

8 CRITICAL CAPABILITIES FOR A COMPLEX WORLD

By identifying and developing eight key capabilities, leaders can capture the big opportunities hidden in today's complex business landscape.

MANAGE COMPLEXITY

Solving problems and making decisions under fast-changing conditions.

What Does it Look Like in a Leader?



Keeps an eye out for indicators of change



Builds diverse teams to solve problems



Looks at organizations as complex systems

Why It Matters Now:

Fewer than 33% of leaders express confidence in their ability to manage complexity.¹

MANAGE GLOBAL BUSINESS

Identifying and capturing opportunities unfolding in global markets.

What Does it Look Like in a Leader?



Crafts a global strategy that also incorporates region-specific tactics



Seizes opportunities in emerging markets



Navigates culturally complex, often nuanced business situations

Why It Matters Now:

By 2025 almost half of Fortune 500 companies will be based in emerging markets, up from about 5% in 2000.²

ACT STRATEGICALLY

Adjusting strategies to capture emerging opportunities or tackle unexpected challenges.

What Does it Look Like in a Leader?



Understands competitive forces that shape relevant industries



Identifies and evaluates strategic opportunities



Communicates a compelling strategic vision

Why It Matters Now:

71% of learning & development professionals said their leaders are not ready to lead their organizations into the future.³

FOSTER INNOVATION

Building reliable innovation processes and a collaborative, creative environment.

What Does it Look Like in a Leader?



Establishes the structures that best support innovation



Effectively manages systems and processes



Encourages people to discover new ways to achieve success

Why It Matters Now:

Three out of four executives think their firms lack the kind of ideas needed to drive growth.⁴

LEVERAGE NETWORKS

Systematically developing networks to achieve organizational goals.

What Does it Look Like in a Leader?



Leverages network to gain insight into complex problems



Creates networks to enhance influence



Treats networks as mutually rewarding relationships

Why It Matters Now:

Leaders who excel at networking are also great collaborators, which is a highly sought-after skill.⁵

INSPIRE ENGAGEMENT

Fostering a culture that creates meaningful connections between employees' values and those of the organization.

What Does it Look Like in a Leader?



Understands individual employee's values and needs



Shapes work assignments to meet different needs and values



Fosters an inclusive work environment

Why It Matters Now:

Only 13% of employees worldwide are engaged at work, which makes engagement and its impact on retention a significant concern for HR leaders.⁶

CULTIVATE LEARNING AGILITY

Routinely seeking out and learning from new experiences.

What Does it Look Like in a Leader?



Seeks out opportunities to discover new approaches and acquire skills



Rapidly analyzes problems and synthesizes information



Searches for lessons in both successful and unsuccessful outcomes

Why It Matters Now:

Organizations whose leaders can navigate a complex world are three times more likely to be in the top 20 percent of financial performance.⁷

DEVELOP PERSONAL ADAPTABILITY

Remaining focused and effective in the face of uncertainty and ambiguity.

What Does it Look Like in a Leader?



Deals flexibly and creatively with challenging situations



Builds resilience by effectively managing stress, time, and energy



Recognizes that past approaches often do not work in current situations

Why It Matters Now:

60% of CEOs believe that adaptability to change is the top skill needed for leadership, up from 40% in 2013.⁸



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1. 2014 | 2015 Global Leadership Forecast by Development Dimensions International and The Conference Board | 2. "Urban World: The Shifting Global Business Landscape," McKinsey Global Institute, 2013 | 3. Brandon Hall State of Leadership Development Survey 2015 | 4. Corporate Executive Board 2012 report on Transformative Innovation | 5. PwC 2014 Global CEO Survey | 6. Gallup 2013 State of the Global Workforce Survey | 7. In a 2014 Conference Board Survey | 8. 2014 Best Companies for Leaders Survey, Chief Executive Magazine