



THE MANY FACES OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership is like the proverbial story of a few blind men touching an elephant. Touching its trunk, one of them would think that an elephant is long and thin. Another, touching its belly, would say that an elephant is big and round. Yet another, feeling one of its legs, would claim that an elephant is firm and stout.

All of us have some opinion about leadership. Some of us say leaders must lead the charge like Alexander the Great on the battlefield. Others may think that leaders should view the proceedings behind the frontline, like Winston Churchill, so that they can see the bigger picture. Who's right? Is any one wrong?

We are better informed than the proverbial blind men since we have all experienced leadership in one way or another. Some of us could even be leaders.

The reality is that there are many styles of leadership and many different types of leaders. In this third edition of the newsletter, we explore the multi-faceted nature of leadership through the perspective of those who have been walking the tightrope that Alexander and Churchill once did.

Table of Contents

- 2** Harya Dimas
Connecting in a digital age
- 4** Goh Chee Seng
The evolving leader
- 6** Luc de Waegh
Leadership in a transitional economy
- 8** Koh Kong Meng
Getting our hands dirty
- 10** The latest findings from Dale Carnegie Thought Leadership Research
Leadership Blindspots



C — O N — N E — C — T I N G

in a digital age

Harya Dimas



Leadership mindset change

When I became a manager at the programmer level, I have good technical skills but I realized that I know nothing about leadership and how to lead people. There was an employee who confronted me and told me that I was a toxic person.

That was before I enrolled in the Dale Carnegie Course in 2017. Taking part in the course was part of my learning journey in leadership that started five years ago. I started to pick up books and learn from many famous people about leadership. Joining the Dale Carnegie Course worked wonders for my team. I accepted the negative comments about my leadership style from my staff and applied what

I learnt from the course. Just months ago, the same staff gave me an award and he wrote that I am a leader who is most willing to learn. By applying the Dale Carnegie principles, we can turn challenging employees into better ones.

Human touch

In the digital era, sometimes we lack the human touch when we communicate digitally. For example, we use the Slack app in the office to communicate with each other. It's a quick, fun way to keep in touch and to trade jokes to lighten the mood at work. However, at times, electronic communication may lack sincerity. During the Muslim fasting month, I used to



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human touch when we
communicate digitally.**

write "Happy Fasting" on Slack. Everyone at work did the same after I posted the greeting. However, the personal element is missing using this digital approach. So, I went up to each and every staff member, shook their hands and greeted them. This started a positive chain reaction and the whole office did the same. This shows that even in the digital era, soft skills are crucial for leaders.

afraid to learn from others will inspire and influence those in his circle. A supportive learning community will evolve as a result. In the bigger scheme of things, a larger network can be formed where people connect, learn, mentor, influence and motivate each other. Only by doing so can we better equip ourselves to adapt to changes. Adaptive leaders can better assist their colleagues.



A humble leader who is not afraid to learn from others will inspire and influence those in his circle.

Good leaders must possess both hard and soft skills. Leaders need to share their thoughts with those around them. In this way, we show that we are constantly communicating and also inspiring others to be open about their thoughts. A humble leader who is not

Also, an important practical tip for leaders is to set up digital profiles and update them regularly. Nowadays, even doctors have popular social media accounts. This is an important way for us to stay relevant and connected in the digital age.



Good leaders must possess both hard and soft skills.

About

Harya Dimas is the managing director and partner of Definite. He joined the agency eight years ago and his background is in programming. He is a graduate of the Dale Carnegie Course, having taken it in 2017. He graduated from Leadership Training for Managers, another signature Dale Carnegie offering, this year.

New expectations

Uploading our profiles online is not just for the sake of having a digital presence. Our workforce, especially the younger generation, has evolved. Now, they can work from anywhere, anytime using any device. For many of them, climbing the corporate ladder is not important. That process is no longer as important as before because the new generation at the work place focuses on outputs. What matters to them is what they will be getting – receiving bonuses, going on vacations, taking selfies and then sharing them on social media and getting many followers. Their definition of a better life is influenced by social media. A young kid living next to me said his ambition is to be a famous Youtuber. Their priorities are very different from the other generational groups before them. For the leaders amongst us, if we do not understand this, we may risk becoming disengaged. We can lead a modern workforce only if we can connect with them. Definitely, we need hard skills like analytical thinking and strategic planning. What we all can focus more on in terms of soft skills will be creativity, resourcefulness, adaptability, collaboration, and leadership.

Tech trends

There will be no digital businesses but businesses in a digital world. Artificial Intelligence (AI) will replace work done by humans. Now, there are refrigerators that will give us information on where items should be placed in the fridge itself. The fridge will even place orders for items, like milk, that are going to expire. So, to remain relevant and add value, we can no longer stick solely to our job functions. For example, an IT personnel cannot just be performing tasks related only to information technology. He needs to look after business development and be in the management as well. Otherwise, he will be replaced by robots.

Customers' expectations

Consumers now are extremely well-informed. Before buying anything, they will first look up the items on Google and read all the reviews. They watch unboxing videos and read the comments before buying.

Also, customers value quality content. They will reference businesses' social media pages like Facebook and Instagram to find out if the product or service suits them.

Price may no longer be an important purchasing criterion. For example, in the food and beverage space, restaurant owners are discovering that some customers prefer to patronize expensive-looking places so that they can take pretty selfies. They see this as the main reason for spending their money there.

Workplace changes

Organisational structures will become flatter and more horizontal. Companies that have applied this type of structure are Go-Jek, Tokopedia and Genius. None of them have a standard structure in the traditional understanding.

There are no rigid desks and chairs; they use beanbags. At their offices, games can be found easily. Previously, providing lunch for employees at work is seen as a perk. Now, a perk is when employers provide culinary workshops at the office.



Definite is digital agency based in Jakarta. Established in 2009 as a web agency, it has grown into a dynamic digital agency venturing into social media, digital products, mobile solutions, and content marketing.

The EV LIVING LEADER

Goh Chee Seng



Values alignment

I work with a lot of younger people between the ages of 22 and 27 in an animation studio. Money is not their chief motivation for reporting to work. They seek to forge meaningful connections with their companies that go beyond business and work. It is vital that they can relate their personal and social lives to the work that they do. The challenge for leaders is to create alignment between



The challenge for leaders is to create alignment between the core values of the organisation and the personal outlook of its staff.

the core values of the organisation and the personal outlook of its staff. This requires tactful persuasion and skillful communication techniques. For my company, I need everyone to be positive and proactive. Some of my staff do not personally subscribe to these traits. To overcome their resistance, I rely on soft skills to get them to realize and eventually experience the positive outcomes that such core values will generate. Once the initial barrier is breached, it becomes easier for me to introduce new ideas and practices to them later on. Communication between myself and them becomes more effective. I feel freer to express myself to them as a result.

Changing leadership style

I like to have fun at work while keeping my eye on the target all the time. It's important to be a little informal and still respect that my team members have different qualities so that we can leverage on everyone's strengths. This is crucial as my company needs creativity. When staff feel that they are given the space to explore and experiment, they will feel at home and this will lead to more creative outputs and outcomes. This does not mean that we lack focus. It is my duty as the company's director to ensure that we are all aligned towards the same goal. This is why I am a determined leader who values fun at the same time.

As recent as eight years ago, I used to reprimand my team whenever they made mistakes. It worked when I was a lecturer. Students and fresh graduates accepted it at the start. However, after two years under my charge, they resisted my chidings as they accumulated experience. Many of them vented their unhappiness with me on social media. They even mustered up the courage to confront me face-to-face. After that, I retreated and did things only to please my staff. Leaders must have a strong vision and lead employees to follow them. But to simply please them as a knee-jerk reaction to their outbursts against me, it meant that I have lost my direction as a leader and merely gave them what they wanted. This was not good for the company. Also, I lost my character. Hence, I realized that I needed to be both determined and fun at the same time. By being 'fun', I can influence my team members with a positive mindset and culture instead of coming down hard on them. Staying focused means that I do not lose sight of the target and lead my staff towards the goal. We cannot let ourselves be overtaken by circumstances. There is a difference between being flexible and being a doormat.

Importance of soft skills

I took the Dale Carnegie Course in 2016. A few months after I graduated from the course, I asked myself how I have changed. Previously, my conversations were very straightforward and I don't think people enjoyed talking to me. Now, many people are willing to speak to me and this is something I have never experienced before. I found out that there are so many ways to approach people and to talk to them. I have learnt how to apply the Dale Carnegie principles to put people at ease and lower any barrier they have towards me.

Some millennials are starting businesses in their early 20s. I observed that generally, they need better communication and leadership skills. Even after working for many years, some of them still behave like fresh graduates. Clueless, they lack communication skills and have no clear direction on how to change. Once the art of communication is mastered and leadership abilities are acquired, they will be able to attract talent to their companies. Good leaders or bosses will attract attention and as they say, birds of a feather flock together. They will feel connected to each other and they will be working collaboratively and productively with one another. We have the power to create the environment we work in. The key lies in soft skills.

Quick tips for bosses

Keep learning. Join classes and read a lot of books. In the past, I did not read much. Now, I read up to 12 books a year. My knowledge of the English language is getting better and I have a translation app or dictionary nearby to help me understand and learn. Encourage your team members to read all the time. Never stop learning.

Advice to millennials

Mastering communication is the key to become successful and influential entrepreneurs. This is because we need to communicate face-to-face or via social media all the time. People's perception of us will be based on how we communicate. Facial expression, body language, tone, and choice of words will shape how people see us.



Making mistakes and admitting to them will not tarnish my reputation as a leader.

Showing appreciation, admitting mistakes

To build a positive workplace culture, we show appreciation to each other all the time. To show support and affirm each other, we give high-fives to express team cohesion. I encourage my colleagues to share their experiences and lessons. I would then give them positive feedback and add on some of my opinion for a meaningful and fruitful exchange of thoughts and ideas. Also, I give constructive criticism so that they can improve in the future.

At the same time, my staff are free to point out my mistakes. In return, I will admit to them and accept their comments as part of the learning process. Even if it is not my fault, I would admit to them. Making mistakes and admitting to them will not tarnish my reputation as a leader. On the contrary, it is a reminder that I am only human; I am not Superman. Five or six years ago, I would immediately explain myself when someone points out my mistake to me. This did not turn out well as it was perceived by others that I lacked confidence and cared too much about my reputation. The younger generation at work are very smart and what we can do is to assure them that everyone is on an endless learning journey. All of us are needed to make things work and we learn from each other. Everyone grows as a result.

About

Spacesheep Studio provides servicing and support in CGI (computer-generated imagery) animation production. The animation studio operates in Japan, France, China, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

Goh Chee Seng is the creative director and chief executive officer of Spacesheep Studio. He started the studio in 2018 and has been involved in creative animation since 2011. In 2017, his talent was affirmed when he was awarded the Malaysia Top 10 Outstanding Creative Youth Award. Chee Seng also has experience in lecturing in digital animation in Malaysia, having held academic positions in various education institutions in the country since 2011.



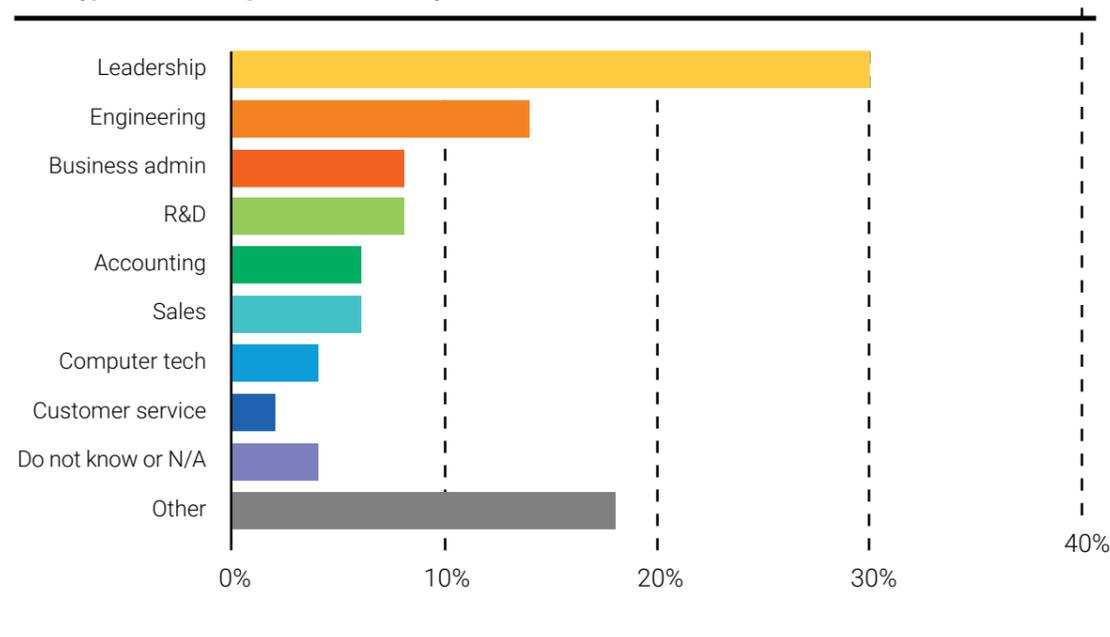
LEADERSHIP IN A TRANSITION AL ECONOMY

Luc de Waegh - managing director of Dale Carnegie Myanmar.

Wanted: Leadership

In a January 2018 survey published by the Oxford Business Group, respondents indicated that the main challenge to do business in Myanmar is access to skilled labor. The one skill that is needed the most is leadership. Three out of 10 survey respondents cited that knowledge and mastery of leadership is needed for the country's economy. Of the various skills mentioned, leadership was cited ahead of others like engineering, business administration, accounting, among others. More than twice the number of respondents felt that leadership is more crucial than engineering which came in second in the survey.

What type of skill is in greatest need in Myanmar?



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The shadow of history

The present state of affairs in terms of the skills needed to further grow Myanmar is a reflection of the country's past. Until the early 1960s, Myanmar (Burma as it was then called) was the most flourishing economy and democracy in Southeast Asia (SEA). There were more hotel rooms in Rangoon (present day Yangon) than in Bangkok. Rangoon was the aviation hub of the region. Well-to-do families in SEA were sending their children to study in the prestigious universities of Burma. When the military took over the country in 1962, Burma entered a self-imposed isolation. The situation was exacerbated by international sanctions imposed on Burma for 50 years. Burma was cut off from most of the world.

The recent history of Myanmar has been a collection of unpredictable events. In 2007, the country witnessed the saffron revolution. Three years later, the surprisingly reformist and efficient government of U Thein Sein won the national elections. In 2015, the country rejoiced as Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) took con-

trol of the government in a landslide election victory. More recently and still happening right now is the escalation of tension in the Rakhine State. The country and its people have lived through tumultuous times.

These events have brought Myanmar's reputation through a roller coaster ride. From a pariah state ruled by autocratic generals, the country has become a stellar example of democratic transition. But the atrocities in the Rakhine State and the jailing of journalists have tarnished its reputation, too.

The repercussions of Myanmar's chequered past and troubling present on businesses in the country have been detrimental. Coming out of isolation and having international sanctions lifted, Myanmar is suddenly seen as the new Eldorado. Like in any gold rush, the initial period of euphoria will give way to sobriety once foreign investors realize that a patient approach is required. Patience is key to overcome the many challenges presented by an economy that has been isolated for so long in order to capture its long-term potential.



Business confidence

This is reflected in the contrasting results of two surveys. In December 2016, Roland Berger published the first Myanmar business survey. The results revealed an enormous sense of optimism among both local and international investors: slightly more than seven out of 10 business people expect the business landscape to rapidly improve. This optimism, which is unparalleled worldwide, resulted from the political and economic changes the country is experiencing. This includes economic reforms, particularly in the telecommunications sector, and the democratic election and a peaceful transition to a new government led by Aung San Suu Kyi. The subsequent lifting of American sanctions added to the sanguine mood.

But just a year later, in December 2017, a second survey showed a drastic decline in short-term business sentiment. Just under half of the executives surveyed foresee the business landscape rapidly improving within the next 12 months. The initial optimism has been dampened by the realisation that several obstacles stand in the way of the business landscape in the country. The chief impediments are:

1. Lack of trained staff (found by 77% of companies to be a significant or very significant issue)
2. No clear government economic policy (77%)
3. Unpredictable legislative environment (72%)

Although the government has launched a National Education Strategic Plan that runs through 2021, questions remain over how it will meet the necessary funding requirements for large-scale reform.



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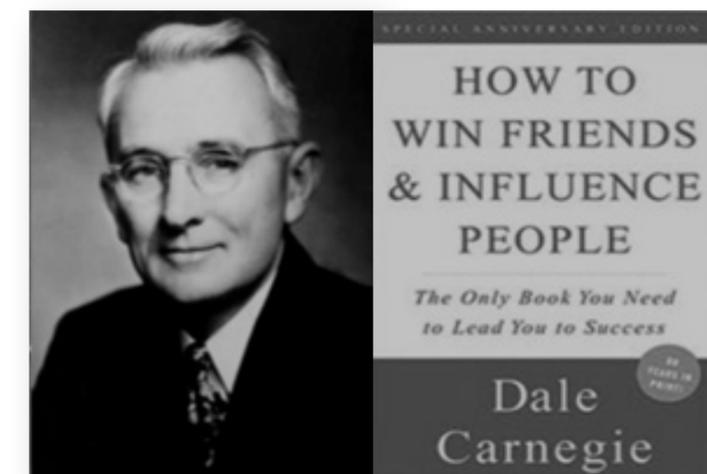
Dale Carnegie in Myanmar

Myanmar has a special relationship with Dale Carnegie. In 1938, U Nu, a former prime minister of Myanmar, translated the global bestseller *How to Win Friends and Influence People* written by Dale Carnegie into the country's language and made it part of the college curriculum. Since then and until today, it remains one of the bestselling books in Myanmar.

Dale Carnegie was officially launched in Myanmar on 2 February 2018. At the launch, John Fleming, senior commercial officer at the US Embassy, highlighted how recent business surveys have underlined the critical need for quality leadership training to build capacity and raise investor confidence in Myanmar.

Dale Carnegie's global leadership study implemented across 15 countries including Myanmar analysed the impact of leadership characteristics on employees. In Myanmar, the results showed that when leaders consistently exhibit key leadership traits such as encouraging ideas, admitting fault, and truly listening, employee satisfaction and intent to stay increased by almost half. Furthermore, when a leader is perceived as always honest and trustworthy, four out of 10 employees are far more likely to be very satisfied with their jobs.

As the only provider of international quality leadership training in the local language, Dale Carnegie is well positioned to assist Myanmar develop its leaders so that morale and productivity can be heightened at the workplace.





Getting our hands dirty

— Koh Kong Meng

Trial by fire

American social activist Faye Wattleton said that “the only safe ship in a storm is leadership”. For Koh Kong Meng, these words aptly described what he learnt about being a leader during an extremely difficult time in his career. After the September 11 attacks in New York City, it was not just the global security climate and the airline industry that took a turn for the worse. The retail IT sector that Kong Meng was in braced itself as the global economy slowed down. At that time, he was working at IBM managing a small team across emerging countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. He was offered the opportunity to manage the personal computing business in Singapore and he took it up without too much thought. He recalled: “It was a very challenging role and I suffered during that difficult period. This was because after the attacks on New York City, business fell off the cliff in 2002. Our business unit had about a year’s worth of unsold inventory. In those days, IBM had about six to seven distributors. The team was used to stocking the distributors with inventory to meet our sales quota. This method worked during the good times but during the downturn, the distributors suffered from ‘indigestion’.”



Leaders must experience failure and learn from it to become stronger.

In that challenging environment, Kong Meng had three priorities – to figure out how to clear the inventory, rebuild the team and change the way the team operates.

Looking back, Kong Meng said: “Every day, I had an 8am meeting with the managing director of Singapore to review the business status and progress. I would travel across the island from Choa Chu Kang in the west to Changi in the east to see her. It was a very painful period for me and the team but the business improved within two years.

“This period shaped me as a leader. I thought hard about leadership and teams. I learnt to be very operational. One very important lesson I learnt is that you need to get the right people on board. It’s not healthy to have naysayers or people who are passive aggressive in the team.

“A good analogy would be a bus ride. There are three groups of people on the bus. The first group is interested in driving the bus forward. The second group just wants to be passengers. They don’t do any harm initially because they just sit on the fence and don’t do anything. The third group just wants to stop the bus. I have learnt that you need to remove the third group from the bus.”

Without a safe and steady pair of hands at the helm, Kong Meng and his team would not have weathered the storm. It is crucial that leaders have a clear strategy and implement it even in the most trying of circumstances. He believes that leaders must experience failure and learn from it to become stronger. It is going to be rough but we should not be afraid, Kong Meng said.

The experience in 2002 had also imparted Kong Meng vital lessons in leadership – that leaders must be involved and take risks to further enhance their abilities as well as to connect with the ground.

Comfort zone

It will take time to develop leadership qualities. Kong Meng admits that he is an introvert. To foster leadership competencies, he realized that he cannot be too passive.

He said: "I have grown to accept that I have to willingly expose myself to different situations and circumstances to stretch myself. Over time, I have learnt to engage people and speak in public. In the last five years, I have also grown to be more comfortable with exhibiting vulnerabilities and to share more personal details with others.

"In my younger days, someone asked me if I was open to a product management role. I said sure, why not? Several years later, the boss whom I worked for back then came to me and proposed another interesting management opportunity. I was able to develop and have more opportunities given to me because I showed him that I was willing to step up and take risks.

"My advice to young executives who aspire to become leaders is that we must try different things.

Be more open and embrace possibilities. Get out of our comfort zones. This is because if we have not tried something, we will never know how it might turn out. Sometimes, younger people think that trying something new in their careers might be risky. There is no reward without risk and besides, what is the worst that can happen?"



Young executives who aspire to become leaders must try different things. Be more open and embrace possibilities.



The human touch

Kong Meng firmly believes that leaders have to be on the ground in order to know what is happening in the trenches. They must be able to directly relate to the person on the ground to establish a direct connection and not through the managers or the different organisational layers. In his current job role, Kong Meng covers several countries and it is not possible to be everywhere and know everything. So, during country visits, Kong Meng makes it a point to organize informal lunches to catch up with the staff without their managers. The challenge lies in institutionalizing this practice. Recently, Kong Meng invited the president of Asia Pacific Japan and his human resources colleagues to lunch. The staff were thrilled because they don't usually get such opportunities to dine with the Asia Pacific Japan president.

He advised: "Ultimately, it is about establishing the human connection, about knowing people, about knowing each other. At a recent luncheon, I found out that one of our colleagues who has been working in HP for over 20 years is also the leading marshal in the annual Formula 1 race! Through this informal setting, I was able to learn about the passions of my staff member."

In the end, what matters is sincerity. Kong Meng points out that if leaders are not genuine, whatever they do will not bear fruit. He said: "We must mean what we say because such consistency in behavior can be observed and others will appreciate this quality in us."

Successful leadership development

To succeed, leadership programmes must have the following:

Firstly, the potential leaders themselves must have the right learning attitude. If the individual is not open to learning, nothing is going to change.

Secondly, the company should not be sending out mixed messages. For example, laying off staff members who show great potential is a big no-no.

Thirdly, the human resources department needs to focus on selecting the right people for training and grooming. These are individuals who are lifelong learners. They are ready and interested to take the next step up in the organisation.

Lastly, they need to be given stretch assignments where they will probably be learning on the job by learning from the organisation and other people.

Parting shots (quotable quotes)

"I would tell all hires to start being a leader when you join a company. Leadership is not based on a job title or role. It is based on what you stand for. It is not just about leading people. You can lead in knowledge, in how things are done. Everyone can be a leader. We attach too much weight to the label of leadership. What I have noticed is that when people don't have a managerial title attached to their official positions, they become mere followers and forget to lead."

About

Koh Kong Meng is the general manager and managing director for HP Inc. Southeast Asia and Korea. He also oversees HP's businesses in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Kong Meng is responsible for the overall growth of HP's print and personal computer business in these markets.

Prior to HP, he was leading the personal computer business for Lenovo ASEAN as the general manager. Kong Meng spent 25 years in the IT industry, having started as a fresh campus hire in IBM.



Leadership Blind Spots & the Behaviors that Employees Value Most

As globalization expands the geographic scope of leadership responsibilities, leaders must be sensitive to what motivates employees across cultures. This global study examines how leadership characteristics drive job satisfaction and retention differently across regions.

ONLY 24% of employees are very satisfied in their current job.

...and **45%** of employees want to leave their job in the next year.

Leadership Behaviors that Inspire

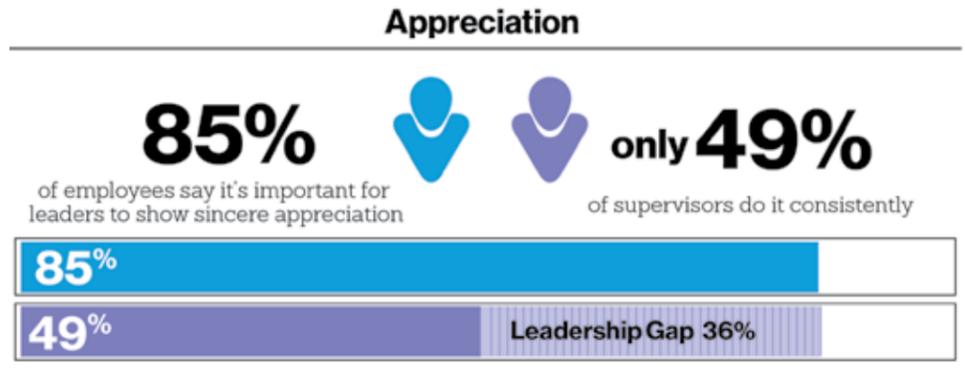
4 Key Findings Globally

Sincere appreciation and praise are essential

Employees demand leaders who can admit when they're wrong

Honesty and integrity in action drive engagement

Effective leaders encourage their employees to grow



Honesty and Integrity in Action

When a leader is honest and trustworthy with others, employees are

10x

more likely to be satisfied in their jobs

When leaders are rarely or never honest with themselves

54%

of employees are looking for a new job within a year

Contact our local offices to have more information about the research content

