Developing More
Great Leaders
in the Age of Hybrid Work

Table of Contents

Introduction

Developing great leaders is difficult. Every year, employers invest more time and resources into leadership development than any other human capital management function, according to Brandon Hall Group research.

Top 5 Areas of HCM Investment, 2022

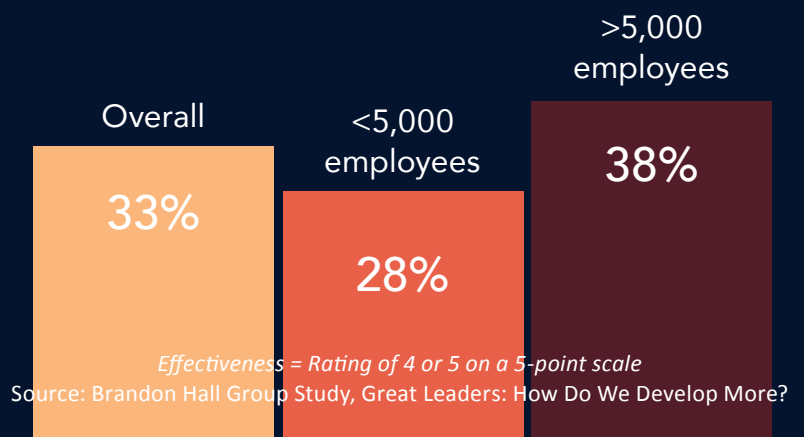| 74%	71%	69%	68%	65%
Leadership development	Technology optimization	Learning	Talent acquisition	Data and analytics
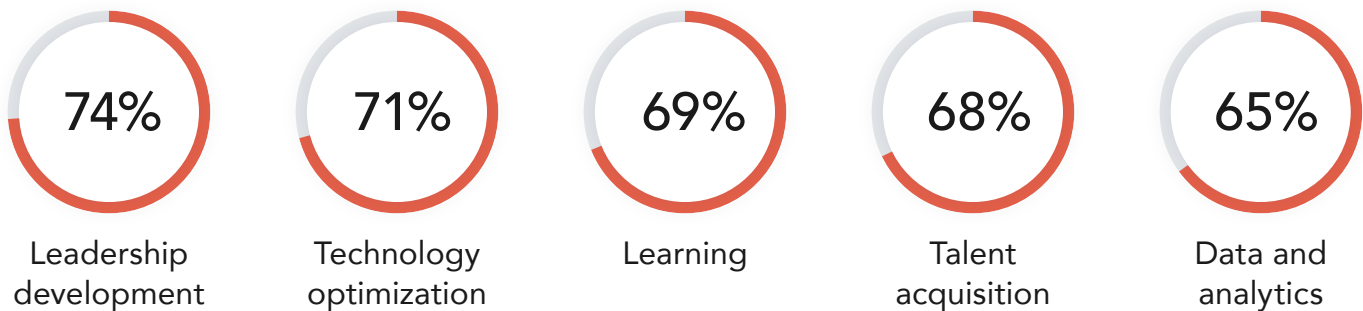
Source: Brandon Hall Group HCM Outlook 2022
Percentages reflect organizations planning moderate or heavy investment in time and money

But year after year, leadership development does not deliver the impact organizations seek – more leaders with the capabilities to drive business growth while engaging and developing agile employees.

Effectiveness of Efforts to Develop Great Leaders

Overall: 33%
<5,000 employees: 28%
>5,000 employees: 38%

Effectiveness = Rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Great Leaders: How Do We Develop More?

Several problems have historically hampered the development of great leaders:

- Event-driven learning through live or virtual classroom training

- Lack of reinforcement of newly learned behaviors and competencies

- Limiting development to a select group rather than leaders and high-potentials at all levels of the organization

- Few immersive learning opportunities to practice new skills in a safe environment

- Lack of consistent coaching, mentoring and sharing experiences and insights with peers
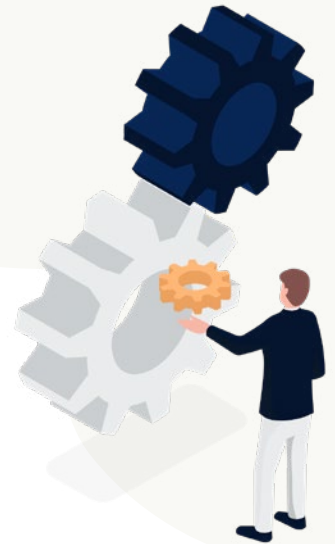
Now employers understand that leadership development must evolve — and quickly. Brandon Hall Group research shows that at least 70% of organizations believe it is important to improve these competencies and attributes:

Managing change	Coaching skills	Emotional intelligence	Strategic thinking
Team development	Providing constructive feedback	Agility	Accountability
Growth mindset	Unconscious-bias awareness/mitigation	Collaboration	Decision-making

That's a lot of heavy lifting to do at a time when disruption and change are the only constants. The key to success is to nurture the leaders of today and tomorrow through a continuous learning journey.

Leadership is the ultimate context-driven capability, requiring a blend of cognitive, empathetic and practical behaviors and competencies. The most effective way to build this capability at scale is through collaborative and social learning. This eBook explores research-based strategies for success.

Democratization of Leadership Development

The days of training a small group of leaders and high-potentials are over. Most organizations now believe everyone should receive some type of leadership training.

Almost half of employers believe employees should be exposed to some type of leadership development training within their first three months of employment and 86% believe it should occur within the first six months.

70%

Leadership development training is needed for every employee

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Creating Leadership Development for Every Employee

More employers understand that today's workforce requires inclusive leadership and values collaboration and diversity. The increased complexity of the business environment also requires more work to be done in diverse teams, where more people are asked to lead based on their experiences and expertise. Therefore, more people must understand the values and behaviors needed to lead in a collaborative environment.

Percentage	Timeframe
14%	More than 180 days
13%	121-180 days
	91-120 days
25%	
18%	
	61-90 days
12%	31-60 days
18%	First 30 days

When would you target a new employee's first exposure to leadership development?

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Creating Leadership Development for Every Employee

However, while most organizations understand the need for democratization, only about four in 10 employers provide leadership training for every or most employees now. The biggest reason: The continuing reliance on event-based training makes it difficult to deliver practical and applicable learning experiences across the organization.

Does your organization provide some type of leadership training for every employee?

47% YES **53%** NO

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study,
Creating Leadership Development for Every Employee

To improve the impact of leadership development, organizations must escape the constraints of event-based learning that pulls people away from their jobs for extended periods and restricts the collaboration and reinforcement needed to drive behavior change.

With collaborative and social learning technology, organizations can deliver more effective learning experiences at scale to a broader set of leaders, from the C-suite to the front lines.
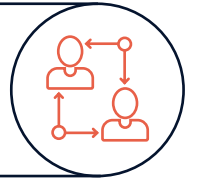
This type of learning, offered on a broad scale to a wide variety of employees, drives a better employee experience.

Brandon Hall Group research shows that at least 80% of organizations believe widespread leadership development provides the following benefits for employees:
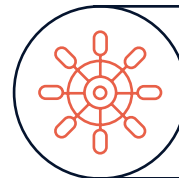
Promotes a clear, vision, direction

Fosters collaboration

Improves trust

Improves emotional intelligence

Encourages coaching

Improves interpersonal skills

Contextualize the Learning Experiences

Employees can't gain the full benefits from learning solely through traditional interventions, however. Brandon Hall Group research shows that a majority of employers believe these strategies are important to improve leader training.

Top Strategies to Improve Leader Training

Coaching leaders
82%

Creating continuous learning paths
80%

Offering immersive learning by doing
78%

Mentoring leaders
77%

Enabling peer-to-peer discussions to share challenges, experience
76%

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study,
Great Leaders: How Do We Develop More?
Important = Rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale
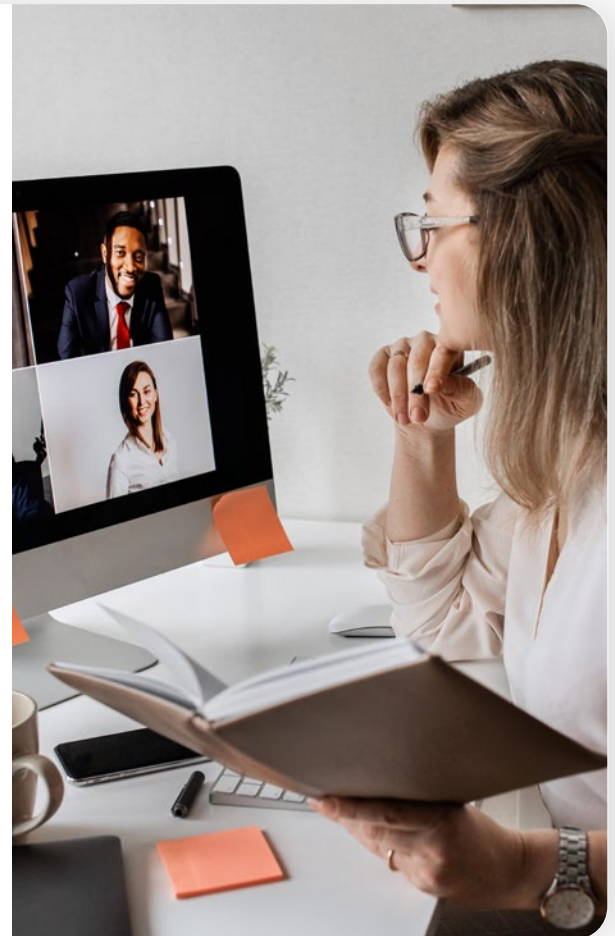
A fully developed collaborative learning platform empowers organizations to leverage all of those strategies and more. But only 28% of organizations say their technology solutions for leadership development are very well developed, according to Brandon Hall Group's study, *HCM Technology: How to Transform HR into a Digital Powerhouse.*

Investment in technology that reduces dependence on event-driven learning and enables contextualized learning experiences is critical to developing more great leaders in the hybrid work environment.

Online learning, such as VILT and eLearning, can introduce new concepts, behaviors and skills, but does not effectively reinforce the learning or allow practice and discussion.

A learning platform that empowers collaborative and social learning:

- Provides opportunities for leaders and prospective leaders to practice and apply newly learned behaviors and skills in a safe environment
- Enables employees to engage in discussions and share experiences with peers
- Enables team-based action learning projects
- Empowers coaching and mentoring
- Aligns your leadership development training to your business priorities

These approaches combine to provide continuous learning. They also develop your hybrid work culture by promoting collaboration across the organization and enabling employees and leaders to learn from each other through informal and informal feedback.

Collaborative and social learning also reinforce initial learning and "nudge" employees to apply behaviors and skills they have learned. Nine in ten employers believe reinforcement and nudges are important and most believe it should continue for months.

For how long after initial leader training should learners be nudged after initial training?

0-2 weeks	3-4 weeks	2 months	3 months or more
20%	26%	12%	42%

Source: Brandon Hall Group Training: How Do We Improve Leadership Training?

The best collaborative and social learning platforms create these immersive experiences that nurture and reinforce in a variety of ways. They include:

Inline discussions
that connect content to context with immediate opportunities to reflect and engage with peers and experts

Flexible practice
that ties learning to work with practice assignments that accommodate a range of media types

Project galleries
that empower leaders to learn from each other through feedback on each other's work

Team workspaces
that facilitate group collaboration with dedicated team workspaces

Learner profiles
that promote connections between leaders

Gamification elements
that provide status reports on learning progress and promote friendly competition with points and leaderboards

Mobile apps
that empower leaders to learn anywhere, anytime

Key Takeaways

With all the ambiguity associated with work, leaders must build strong relationships with their employees. They should collaborate, rather than dictate, and be empathetic and adaptable to employees' needs whenever possible.

Working with inclusive leaders who listen builds trust. You know the adage, "Workers don't leave organizations, they leave managers." It can work the other way around. Workers will stay longer if they trust their managers and believe they have their best interests at heart.

To build a stronger link between leaders and employees, you must establish a collaborative approach to leadership development. Key considerations include:

Leadership is the ultimate context-driven capability, requiring a blend of cognitive, empathetic and practical behaviors and competencies

Collaborative learning fosters a dynamic learning culture that engages learners, promotes accountability, and makes learning across the organization more scalable, applicable and dynamic

Collaborative and social learning is the most effective way, especially in the evolving hybrid work environment, to build this capability at scale in your workforce

With collaborative and social learning technology, organizations can deliver more effective learning experiences at scale to a broader set of leaders, from the C-suite to the front lines

These experiences include:

- Customizing and aligning your leader development to your business priorities

- Application of new behaviors and skills

- Ongoing peer discussion and collaboration

- Team-based projects to apply leadership concepts

- Coaching

- Mentoring

Authors and Contributors

Claude Werder (claude.werder@brandonhall.com) co-authored this report. He is Senior Vice President and Principal HCM Analyst at Brandon Hall Group. He leads the Talent Management research and advisory practice, specializing in leadership development, performance development, learning, career development, employee engagement, succession management, talent retention, and diversity, equity and inclusion. He also produces Brandon Hall Group's HCM Excellence Conference.

Mike Cooke (mike.cooke@brandonhall.com) contributed to this report. He is CEO and Principal HCM Analyst at Brandon Hall Group. Mike has more than 20 years' experience in human capital management and the research, software and technology industries. Before running Brandon Hall Group, Mike was co-founder of AC Growth, a research and consulting firm, and VP and General Manager of Field Operations at Bersin & Associates, a global analyst and consulting services firm in all areas of HCM.

Rachel Cooke (rachel.cooke@brandonhall.com) is Brandon Hall Group's Chief Operating Officer and Principal HCM Analyst. She is responsible for business operations, including client and member advisory services, marketing design, annual awards programs, conferences and the company's project management functions. She also leads Advancing Women in the Workplace and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives, research and events. Rachel worked in the HCM research industry for 15 years and held several key management and executive positions within the Talent and Learning Research, and Performance Improvement industries.

Michael Rochelle (michael.rochelle@brandonhall.com) contributed to this report. He is Chief Strategy Officer and Principal HCM Analyst at Brandon Hall Group. Michael leads a wide range of advisory support and strategic engagements for Fortune 1000 and small- to medium-sized organizations as well as leading and emerging solution providers across the HCM industry. Michael has more than 30 years' experience in HR, IT, sales, marketing, business development, and strategic and financial planning in Fortune 500 and venture-backed start-up organizations.

Richard Pachter (richard.pachter@brandonhall.com) edited this report. He is the Content Manager at Brandon Hall Group and is responsible for editing all types of content related to research. He has experience as a journalist, copywriter, editor, marketer, blogger and social media marketing manager. He also served as the business books columnist for the *Miami Herald* for more than a decade.

About NovoEd

Overview

- The leading digital platform for collaborative learning at scale

- Founded at Stanford's Social Algorithm Lab in 2012

- Used to develop high-value capabilities that accelerate business performance

- Serve corporate, executive education, and professional training markets. Over a million learners to date

Select Customers

Select Awards

NovoEd's collaborative learning platform empowers organizations to design and deliver experiential learning that accelerates business performance on a global scale.

Since the company's founding at Stanford's social algorithm laboratory in 2012, global corporations, executive education providers and training firms have relied on NovoEd to develop high-value capabilities through purposeful practice and application, coaching and mentorship, and group collaboration. NovoEd's proven approach to learning connects diverse groups of learners, mentors and leaders in a high-impact online environment.

NovoEd

To learn more, please visit: **www.novoed.com**

About Brandon Hall Group

With more than 10,000 clients globally and 28 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

SOME WAYS WE CAN HELP

Membership
Individual and Enterprise Membership Options: Includes research assets, advisory support, a client success plan and more.

Professional Certifications
Self-paced certification programs. Virtual group sessions for companies. In-person conferences and summits.

Advisory Offerings
Custom Research Projects, including surveys, focus group interviews and Organization Needs Assessment for Transformation, Technology Selection and Strategy.

Excellence Awards
Two annual programs recognize the best organizations that have successfully deployed programs to achieve measurable results.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
recognizes world-class HCM programs that transform their organization and achieve breakthrough results. This designation is the next step beyond the HCM Excellence Awards, which focus on a single program, and looks at the department as a whole.

SMARTCHOICE® PREFERRED PROVIDER PROGRAM
uniquely places HCM service and technology companies at the top of organizations' consideration list of vendors. It adds an unmatched level of credibility based on BHG's twenty-eight-plus years of experience in evaluating and selecting the best solution providers for leading organizations around the world.