

MORE LEADERS SOONER

5 WAYS TO ACCELERATE YOUR LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

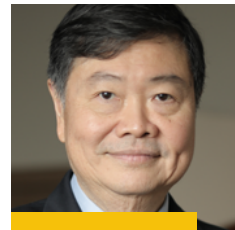
It's a fact that modern-day leadership is challenging. Over the last two decades, the changes in business context have completely redefined what leadership means today. We've come a long way from when leadership used to be just about a senior executive directing his or her team in the pursuit of an organization's goals. That kind of leadership was "personality-driven"—propelled by whatever an individual's dominant traits and characteristics were. Companies today can't survive with that kind of leadership.

We've all heard the examples of leaders and companies that didn't want to change with the times, and weren't able to revive themselves from the downfall they had steered themselves toward. The pace of disruption is high and demands for time, results and output aren't slowing down—and the models of leadership and leaders have changed to emphasize effectiveness and shared focus.

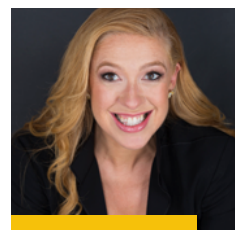
The modern workplace needs a different leadership style and a different mindset from leaders where each individual in the company is able to look at himself or herself as a leader and be able to contribute in ways that help the team and move the organization forward. Managers can't just be managers anymore—they're also expected to inspire their teams and develop them for the future.

For instance, in this disruptive age, the responsibility for innovation can't remain solely with top management. Organizations need innovation to come from everywhere and realize that they need to have a culture of innovation. However, in order to build that culture, they need to have leaders who understand this and are able to engage their teams to innovate.

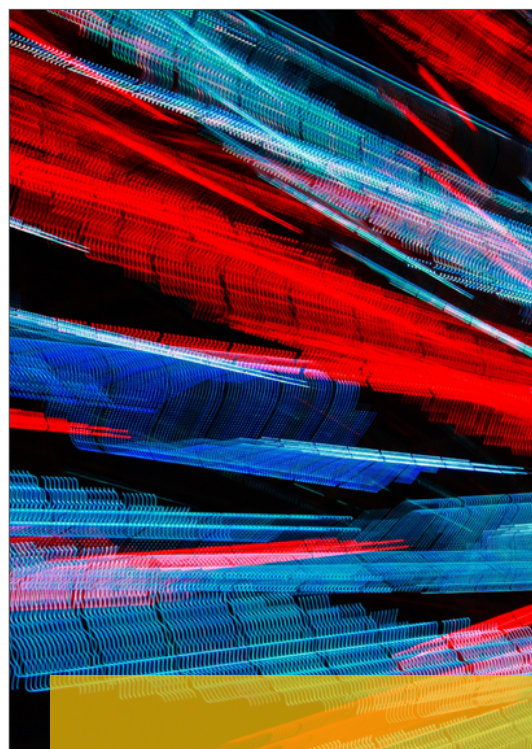
Successful leadership is no longer synonymous with achievement; it's not just about business growth anymore. In order to be effective in today's fast-paced and complex world, a leader needs to be agile; have a sense of purpose; have strategic vision; be inspirational and engaging; have the ability to deal with ambiguity and complexity; be able to coach and build teams; and be innovative—all at the same time.



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Leadership Acceleration Is Essential

Have you taken a look at recent statistics on the future of our global workforce? Eighty-four percent of organizations today anticipate a shortfall of leaders in the next five years. Ten thousand Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964) retire each day and nearly half of all Millennials (born 1983–2000) will occupy the workforce by 2020. How can organizations create leaders who have the knowledge, skills, experience and wisdom to close the gap of skills and experience that the Baby Boomers will leave?

Effective leadership is the only way to maneuver through this and prepare for the future. Organizations need to be able to define what leadership means for them and to have both sturdy existing leadership and a solid pipeline of capable executives, who have the skills and the character needed to take up leadership roles in the near future.

This is what makes leadership acceleration not only essential, but also indispensable.

“ Leaders must encourage their organizations to dance to forms of music yet to be heard.

Warren Bennis

Leadership—how to develop and coach individual leaders, leadership teams, and build organizational capability—needs to be made easy and simple for leaders today who are busier and more inundated than ever. Advancement can no longer be left only to those who have years of experience, as in the past.

Though rising budgets for corporate learning and development signify that many organizations realize the need for accelerating leadership development, not many organizations are using those budgets to accelerate leadership development *at all levels*.

The need for more leaders sooner requires us to think differently about how leaders form and will require that we think differently about talent readiness. Essentially, replacing some of the work-based experiences and time for growth we once relied on to populate our succession plans and leadership benches.

More than ever, organizations need to rely on all available talent to step up and step in to leadership. This means leadership is now synonymous with inclusion. Gone are the days where leaders learn about "difference" in basic diversity training, or simply take for granted that there is a dominant "way" to lead that is representative of the majority who have been in power.

Five Ways to Develop Your Talent Now

All leaders, with an eye on developing future leaders, will need to question deeply held assumptions about what leadership looks like and facilitate ways for everyone to step up. Specifically:

1. *How we interview, coach and review the performance of diverse talent must be grounded in bias awareness and an insatiable curiosity and openness.* We can't afford to shut out those who can't—or won't—lead. This means thinking differently and openly about everything from where and how we get work done to the kinds of communication practices we employ and making room for different styles and approaches.



2. *How we think about "readiness" and "risk taking."*

We know women, for example, are still promoted based on performance, while men are promoted based on potential. To accelerate leadership, we need to first become aware of beliefs that may be causing constraints, and then take more chances on not only women, but also other members of underrepresented groups who may not look or act the way those in the majority of leadership positions may look and act. *We need everyone.*

3. *As leaders, when we try to develop the individual talent available on our teams, we need to follow the "teach, do, feedback, do" cycle to accelerate development.*

This is where you show the ropes to your team members, make them do what is required of them, give them feedback, and then make them do it again. This cycle should repeat itself until they have become confident and an expert at it.

4. *When we do elevate any talented leader in an accelerated fashion, we must ensure the leader has strong support and sponsorship (advocacy, just-in-time coaching, and development) if we want them to succeed.*

For women especially, because of the perceived risk often associated with these appointments as well as some of the ways women speak about themselves (often offering the full picture of their capability, complete with areas they may not feel as confident).

5. *Coaching skills (early, often, and just-in-time feedback) for leaders will become essential.*

We know that underrepresented populations receive less feedback—ultimately doing them and the organizations they work for a disservice regarding the full value these groups can add to leadership.

To be successful and meet the future head-on, organizations must adopt a mindset that grasps the need for development of its leaders, challenges conventions, and recognizes the learning styles of the modern workforce, in order to accelerate leadership and create a stronger bench strength that is ready for the next level. Remember—we need everyone.



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Create lasting **IMPACT**.

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At Linkage, we are passionate about developing leaders who create **lasting impact** in business, in lives, and in the world every day.

We help you become a leader worth following. **We are Linkage.**

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