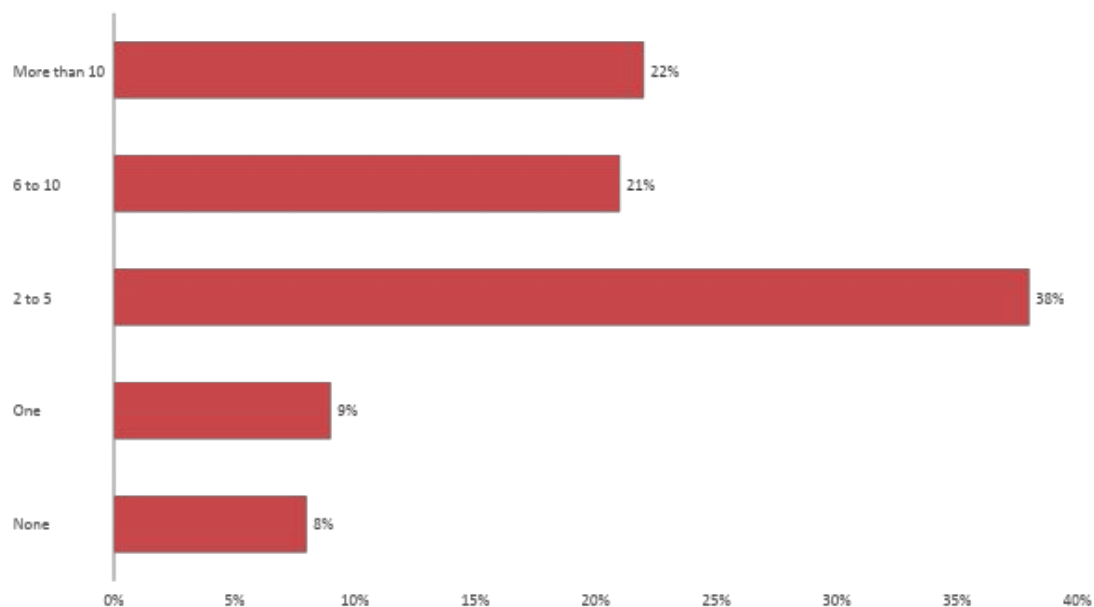
If the organization doesn't already possess a leadership culture, creating one is a slow process. But it's worth it. Why? Because developing leaders is the only way to grow, improve, create momentum, and achieve greater success.

One of my favorite quotes is by nineteenth-century steel magnate and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. He said, "I think a fit epitaph for me would be, 'Here lies a man who knew how to get around men much cleverer than

himself.' ” The only surefire way to achieve something like that is to develop more leaders so that they reach their potential, and that’s not something any leader can afford to delegate or abdicate. It takes a leader to show and grow another leader.

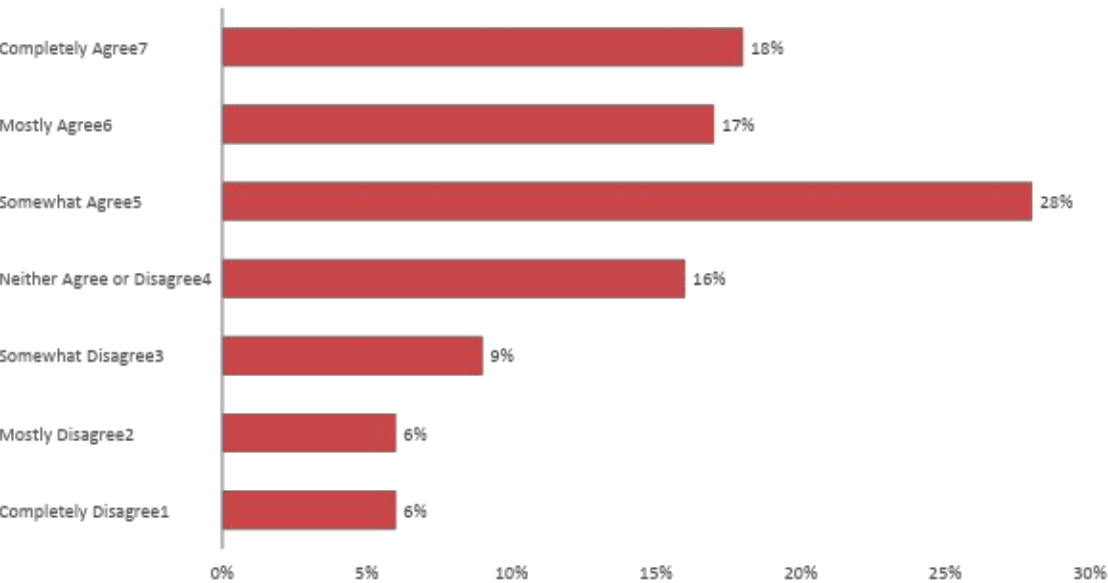
Zig Ziglar used to say, “Success is the maximum utilization of the ability that you have.” I love that definition, and I believe it applies to an individual. But for a leader, success requires something more. Success for leaders can be defined as the maximum utilization of the abilities of those working with them. There’s only one way for a leader to help people maximize their abilities and reach their potential, and that’s to help them develop as leaders. It is my desire that the following pages help you do exactly that.

## **How many people who have directly reported to you during your career have gone on to formal managerial or leadership roles?**

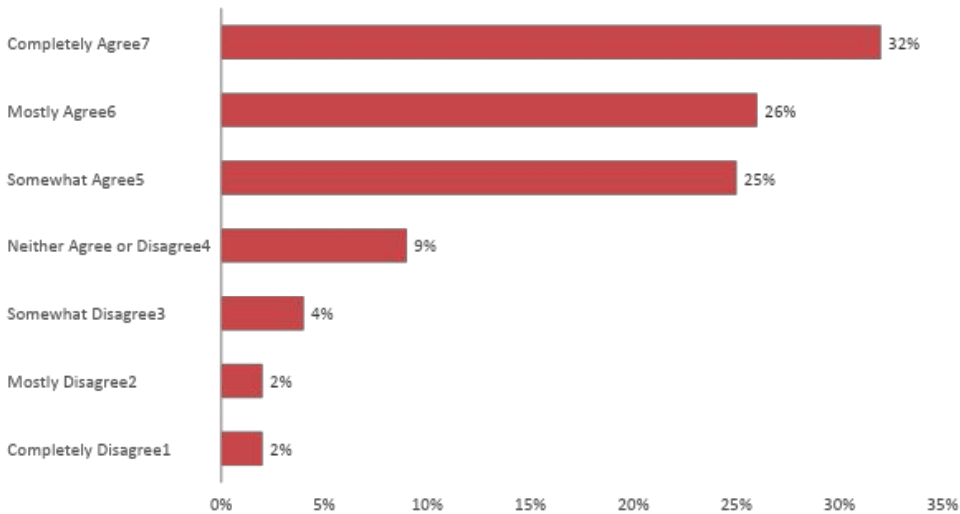


# How much do you agree that each describes the reasons people may follow you as a leader?

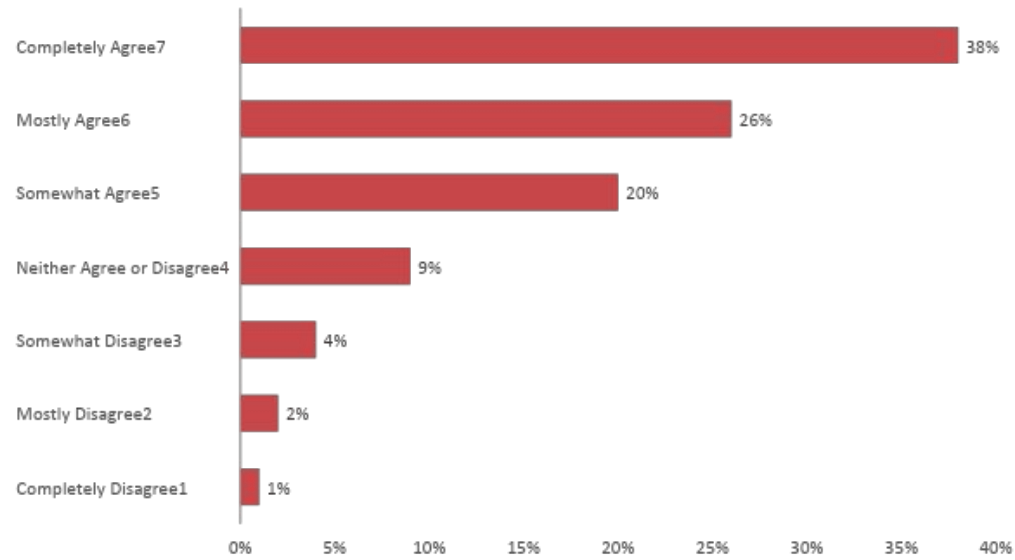
Position – People follow me because of my title



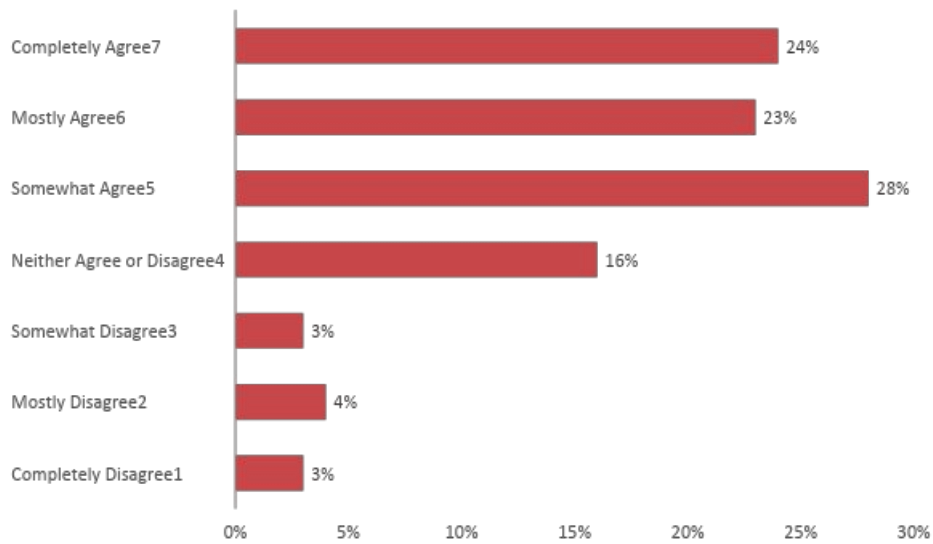
Permission – People follow me because of my relationship with them



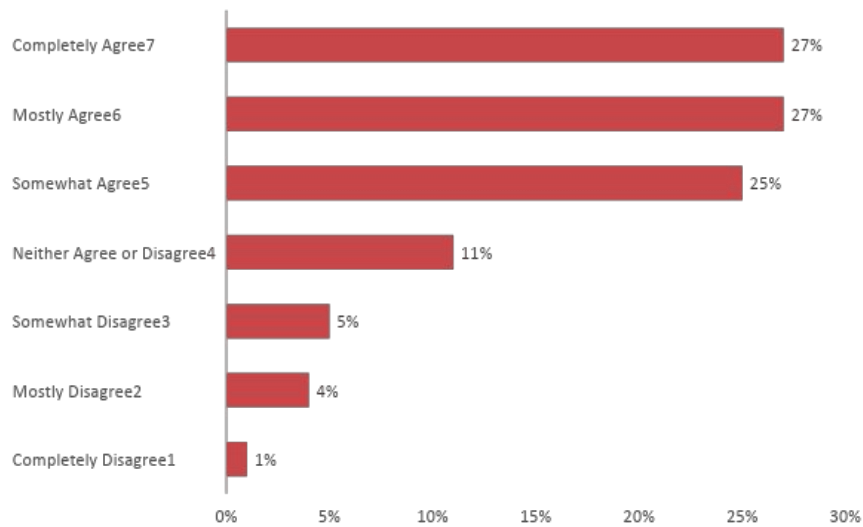
### Production – People follow me because I get results



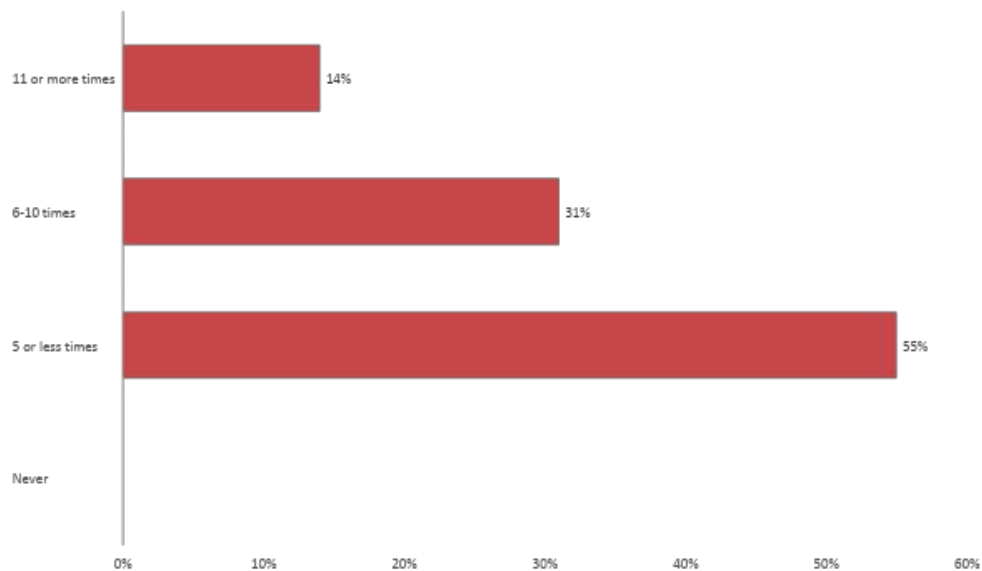
### People development – People follow me because their lives will change for the better



**Pinnacle – People follow me because they respect my legacy or reputation**

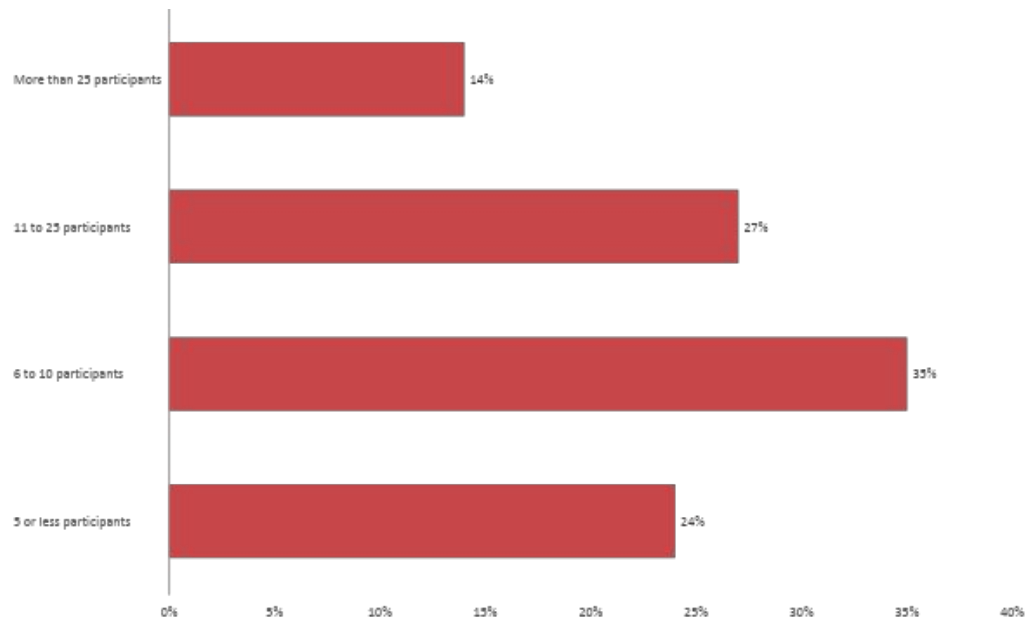


**How many times have you led a virtual team (defined as leading team members who may not report to you)?**

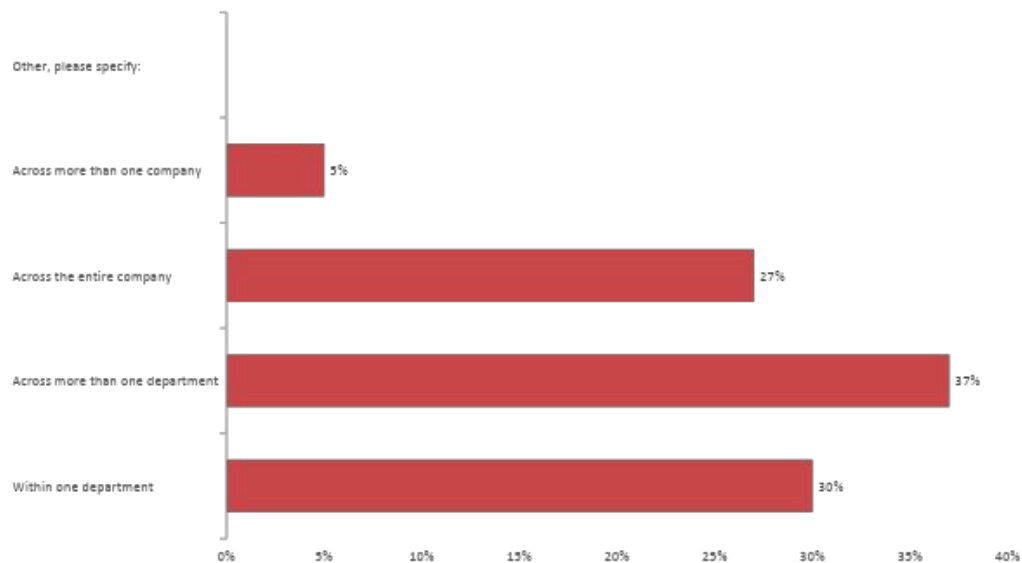




## What is the largest virtual team you have led?



## What was the scope of the virtual teams you have led? (Check all that apply)

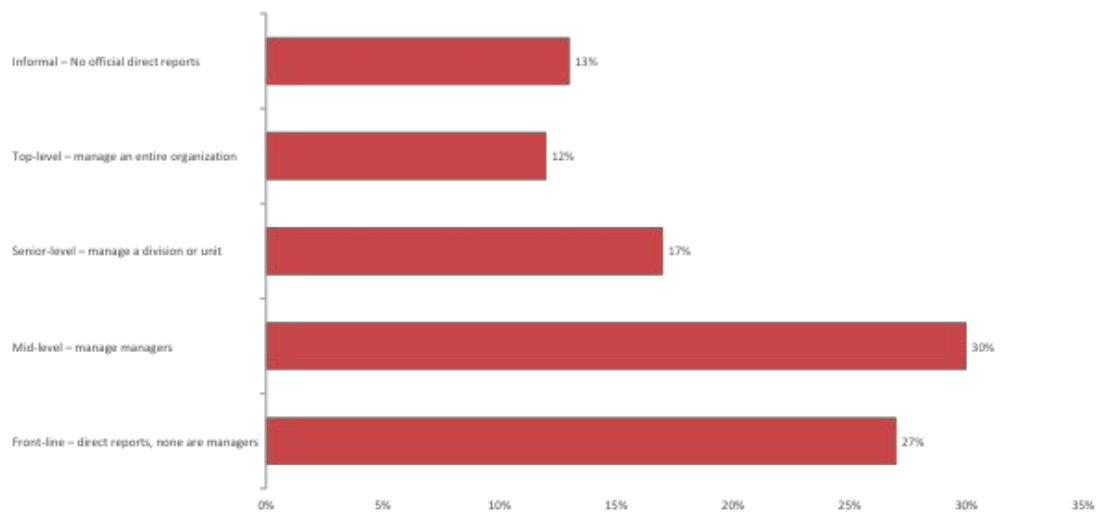


## About the Participants

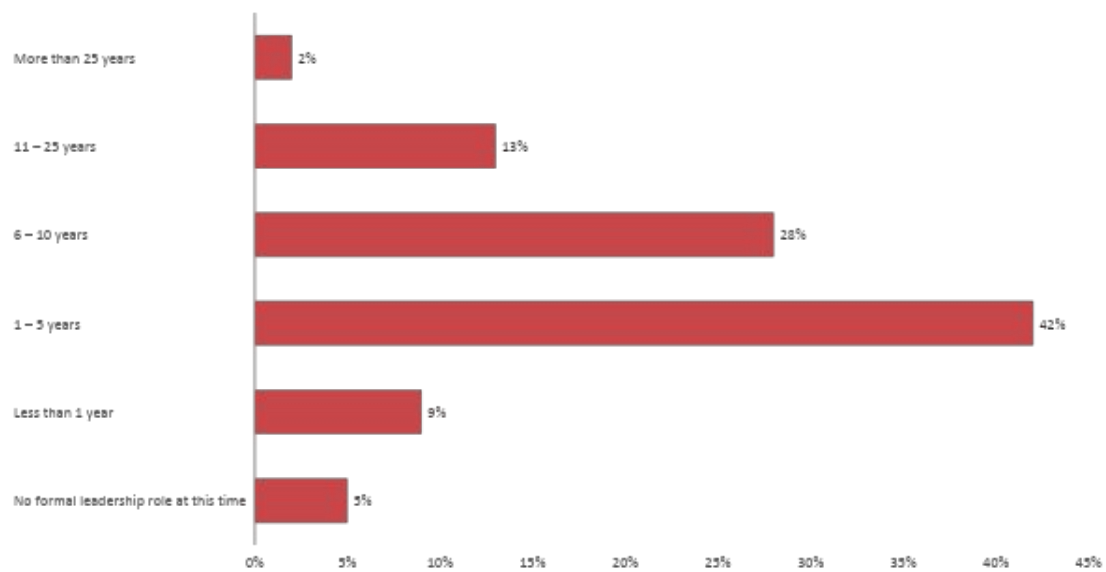
The following provides details on the participants of this survey.



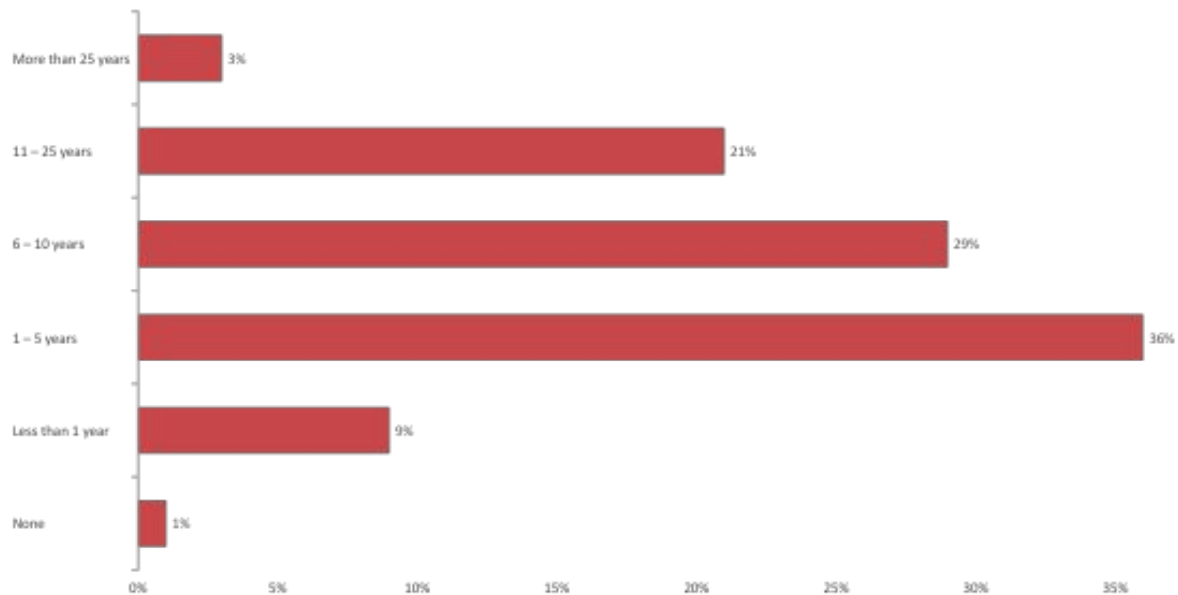
## What best describes your leadership role?



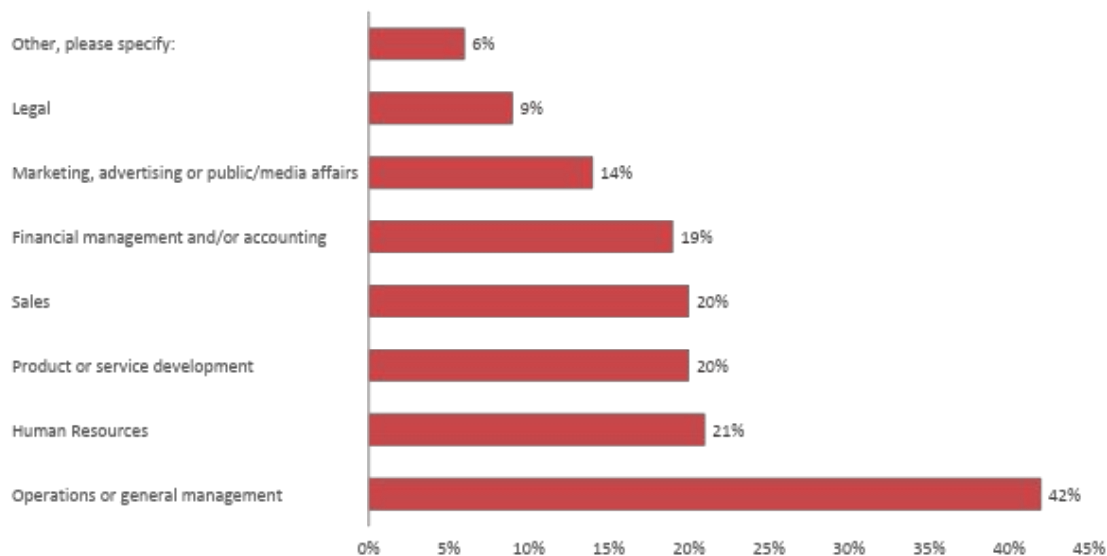
## How long have you been in your current leadership role?



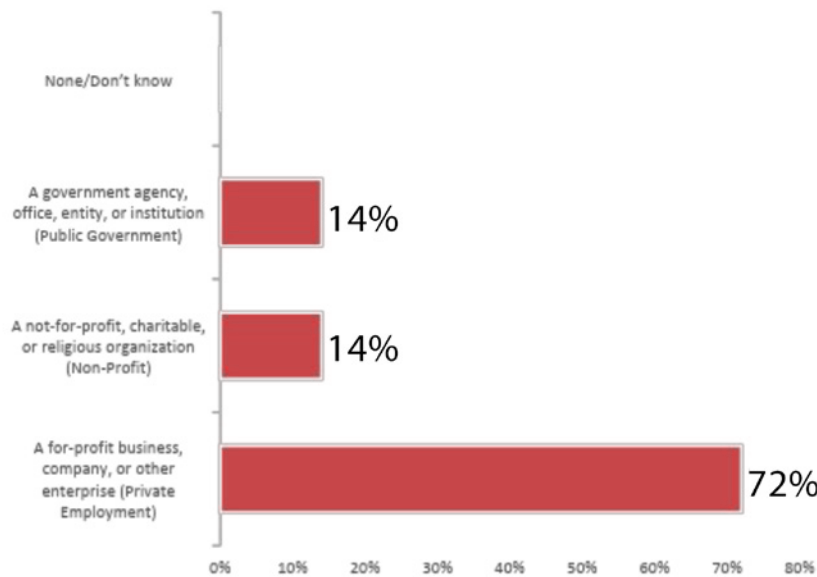
## How many years have you directly managed other people in your overall career?



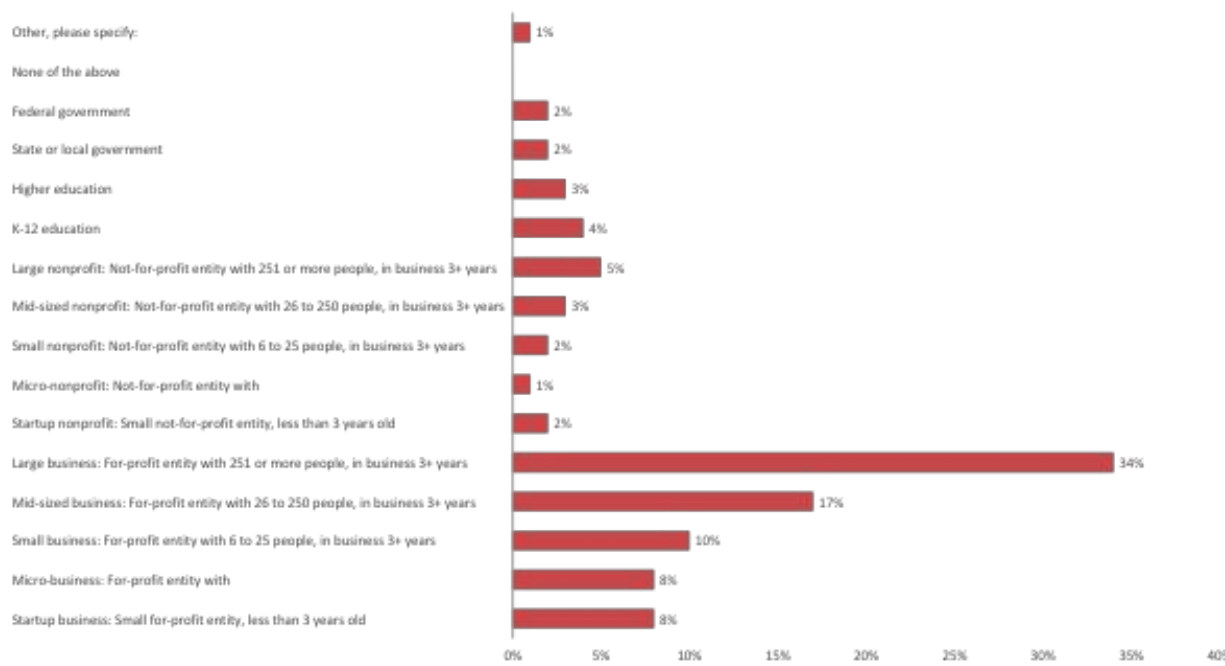
## What best describes the primary functional role that you play in your organization?



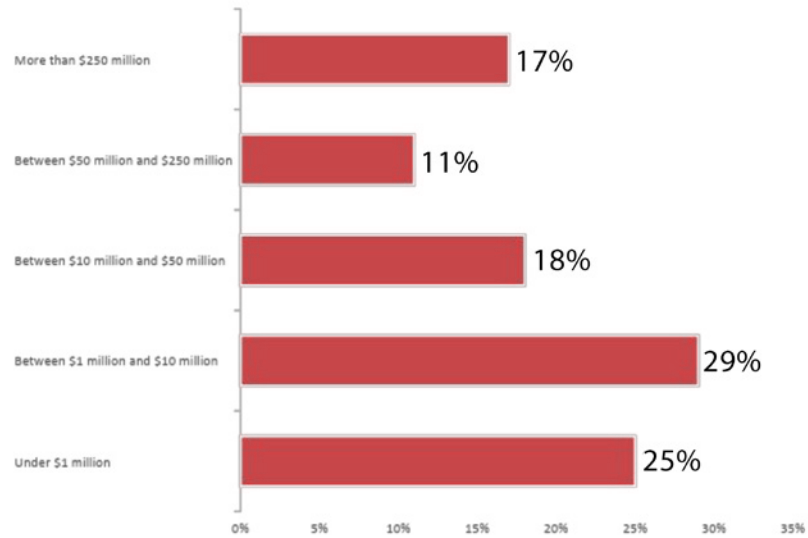
# Which best describes the company you work for?



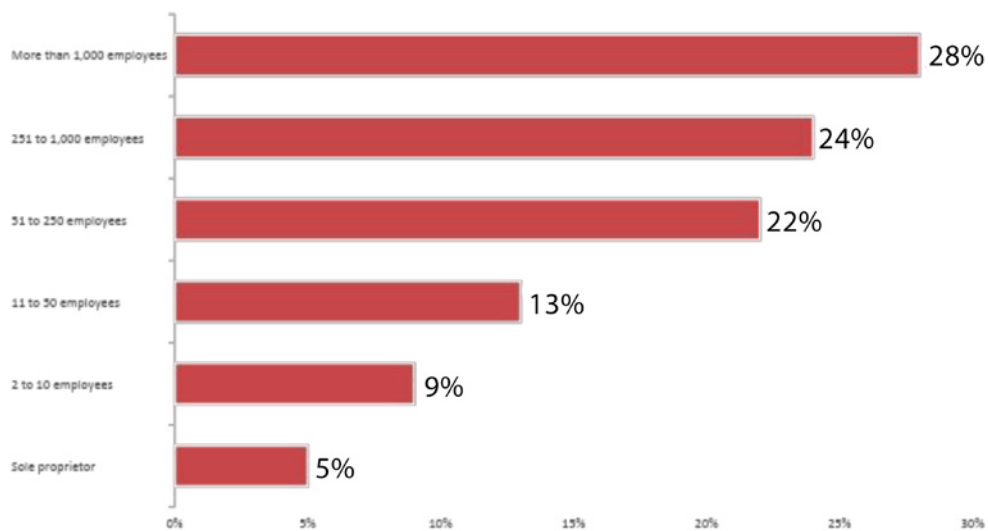
# What is your primary work environment or area of leadership influence?



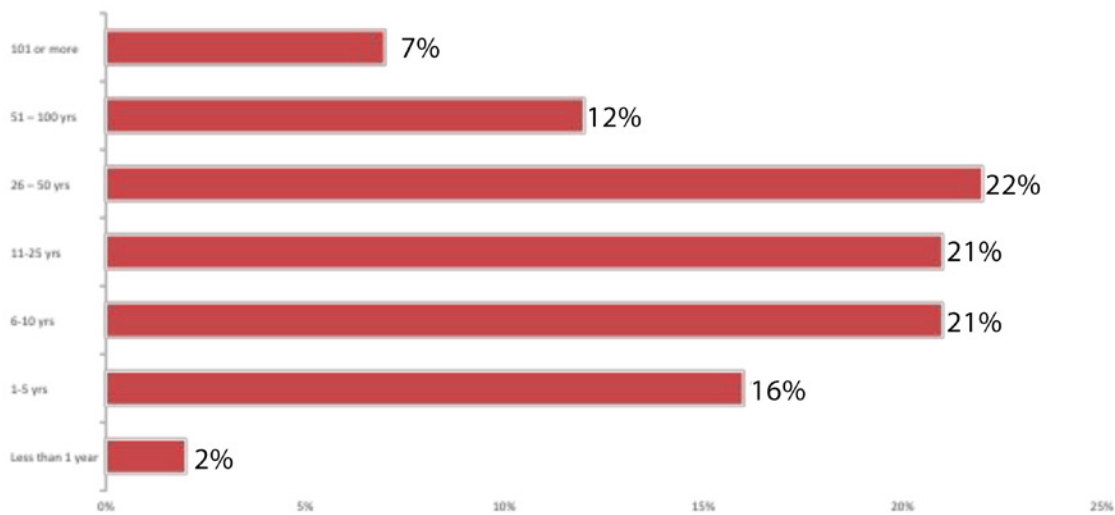
## What is your organization's size from a revenue perspective?



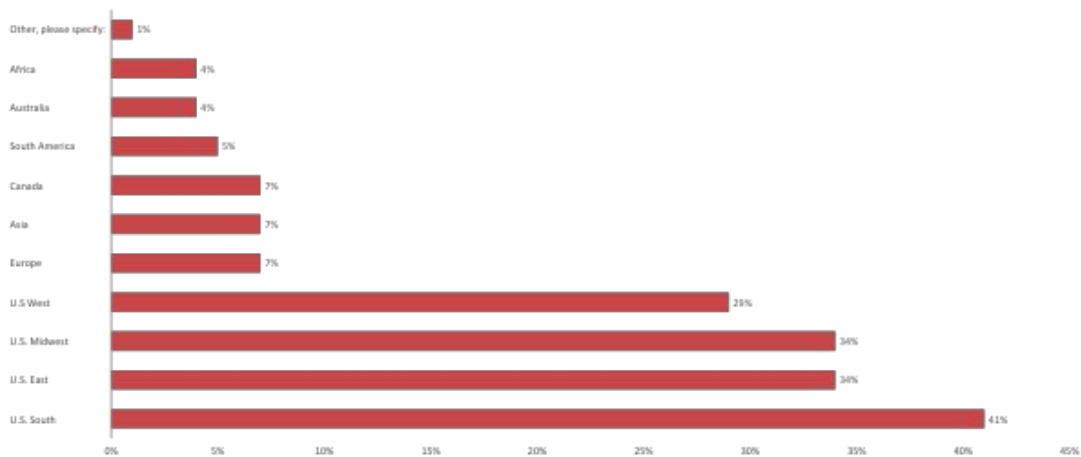
## What is your organization's size from an employee perspective?



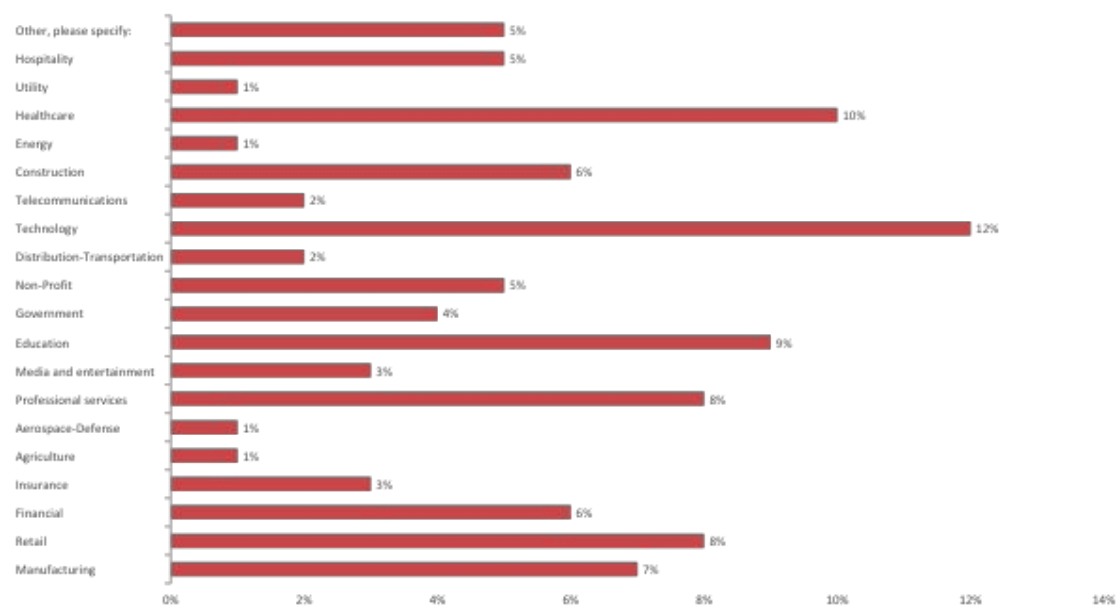
# How old is your organization?



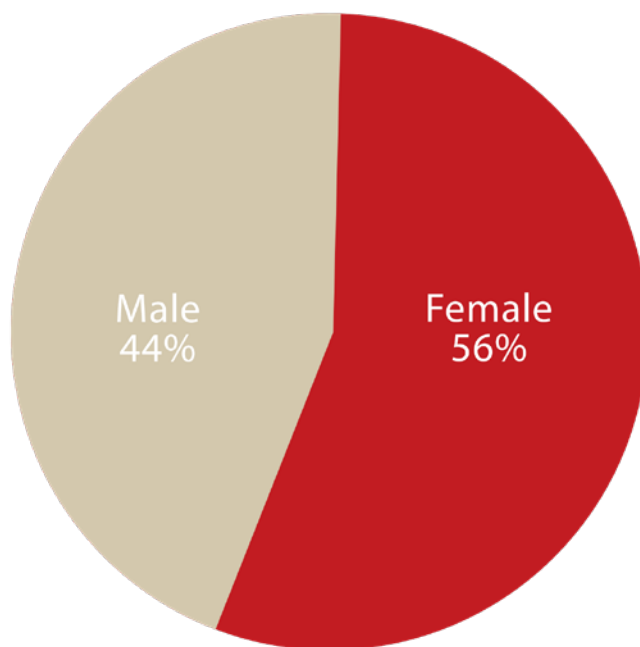
# In what region is your organization located? (Check all that apply)



What industry does your organization operate in?

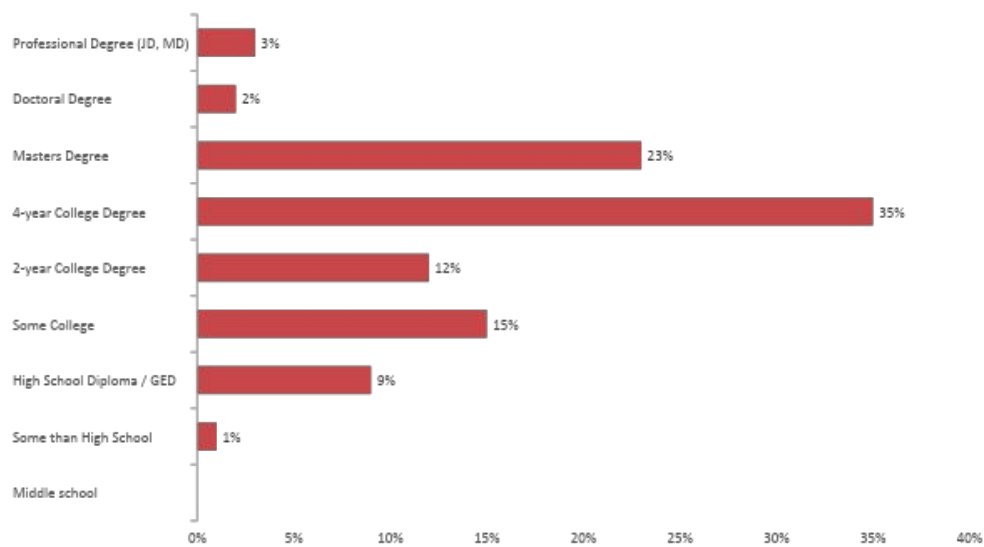


Are you:

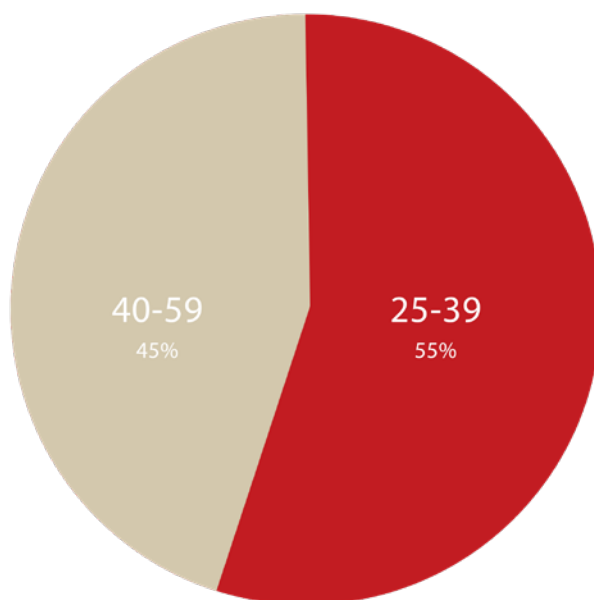




What is the highest level of education you have completed?



Which of the following age brackets do you belong to?

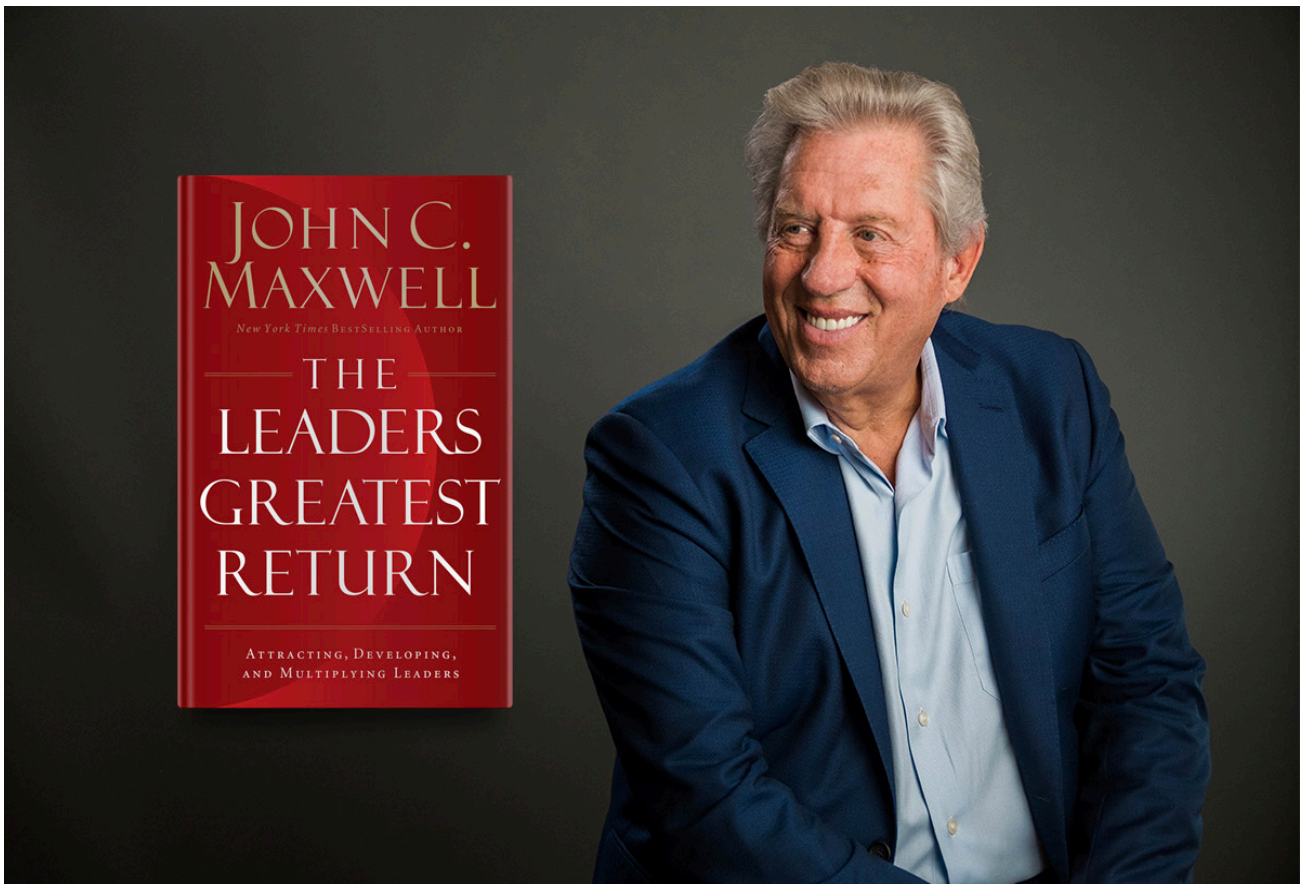


## Study Methodology

In January 2020, HarperCollins Leadership conducted an online survey based on insights and topics found in *The Leader's Greatest Return* by John C. Maxwell to better understand development and training of U.S. leaders. Respondents were recruited from a national representative panel. To qualify for the survey, a person met the following requirements:

- 25-59 years old
- Employed
- In a leadership role
- Purchased at least one business or leadership-themed book in the past year

Minimal weighting was applied to ensure representation of certain demographic factors, such as age, gender, region, and employment role. The sample error for this data is plus or minus 3.2% at the 95% confidence level for the total sample.



In *The Leader's Greatest Return*, Maxwell shares the most important lessons he's learned about the leadership development process over the last quarter century. He instructs readers in how to

- **Recognize potential leaders**
- **Attract leaders by creating a leadership “table”**
- **Work themselves out of a job by equipping and empowering leaders**
- **Position leaders to build a winning team**
- **Coach leaders to higher levels and make them leadership developers themselves**

This is where leaders really experience the compounding value of developing leaders and go to the highest levels of leadership themselves. Anyone who wants to take the next step in their leadership, build their organization or team today, and create their legacy for tomorrow needs to read *The Leader's Greatest Return*.

**Learn more at <http://theleadersgreatestreturnbook.com>  
or visit your favorite book retailer.**