



Ipsos Reid Public Affairs

Report for:
The Refinery Leadership Partners, Inc.

C-Suite Executive Research

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INTRODUCTION

About the Refinery Leadership Partners, Inc.

The Refinery Leadership Partners, Inc. works with organizations to create a competitive advantage through increased leadership capacity. Drawing on the experience of senior people and highly skilled specialists, The Refinery's rigorous process combines the knowledge and expertise of the academic world, the sophistication of the consulting world, and the knowledge of how things work in the real world. Candid and diligent, Refinery consultants ask tough questions, listen exhaustively and challenge clients to make the courageous decisions that lead to greatness.

The firm's client list includes such heavyweights as Goldcorp Inc., Cameco Corporation, Toyota, Johnson & Johnson Group of Companies, 20th century Fox filmed & entertainment, and Vivendi Inc. All Refinery clients, regardless of size or industry, have ambitious goals and a hunger for positive change.

Committed to driving change that is both holistic and sustainable, The Refinery helps build not just strong leaders but also the organizational systems that ensure objectives are reached, problems are minimized, talented employees are attracted and retained, and a culture of achievement thrives.

Objectives

The Refinery Leadership Partners, Inc. commissioned Ipsos Reid to conduct a survey of Canadian and American senior-level business executives to better understand their views and approach to leadership development.

Specifically, the main objectives of the research included:

- Understand business executives' evaluation of their own performance and that of their company's executive team;
- Measure the level of priority business executives place on leadership development;
- Determine the incidence of having a formal leadership development strategy, the specific activities that are included in this strategy, perceived effectiveness, and business executives' level of involvement;
- Understand what, if anything, business executives have recently done to develop their leadership skills and the perceived effectiveness of these activities; and,
- Identify potential barriers to pursuing leadership development activities.





Methodology

A total of 151 telephone interviews were conducted with a randomly selected representative sample of Canadian (n=67) and American (n=84) senior-level business executives. The research targeted all business sectors with the following exceptions: government, churches, and schools. All respondents were responsible for overall management and direction of their company at their location. Further, respondents were screened at the beginning of the survey to only include those companies with at least 1,000 employees worldwide. All interviews were conducted between January 3 and February 22, 2008. Overall results are accurate to within ± 8.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error will be larger for sample subgroups.

The following report is a summary of some of the key research findings. A copy of the full report can be obtained by contacting The Refinery Leadership Partners, Inc at info@refineryleadership.com.



KEY FINDINGS

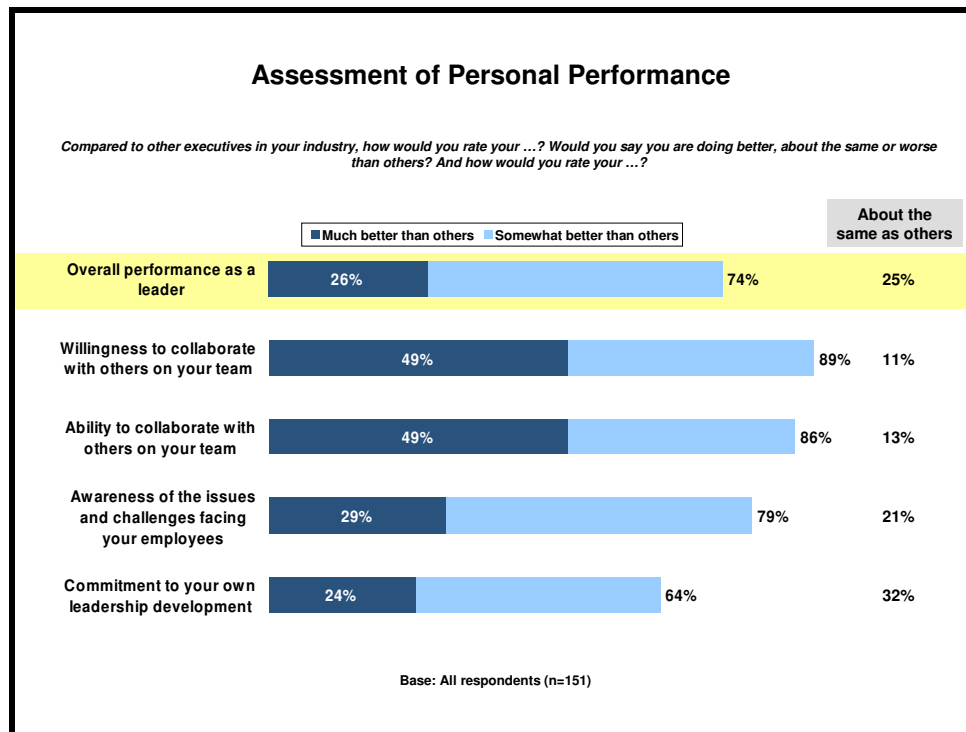
Assessment of Personal Performance

Senior executives believe they are performing better than others in their industry.

Most senior executives take a very favourable view of their own performance as business leaders, with three-quarters (74%) considering their “overall performance as a leader” to be “much” or “somewhat” better than that of other executives in their industry.

The survey shows that collaboration is one area in particular where executives feel they excel. Overall, 89% say they are doing better than others when it comes to “willingness to collaborate with others on their team”; 86% say they are doing better than others when it comes to “ability to collaborate with others on their team”. Most (79%) also say they are doing better than others when it comes to demonstrating “awareness of the issues and challenges facing their employees”, while two-thirds (64%) consider their “commitment to their own leadership development” to be better than other executives in the industry.

The high numbers suggest senior executives may have an overly high estimation of their leadership abilities – clearly, not everyone can be performing better than everyone else. Senior executives could benefit from an independent review of their leadership skills and abilities to help them more accurately gauge how they are doing in this area and address potential misconceptions.

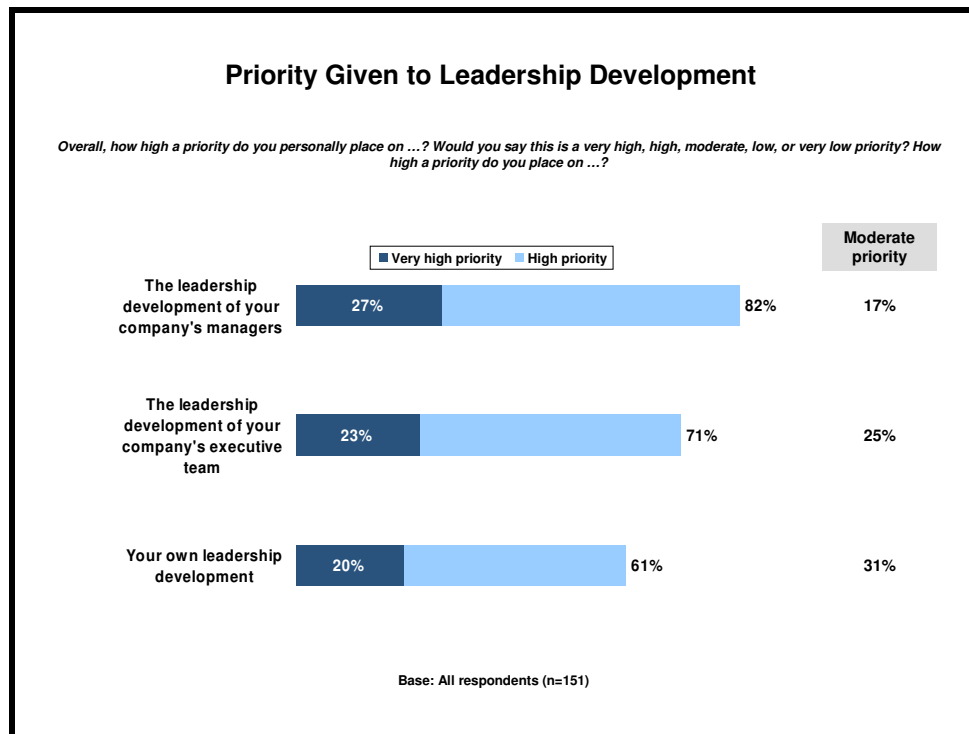


Priority Given to Leadership Development

While leadership development is important to senior executives, the survey suggests respondents are more focused on opportunities for their staff rather than on developing their own leadership skills.

The survey shows that leadership development - whether it be for themselves, their executive team, or their managers - is a priority for the majority of senior executives. Overall, respondents place the greatest emphasis on developing the leadership skills of managers, with 82% saying this is a “very high” or “high” priority. Another 71% consider developing leadership skills among their company’s executive team to be a priority. While most (61%) senior executives also say their own leadership development is a priority, it is clear that this falls behind developing the leadership skills of those working beneath them.

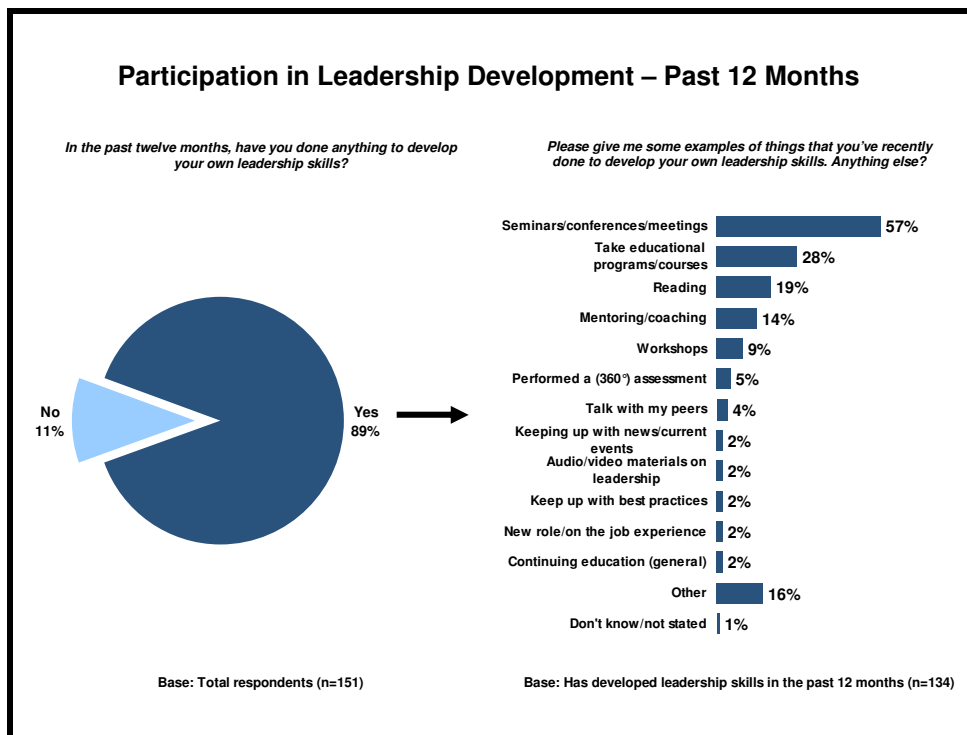
Senior executives may need to be convinced that their own leadership development – not just that of their staff – is important and worth investing in.



Participation in Leadership Development Activities

Despite findings showing that senior executives place less emphasis on developing their own leadership skills as compared to their staff, most have recently participated in leadership development activities themselves.

Nine-in-ten (89%) senior executives say they have done something in the past twelve months to develop their own leadership skills. Of these respondents, more than half (57%) say, on an unprompted basis, that they “attend seminars/conferences/meetings”. Other common responses to the open-end question asking what specific leadership development activities they have participated in the past twelve months include: “take educational (degree/certificate/non-degree) programs/courses” (28%); “reading” (19%); and, received “mentoring/coaching” (14%).



When presented with a list of specific leadership development activities and asked which ones they participated in during the past twelve months, virtually all (97%) senior executives say they “read about leadership in a book, magazine, or newspaper”. The majority also say they “participated in own company’s leadership development program or activities” (80%) and “attended a presentation, seminar, or workshop on leadership” (73%).

Participation in the remaining activities is much less common, with less than half of all senior executives saying they have done this in the past year.

- “Enrolled or participated in a leadership program that was offered by someone other than your company” (37%);
- “Attended a peer networking or development session on leadership such as Young President’s Club, 40 under 40, or other executive forums” (24%); and,
- “Employed the services of a personal leadership coach” (21%).

Overall, these findings suggest that while executives are open to participating in leadership development activities, their efforts to-date have been primarily focused on less formal activities that may require a more passive level of involvement and call to action.

