

Impellus reveals clients' views on leadership and management challenges

Research recently conducted by Impellus Ltd confirms an ongoing appetite for leadership and management training in 2017 among delegates¹ (managers), as well as HR Managers and others responsible for booking training (training organisers²). The insights reveal that training organisers view the overall picture regarding leadership and management skills in their organisations in a somewhat rosier light than the delegates themselves, however.

The research was conducted at the end of 2016 by Impellus to gain a better understanding of its clients' and delegates' current challenges and future requirements for leadership and management training.

Perception of deficiency in leadership and management skills

Over 60% of training organisers believe that a lack of leadership and management skills is a factor in holding back their organisation from achieving growth/objectives/competitiveness. When delegates responded to the same question the percentage rose to over **80%**. When one considers this against the backdrop of a UK economy that is underperforming in terms of productivity and experiencing nervousness about the implications of Brexit, it is concerning that this high number of respondents are acknowledging a gap in fundamental organisational skills.



The picture for those organising training is more optimistic with 26% believing that the deficiency in skills is **definitely** preventing their organisation from moving forward and 37% feeling that it may be but that there are other factors holding them back more (as illustrated above).

Ability of management team to cope over next few years

In response to another question, interestingly 77% of training organisers believe that their organisation's management team has the right skills to cope with changes that are likely to occur over the next couple of years. This figure reduced slightly to 74% of delegates who were asked the same question.

At the other end of the scale, 17% of delegates believe that their team **does not** or **definitely does not** have the skills to cope compared with the more optimistic figure of 12% from training organisers.



Alongside each other, the responses to the two questions above point to over two thirds of respondents believing that their management team has the right skills to cope but **not** to grow or move its organisation forward.

Effectiveness of turning organisational vision into objectives

Only eight per cent of respondents feel that their managers are very effective at turning their organisation's vision, mission and values into clear objectives with 56% feeling they are effective. Just under 20% say that they are ineffective or not particularly effective in achieving this.

When looking more closely at those training organisers who consider that their management team is **ineffective** or **not particularly effective** at turning the organisational vision into objectives, the implications are quite concerning:

- We find that the percentage who feels that a lack of leadership and management skills is **definitely** holding back its organisation increases to **60%** (compared with 26% overall).

- In addition, the number of training organisers who believe that their management team **does not** or **definitely does not** have the right skills to cope with changes that are likely to occur over the new few years rises to **40%** (from 12% overall).

Training priorities for 2017

After leadership and management skills training - communication skills, time management, strategic decision making and customer service skills are seen as the key priorities for 2017.

Topics included in the 'Other' category in the chart below include sales skills, IT, conflict management, delegation, health & safety and bespoke training.



Popularity and availability of training

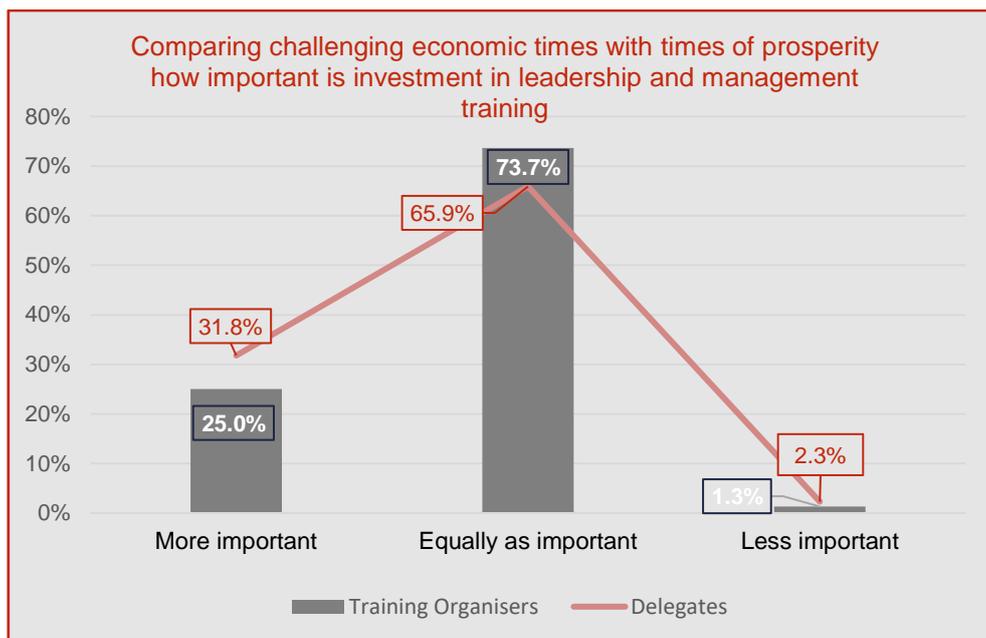
- Forty-three per cent of respondents plan to undertake more training in 2017 than last year with only 10% cutting down on training. The remaining 47% anticipate doing the same amount as in 2016.
- Even though technology is a major part of our everyday lives, 59% of respondents feel that the human interaction of face-to-face training is very important with the remaining 41% saying that the blended approach is best.
- New starters are given access to training and development programmes to the same degree as long-serving employees in 84% of organisations but 10% feel that new starters are less able to access these programmes.

Some of the reasons given for **more** training in 2017 included: increased headcount, not achieving as much training as planned in 2016, business expansion, succession planning, new management and business changes.

Some explanations provided for **less** training in 2017 were: Brexit and the economy impacting budgets, no funding, considerable spend on L&D in 2016, everyone sufficiently trained.

Managers seek greater investment in training

When comparing challenging economic times with periods of prosperity, 25% of training organisers think that investment by their organisation in leadership and management training is more important in challenging times with 74% feeling that it is equally important and only 1% feeling that it is less important.



As a comparison, **32%** of delegates feel it is **more** important illustrating a greater requirement than that of training organisers. A few of the comments provided to support this were:

- *It is vitally important to have a leader who motivates and supports staff in hard times*
- *An organisation needs strong leadership in challenging times*
- *If it's done properly you can come out the other side in much better shape than you went in. It is a huge opportunity*
- *To ensure that skills stay within the business and are not a 'wasted investment' - good managers are key for this*
- *Innovation and change - if implemented well can only help the business progress*
- *All senior management could benefit from up-to-date management training to help the organisation move with the times.*

Application of succession planning and mentoring

On the positive side, 45% of training organisers' organisations already have a process in place for succession planning and two-thirds of organisations deploy mentoring programmes. However, it could be viewed as less positive that 37% of respondents said their organisation did not have a succession planning process and 32% do not have a programme of mentoring.

By far the most popular form of mentoring is a new joiner being paired with a mentor. A combination of this form of mentoring and a newly appointed manager being assigned an experienced manager was also used quite widely in respondent organisations.

Examples of succession planning processes in place include deputy head of department shadowing head of department, managers recognising potential talent to replace themselves, an annual talent and succession management review with managers/leaders in the business.

Research Methodology:

The research was carried out by Impellus Ltd in November and December 2016 across two surveys, which generated a total of 515 respondents.

¹Delegate survey

Managers attending Impellus' leadership and management training courses during November and December 2016 were invited to answer three questions (the same three questions were included in the online survey to enable a comparison of results). A total of 363 managers took part in this survey.

²Online survey

In November 2016 a selection of Impellus clients were emailed and invited to answer 11 questions in an online survey. A total of 152 respondents completed the survey who have responsibility for booking training within their organisations, but they do not attend the training courses themselves. The majority of respondents has the job title of HR or L&D Manager/Director but other participants have the title of MD, CEO, Finance Manager, Operations Director and Office Manager.

Industry sectors covered across these surveys include: financial services, engineering and manufacturing, leisure and hospitality, recruitment, pharmaceuticals food & beverages, automotive, retail, transport & logistics, education and public sector and charitable organisations.

About Impellus Ltd.

Impellus Ltd. is one of the UK's largest independent ILM Approved Leadership and Management training centres. Its specialist Leadership and Management and Commercial Skills training courses are focused on bringing real and immediate performance benefits to clients.

Impellus delivers open courses at 25 training centres nationally and only uses its own directly employed consultants which ensures quality and consistency through all its training. Its Learning and Development Consultants provide training and support for candidates studying ILM Awards at Levels 2, 3 and 5.

Impellus also provides in-house management training leadership development programmes at its clients' premises and can develop a bespoke blended solution to meet specific requirements.

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