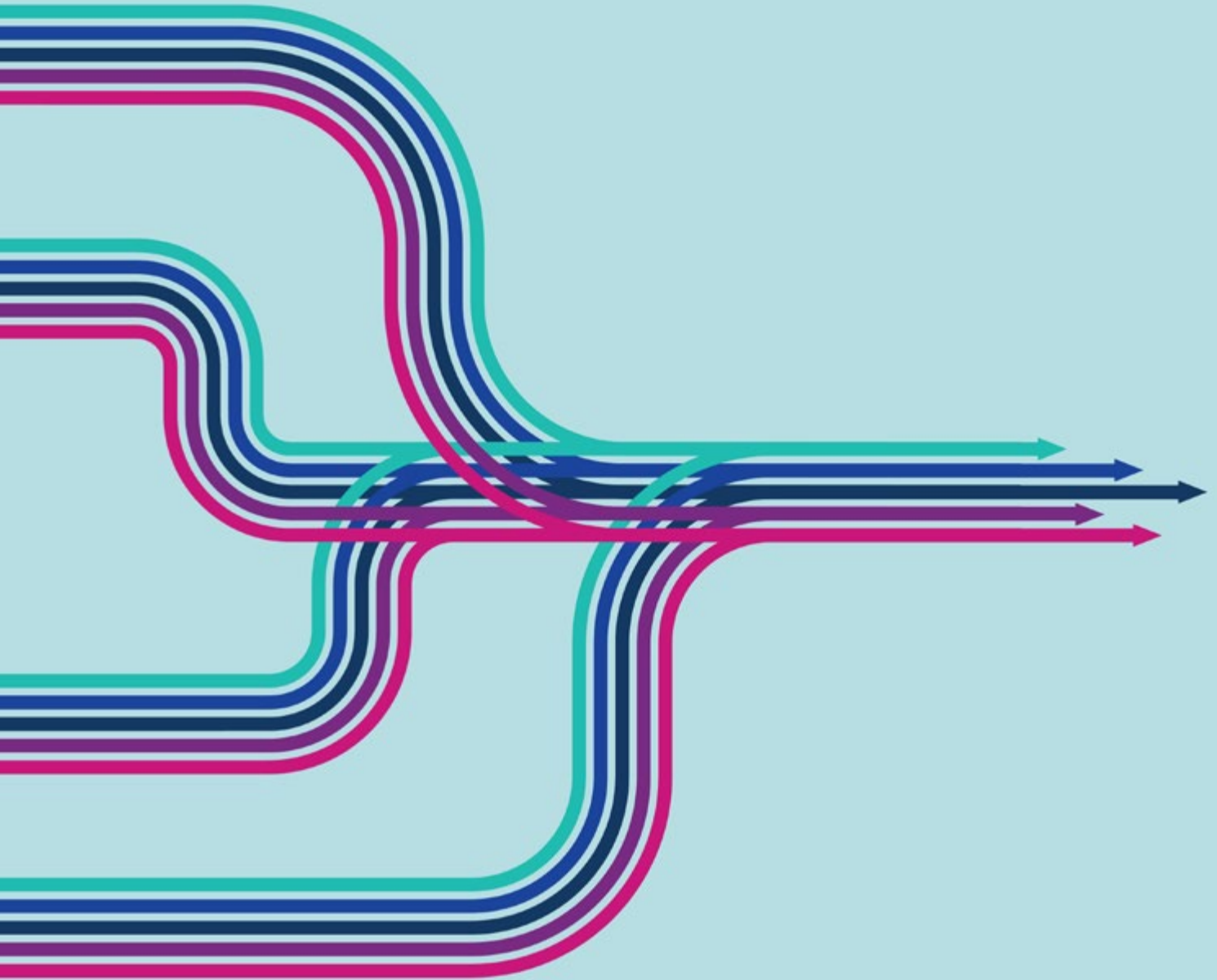


## VIRTUAL CONFERENCE RESOURCES



# *SHIFT FORWARD*

A Virtual Conference on the Future of Leadership

Thursday, June 25th | 9am ET to 4pm ET

# AGENDA

## 9:00am ET: Opening Remarks - John Ryan, CCL President & CEO

### 9:30am ET: BREAK

- Refill your mug, grab your notebook, and get comfortable—we're about to dig in.

## 9:45am ET: The Power of Hardships

- Leaders aren't born, they're made—and we're all shaped by our experiences. In this interactive session, Anne Credi will share an overview of the classic 70-20-10 model of leadership development and how initially, hardships were included in the famous equation because of their transformative power. This session will broaden your perspective on hardships.

## 10:30am ET: Direction, Alignment, Commitment (DAC) Overview

- In this session Katherine Pappa and Princess Cullum will share how leadership is more about what groups of individuals can accomplish working together than it is about what one person achieves working alone. You'll learn why Direction, Alignment, and Commitment are the 3 keys that every team and organization needs for effective, collaborative leadership.

## 11:15 am ET: DAC Assessment BREAK

- Want to see where you and your team or organization stand? Spend a few minutes taking our free, online DAC assessment to gauge whether leadership is currently happening in your group. [www.ccl.org/dac](http://www.ccl.org/dac)

## 11:30am ET: DAC Q&A and Assessment Discussion

- Katherine and Princess invite you to share your assessment results and ask any questions you may have about DAC. They'll help you understand your results and enable you to identify the next actions to take to increase your leadership effectiveness.



**John Ryan**  
CCL President & CEO



**Anne Credi**  
Strategic Business Partner



**Katherine Pappa**  
Director of Client Solutions



**Princess Cullum**  
Senior Faculty

## 12pm ET: BREAK

- Go stretch your legs, grab some lunch, and meet us back here for more great conversations.

## 1:00pm ET: Turning Challenges into Opportunities: Reinventing Your Organization After COVID

- Presenters Alice Cahill, Mike Smith, and Bill Pasmore outline ways leaders can articulate a new vision, cultivate an agile, collaborative culture to support that vision, and build the alignment and commitment needed to unleash the power of collective leadership. You'll learn what the current moment is calling for and the actions you should be taking right now to position your organization for success in the post-COVID world.

## 2:00pm ET: Transformation Through Communication

- As more and more people in your organization develop coaching skills, you instill a coaching culture, which increases employee engagement, job satisfaction, collaboration, teamwork, morale, and bench strength. You'll learn from coaching expert André Keil how equipping your people with coaching skills could be the best next step for your team as we move forward into this transformed world.

## 3:00pm ET: Fast Forward: Reinventing You & Your Organization Through Empathy & Inclusion

- Senior Faculty Abigail Dunne-Moses will close the conference by inviting you into an experience of empathy and will share 9 acts of Inclusion. You will gain a renewed understanding of the power that empathy and inclusion bring to you and your organization.

## 4:00pm ET: Closing Remarks - John Ryan, CCL President & CEO



**Alice Cahill**  
Director, Organizational  
Leadership Practice



**Mike Smith**  
Business Development Lead,  
Organizational Leadership Practice



**William Pasmore**  
Senior Vice President — Advisor to  
CEO's, Boards, and Senior Teams



**André Keil**  
Coaching Practice Leader



**Abigail Dunne-Moses**  
Senior Faculty

# CONFERENCE RESOURCES

These readings provide additional context for the topics that our experts are covering during the virtual conference on June 25, 2020.

## [Turning Crisis Into Opportunity: Preparing Your Organization for a Transformed World](#) (pages 5-20)

Supplement to:

- The Power of Hardships
- Turning Challenges into Opportunities
- Transformation Through Communication
- Fast Forward: Reinventing You & Your Organization Through Empathy & Inclusion

## [The Forgotten Influence of Your Personal Life and Hardships on Leadership](#) (pages 21-23)

Supplement to:

- The Power of Hardships

## [Direction + Alignment + Commitment \(DAC\) = Leadership](#) (pages 24-28)

Supplement to:

- Direction, Alignment, Commitment (DAC)

## [DAC Assessment](#) (page 29)

Supplement to:

- Direction, Alignment, Commitment (DAC)

## [How to Have A Coaching Conversation](#) (pages 30-33)

Supplement to:

- Transformation Through Communication

## [Coaching to Improve Performance: You Need Support During Hard Times](#) (pages 34-36)

Supplement to:

- Transformation Through Communication

## [The Importance of Empathy in the Workplace](#) (pages 37-40)

Supplement to:

- Turning Challenges into Opportunities
- Fast Forward: Reinventing You & Your Organization Through Empathy & Inclusion

# TURNING CRISIS INTO OPPORTUNITY: Preparing Your Organization for a Transformed World

By: Bill Pasmore, Cindy McCauley, Alice Cahill, Mike Smith, Chuck Ainsworth, and Chuck Palus

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Thriving in the face of disruption starts with leadership.** At CCL, we believe in the power of leaders to ignite transformational change — to navigate the crisis of the moment while preparing for the changed world that comes next.

The crisis of the moment, COVID-19, is massive, and what comes next is profoundly unclear. But there *will* be an “**after**.”

And that “**after**” will be decided by you, and other senior leaders, who are continually assessing, acting, and evolving through the intensity and ambiguity of this crisis and its aftermath.

That “**after**” will be created by how you show up right now, by how you and your leadership team work together today and tomorrow, and how the leaders of the future are prepared.

That “**after**” will be determined by the strength of your organizational culture and how freely effective and honest conversation flows up, down, and across the hierarchy.

That “**after**” will be formed by the collective strength and capacity of your organization to accelerate change, fast-track innovation, and drive performance in never-before-imagined ways.

We are now months into the COVID crisis. Decisions have been made to keep communities safe, shift employees to working from home, and implement social distancing and other protective measures. Budgets, workflow, headcount, and priorities have been altered — in many cases drastically — but things are by no means settled.

While the initial spasm of shock has occurred, you will continue to face difficult short-term decisions. At the same time, you know that important things are going to change forever — and your **long-term business strategy will need to change**, too. You need to plan for your organization to emerge from this disaster as strongly as it can, before you lose critical talent, financial wherewithal, or the capacity to adapt to the demands of the new normal.

**It's time to talk about pushing your organization toward reinvention, not retreat, and how you can start creating the "after."**

In this paper, we'll prompt senior leadership teams to be at their best, operating as a cohesive source for organizational transformation, and explain how ***the way you respond to the current hardship will directly affect your organization's ability to survive and thrive.***

We'll also outline why it's so important that executives address their people *and* their culture as they invigorate organizational direction, alignment, and commitment.

## HOW TO TURN CRISIS INTO OPPORTUNITY



**1. ARTICULATE**  
a bold & flexible vision.



**2. CULTIVATE**  
a culture of innovation.



**3. LEAD CHANGE**  
with empathy & integrity.





## HARDSHIP IS PART OF THE JOURNEY

**We believe that leadership is a journey.** It is a personal journey and a collective one. It can be a deeply private experience, or, as in this global moment of crisis, an experience that is shared and highly visible.

At CCL, we've been part of that leadership journey for individuals, organizations, and communities for 50 years. We've traveled alongside many executives, providing more than 20,000 hours of coaching per year, as

they've navigated career and organizational challenges. We've embedded ourselves in leadership teams, and guided organization-wide development and capability-building efforts.

We know a lot about what goes into a leadership journey — yet in a time of extraordinary global crisis, we, too, find ourselves in disturbingly unfamiliar territory. Then, we remind ourselves that ***hardship is part of the journey.***

We've been widely recognized for the **70-20-10 framework** for development first articulated in the 1980s, based on our research on how executives grew over their careers. The framework describes 3 types of experiences that drive leadership learning and growth: *challenging assignments* make up 70% of those experiences, while 20% of them are centered on *developmental relationships*, and 10% on *coursework and training*.<sup>1</sup>

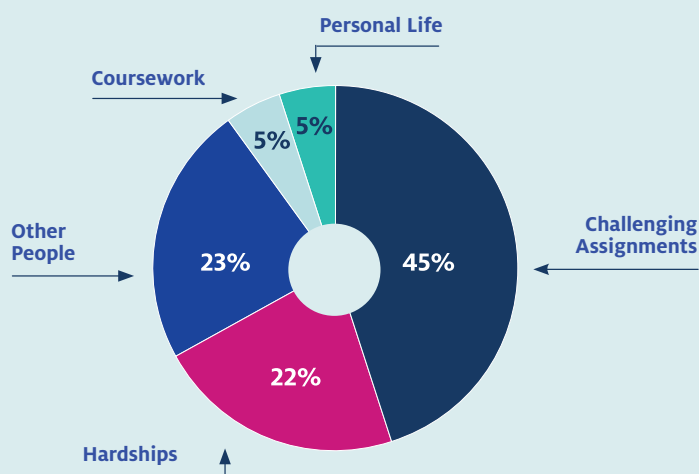
But there were 2 other factors — **personal life and hardships** — that were also part of the leadership development story that have arguably been forgotten.<sup>2</sup> In the original research, **hardships were considered just as transformative as developmental relationships**, and lessons from one's personal life played as large a role in development as coursework and training.

Yet the longstanding focus on just the 3 factors is understandable. These 3 were the part of the leadership journey that could be created, curated, or encouraged, given the societal and workplace norms at the time. Coursework could be replicated, mentors could be assigned, challenging assignments could be delegated — but who

could guarantee hardships, or would wish them on anyone? How could organizations enforce guidelines on learning from personal life?

Yet, hardships — unplanned experiences that create adversity — are always present. They may be situations happening at the organizational level (e.g., business failures, downsizing, crisis) and at the individual level (e.g., mistakes and errors of judgment, career setbacks, firing employees, ethical dilemmas, experiencing discrimination). And lines between the personal and professional are hardly clear — particularly during this COVID crisis. For many, that blended experience is a more authentic one.

### Key Developmental Experiences



### Hardships can be powerful learning experiences for all of us, both individually and collectively.

For individuals, hardships can provide deeper self-knowledge, increased sensitivity and compassion, greater flexibility, and new perspectives. For organizations, hardships provide an opportunity for the senior team to identify and carry out the actions necessary to align the organization and move it forward.

Yet while hardships can fuel individual development and serve as a catalyst for organizational transformation, positive outcomes are not guaranteed.

Some organizations will disappear as a result of the COVID crisis; others will manage through the crisis but survive only as a shadow of their former selves. Those who adapt, emerging with newfound agility and strength, will thrive. But **it will take collective efforts and bold action** — by executives and the entire organization — to create a new path forward.

We believe that the current hardship — one that is shared and fuses individual, group, and societal experience — provides not just an opportunity but an *imperative* to reinvent your entire organization.



# SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Now is the time for senior leadership teams to be at their best, operating as a cohesive collective, to architect the trajectory to the future.

**Yet if the past is any indication, this opportunity will be missed by many senior leaders.**

The single biggest strategic mistake that companies made before the crisis was failure to change when change was needed. The problem was one of leadership mindsets, where executives allowed themselves to be fooled into thinking that the requirements to change seemed too costly. Now, the strong desire to “return to normal” after the pandemic may further deepen that mindset.

**Senior leadership teams will be tempted to avoid taking bold action** and having the toughest conversations and will retreat to the closest thing to the status quo that they can find — but that will leave the organization weaker and less prepared for the future than it should be. Some will want to restore elements of the business that should not be restored, or focus on new ways of doing the same old things. Instead of **imagining a different future, built on candid and courageous conversation**, they will be uninspired and unmoved.

Inaction now, in the face of this threat to continued survival, will be a tragedy that could have been prevented. Leaders must assess the situation honestly and do the right thing, *right now* — which is the opposite of what many are doing, just cutting costs and hoping for a return to normalcy.

**Forward-thinking leaders will act differently.** They will have conversations their competitors are unwilling to have. They’ll change how they work together, engage their people through the crisis, and collaborate to make critical decisions and adapt in real time.

**The single biggest strategic mistake that companies made before the crisis was failure to change when change was needed.**

# MOVING FROM THREAT TO CHALLENGE: IT'S ABOUT DAC

*Right now, people are likely to be feeling threatened, not challenged.*

Shifting the collective leadership mindset will require addressing this key roadblock to change in a crisis. This is a distinction made in the stress literature we reference below: **there are times when you're stressed and you feel threatened** (there's a possibility of harm or loss) and **there are times when you're stressed and feel challenged** (there's a possibility of benefits or mastery of the challenge). The thing with threatening situations is that people often are (rightly) focused more on surviving than learning; thus, people who are feeling more threatened than challenged are less likely to report learning.

In contrast, people who experience a stronger sense of challenge in a stressful situation are more likely to perform effectively in that situation and learn as they go.<sup>3</sup>

**While the COVID crisis requires clear understanding of the threat, focusing on the challenge will boost your ability to flourish in the face of this unprecedented hardship.**

Collective leadership is the way to move from threat to challenge to reinvention.

At CCL, we believe leadership is about creating Direction, Alignment, and Commitment (DAC):

- **Direction is agreement on goals** that the collective group is trying to achieve together.
- **Alignment is coordinated work** that supports integration across the group.
- **Commitment is mutual responsibility** within the group for its success and well-being.



DAC is created through the interactions and exchanges among people with shared work — between managers and their direct reports; among colleagues, teams, and committees; and in the relationships, structures, and processes of the entire organization. DAC allows people to work together to achieve results they would never accomplish on their own.<sup>4</sup>

For people to pull together in any context, they need shared DAC. But those outcomes are ever-more important in a crisis, and signal a way forward now.

In a crisis, creating **DAC requires everyone’s involvement** and requires responses that are *both* **authoritative** (top-down, planned, exercising individual authority) *and* **collaborative** (bottom-up, improvised, with forms of collective leadership).

Authoritative	Collaborative	Outcome of Leadership
Singular focus on effectively navigating the crisis	Ongoing adjustment of strategies for navigating the crisis via shared sensemaking	<b>Direction:</b> Do we have agreement on overall goals?
Use of authority to tightly coordinate independent actions on key initiatives	Bottom-up self-organizing of motivated individuals	<b>Alignment:</b> How well do we coordinate work?
People in power demonstrating commitment to the collective	Collective responsibility for each other and broader society	<b>Commitment:</b> Do we take mutual responsibility?

Table 1: An effective leadership culture in times of crisis is *both* authoritative *and* collaborative.

We’re seeing this now — formal leaders across the globe have issued orders and made sweeping decisions. Teams at every level have changed how they work, improvising and building on experience. Organizations and communities are rapidly reinventing, often with previously unconnected people, groups, and businesses creating solutions together.

In 2020, an organization’s ability to survive will be contingent upon its culture and its ability to create direction, alignment, and commitment. That’s why to prepare for the post-crisis future, the senior leadership team’s critical role is to:

- 1. Build direction** by articulating a bold and flexible vision,
- 2. Strengthen alignment** by cultivating innovation through collaboration, and
- 3. Inspire commitment** by leading change with empathy and integrity.

**In 2020, an organization’s ability to survive will be contingent upon its culture and its ability to create DAC.**





# BUILD DIRECTION: Articulate a Bold & Flexible Vision

**In groups with strong direction, people have a shared understanding of what success looks like and they agree on what they are trying to accomplish.** In just weeks, the sense of direction has been shaken in every level across every organization, large and small. People are uncertain about what they should focus on and accomplish, or they feel pulled in different directions by confusion, or competing goals.

In the COVID crisis, clarity of direction is a big ask. **But focusing on direction helps shift from threat to challenge and opportunity.**

To generate shared direction during this crisis, senior leaders need to work together to frame a vision, take decisive actions, and make intentional adjustments as new information emerges.

**Demonstrate your singular focus to effectively navigate the crisis.** Right now, your people are asking, *Where are we headed?* You don't need to know the exact answer on every front. You probably do know the general direction though, and that's enough for now. Express this as openly as possible to employees, customers, suppliers, and investors through your actions and communications. Be clear about what you know and what you don't. Reflect constancy of your values and principles, even as circumstances change.

**Frame the crisis as a challenge guaranteed to transform leaders bold enough to embrace it.**

The need for leadership and exceptional talent has never been greater. Emphasize the opportunity for development, growth and possibility, collaboration

and coordination, rather than loss. This helps create focused action and generates a sense that people do have some control and choice. They *can* do something to deal with the present situation and shape the future.

**Set aside the organization chart.** Functions, groups, and levels that made sense pre-pandemic are irrelevant or will only slow you down. Operate as you need to in the moment. Get the right people from anywhere in or outside the organization into a discussion about how to move quickly from your initial crisis response to the next move, then the next. Begin to imagine the structure and skills you will need for the future and use those ideas to inform today's decisions.

**Take bold action.** Forget elaborate strategy projects that will take months to complete. You cannot stay still, plan, and then implement. Instead, act your way into the future by iterating rapidly and learning as fast as you can. The faster you take action, the faster you get new inputs and the clearer your direction will be. In fact, even as you scale down or address the most immediate demands, you should already be pivoting resources to head in the new direction. And, if your pre-pandemic business is unlikely to recover, it's time to consider new business models. What is your best hope for survival?

**Be transparent about what you are doing — and what you are not.** Some people need to stop doing what they are doing because it will only drain resources without adding value. Others need to jump into new activities. Customers, suppliers, and



partners are also trying to adjust — and may be some of your greatest resources. Communicate frequently and honestly — and ask for feedback. If you get criticism or pushback, listen for nuggets of good advice and ignore those who want to return to the way things were. You can't go back, so keep moving forward.

**Build in sensemaking, then pivot or adjust as needed.** You need to hear information, clarify decisions, and understand changes — and you need help to make sense of it all. Streamline the flow of communication to maximize access and enable decision making at the point of need. In responding to the crisis, many organizations are setting up nerve centers that tap into multiple sources of official information about the crisis as well as insights generated by employees on the front lines. This ongoing stream of information is digested by multiple teams to regularly adapt their strategies to the unfolding situation.

**Find ways to personally recharge.** The adrenaline rush of the initial crisis is fading, but a different type

of energy is needed to sustain you now. You and your colleagues are probably already physically, mentally, and emotionally fatigued, and that may continue for a while. Everyone will experience their own rhythm and reaction to the overwhelming scope of change. Yet the ability to make innovative, smart decisions will require you and your people to manage stress and overload. Exercise, healthy eating, meditative practices, and sufficient sleep may be new routines — or different because of social distancing — but they need to be encouraged if those of you on the leadership team are to be at your best over many months.

**And, if you don't have a leadership coach, now is the time for one.** A coach can be a sparring partner to test ideas and can help stabilize you when you feel weary and unclear about how to move forward. A weekly 30-minute call with a coach may be the recharge and reset that you and your fellow executives need to stay grounded, gain clarity, give your best, and get through to the next week.

## WAYS TO BUILD DIRECTION

	With Your Team	In Your Organization
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Take Intentional Action</b>	Begin to problem solve and embrace challenging tasks that can alleviate the stressful situation.	Regularly articulate the focused goal that will enable the organization to overcome the current challenges. Take bold action in service of that goal, communicating the rationale and decision-making processes.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Identify Resources</b>	Reflect on the assets each person brings to the situation and how they can be used.	Keep everyone informed about current directives so they can adjust their priorities, support the shared goal, and bring needed resources to bear.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Generate New Ideas</b>	Draw on past experiences with stressful situations for lessons to apply now. Consider how the team's skills or perspective can be applied in new ways.	Expect everyone to tap into their trusted networks and make emerging insights easily available to others. Establish processes for widespread sharing of collective intelligence and use it to generate new ideas that continuously reshape direction.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Delegate</b>	Give each other permission to act.	Enable and encourage colleagues to make decisions for dealing with aspects of the crisis.





# STRENGTHEN ALIGNMENT: Cultivate Innovation Through Collaboration

**In groups with strong alignment, people with different tasks, roles, or sets of expertise coordinate their work.** In those with weak alignment, members work more in isolation, unclear about how their tasks fit into the larger work of the group. They are in danger of working at cross-purposes, duplicating efforts, and having important work fall through the cracks. Innovation is stifled or disjointed.

Always, but especially in *this* moment, you need people to be pulling in the same direction. You need alignment up, down, and across the organization.

**Now is the time for teamwork and better conversations about what matters most.** To adapt quickly, processes across the organization should be coordinated and integrated in support of the short-term demands and priority goals. People must be clear about their own contributions to achieving them. You also need efficient collaboration and the ability to turn good ideas into innovative solutions.

Avoid the temptation to run off in separate directions in a rush to execute. Or conversely, to wait for perfect, instead of executing on good-enough. Both errors can be avoided by dedicating focused time to gain alignment through conversations that balance the need for deliberation and commitment to action.

Senior leadership teams can create broad alignment by taking steps to speed essential collaboration and innovation.

**Tightly coordinate key initiatives that involve people from across groups.** Always a struggle, cross-boundary coordination requires more directive approaches to alignment during a fast-moving crisis. In critical areas, give clear instructions and rationale for who will work together, what they need to produce, and by when. And orchestrate what they need to manage these changing expectations for how to work together. Create forums where you

clarify what is expected. Cut levels. Create new teams. Accelerate digital transformation. Expand access to collaborative tools and technology. When things get in the way of needed progress, deal with them quickly and decisively.

**Raise the bar for senior team collaboration.** If collaboration at this level is anything but stellar, you're in trouble. Broad alignment is impossible if senior leaders are working against one another, defending their personal interests, or simply unskilled at fast-paced, high-caliber collaboration. The quality and effectiveness of the conversations taking place are a reliable, tell-tale sign of how things are going — call in expert facilitation and coaching if necessary to make certain that the team is performing as it should. The senior team is the single most important driver of everything that will happen next. Make sure this is their finest hour — and that they are developing as a unit so they are able to execute skillfully for the long term.

**Ensure more frequent all-way communication.** The top of the organization needs to stay connected to what is going on throughout the organization. Leaders can't assume that what's happening at the front lines is what is supposed to be happening. And people throughout the organization need to know that senior leadership is making decisions based on reality. If necessary, you should adopt specific practices that enable truth-telling to reach their level. Spend more time than ever before on listening tours, in small groups and on one-on-one calls (virtually, of course, if need be). Paying attention to the facts, emotions, and values in play across the organization will unlock a deeper understanding of what is truly going on. Remember, change and transition are often a deeply emotional experience — and we are experiencing a large-scale, global upheaval. Only through effective all-way communication can insights be unearthed, and best solutions emerge.



**Set the climate for creativity.** What a leader says about a new idea or a team working through a problem can support — or stifle — innovation. Caution and skepticism are understandable (and typical) reactions. But those responses kill innovation. For creative ideas to be expressed, much less developed into an innovative solution, you need to show support for those who challenge the status quo. Avoid quickly dismissing new ideas or experiments, assigning innovation to one group, or insisting that all good ideas will come top-down. Common mistakes that undermine innovation in good times are more damaging in a crisis, when the energy of a challenge can rapidly be replaced by the fear or threat.

**Model the culture you need going forward.** Change can only succeed when the culture supports it, and crisis provides a unique opportunity to rapidly check your organizational culture. Reinforce elements that are essential and enduring, but if there were parts of the culture that were never helpful, say so and extinguish them. Insist on new behaviors that are critical to your future success. Reward those new behaviors and stop rewarding behaviors that will hold you back. Place leaders in charge who exemplify the behaviors you expect from everyone and establish practices and systems that reinforce the new way of doing things.

## WAYS TO STRENGTHEN ALIGNMENT

	With Your Team	In Your Organization
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Create Feedback &amp; Feed-Forward Mechanisms</b>	Talk regularly, seek feedback, and continuously strive to better understand the current situation and anticipate what's next.	Create a recovery task force made up of the best and brightest who are poised to feed ideas to your senior team. Seek feedback about what's working well and what is not.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reassign Roles &amp; Work</b>	Join with others across the organization who are working on important initiatives in response to the situation.	Give clear instructions and rationale for who will work together, what they need to produce, and by when. Then regularly monitor and communicate progress to everyone.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Experiment &amp; Fail Fast</b>	Bring a creative mindset to the work and encourage experimenting with innovative solutions.	Develop a culture that embraces innovation: expressing curiosity, tolerating ambiguity, showing persistence, and staying in a constant learning mode.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Recognize Needed Behaviors</b>	Be supportive of others' ideas and perspectives and willing to help where needed.	Insist on new behaviors that support vital collaboration and rapid innovation.



# INSPIRE COMMITMENT: Lead Change with Empathy & Integrity

**In groups with strong commitment, people feel responsible for the success and well-being of the group, and they know that other group members feel the same way.** They trust each other and will stick with the group through difficult times. In groups with weak commitment, members put their own interests ahead of the group's interest and contribute to the group only when it's easy to do so or when they have something to gain.

Most of the time, human interaction, the personal touch, and emotional intelligence are capabilities to be developed and deployed. During this pandemic, the usual expressions of human connection have had to change, as people cannot work and gather in their usual ways. Lack of social connection and support creates another level of hardship, adding to the difficulty of learning and embracing challenge. While we know that hardship can accelerate development, we also know the best learning comes when people are supported through a challenge or a difficult time. **If your organization can intentionally develop and support people during this hardship, you can be confident that they will learn, become more resilient, and be prepared to work toward what's next.**

**Don't think of yourself as a change manager right now; think of yourself as a change leader.** Change management is about getting things done. Change leadership is about how you do it. Change leaders understand that getting through a change won't matter if all that is left is scorched earth. By leading change with integrity, empathy, and shared responsibility, your senior leadership team can create connection and generate the highest level of commitment possible.

**Take the right actions, the right way.** In a crisis, people look to the actions and reactions of powerful people to decide their own level of commitment. When faced with a crisis, leaders can easily become overwhelmed. Some panic, issuing ill-formed directives. Others shut down or misjudge the need to act. They lose the confidence of their followers in the process. When faced with the kind of crisis we are experiencing, difficult changes — like reductions in force, closure of facilities, and pulling back from some markets — are necessary. You can lead these changes in a way that destroys the morale of the people who remain, or you can actually deepen their commitment. As a change leader, your clarity, care, and integrity are what will bring out the best in others. Engaging others in difficult decisions and providing choices whenever possible will foster shared ownership. Doing things the right way will ensure that when the immediate crisis ends and you are moving toward what's next, you will still have committed followers.

**Respond with empathy to employees.** The COVID crisis will have a real impact on your people, both the employees who are working through the intensity of the crisis and those who are back after leave, furlough, or layoff. Don't overlook the hardship everyone has faced or minimize the difficult experiences and harm that has been caused. Empathy can be learned and developed, and our research has found that it is positively related to job performance. So, if showing empathy is not your usual approach, try again. Allow conversation to focus on emotion or what people are experiencing. Or, start a meeting by asking a simple yet powerful question, such as,



“What’s your dominant emotion right now?” Note that demonstrating empathy doesn’t mean you need to endorse how someone feels or leave them where they are. Now is the time to employ coaching skills you have learned along the way; slow down for a moment and listen deeply. Ask questions instead of rushing to give advice. Provide both challenge and support as you help others co-create next steps.

**Show you are human.** You may be moving too fast to grieve, but you must signal to people you are experiencing this as a person, too. As decisions get made and the organization changes, avoid being cold or calculated. Don’t be afraid to show some vulnerability; doing so may be just what is needed so your people see you as human and relatable. Let others know that you are moving forward because you have feelings, not in spite of them.

**Help employees develop the skills and behaviors that will be important for future success.** People will be working with one another and engaging with partners, customers, clients, and communities in new ways — and more often, virtually — as they move forward from this crisis. Regardless of role, industry, or location, your people need to hone and use 4 critical leadership skills — self-awareness, communication, influence, and learning agility. Helping them develop and leverage these skills will position your workforce to be able to collaborate, work together more effectively, and emerge from this crisis more committed to your organization than ever before.

## WAYS TO INSPIRE COMMITMENT

	With Your Team	In Your Organization
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grow Positivity</b>	Share good news and stories of progress. Express gratitude.	Communicate good effort and good outcomes. Express appreciation. Use resources to respond to societal needs and their employees’ desire to contribute to the greater good.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Acknowledge Difficulty</b>	Willingly share perceptions and concerns with people at the top, and with colleagues.	Express authentic concern for others. Be transparent about how tradeoffs are evaluated in making decisions with negative consequences for individuals.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Encourage Growth</b>	Create space for collective learning. Reflect on learning through hardship with conversations and journaling. Don’t make decisions for people when you can give them choices.	Share ideas for how employees’ collective talents and resources could help others. Help people whose roles have gone away or changed refocus on using their talents for broader or new purposes. Give people the opportunity to help you make difficult decisions.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Set Boundaries</b>	Recognize limits and guard the team’s well-being.	Acknowledge uncertainty and lack of control. Understand and communicate that the way forward will include a lot of saying no.

## CONCLUSION

No one knows yet how long this new reality is going to last, or what exactly is on the other side, but we *do* know that **leadership can be the differentiator** in every organization. It's more important now than ever.

Impactful leaders and effective leadership will emerge from the current crisis and its aftermath. We predict that the organizations that flourish will be experts at harnessing the powerful catalyst of hardships.

The leadership that is created during this time will not resemble a power that simply flows from you and other influential individuals. Rather, it will be created collectively by resilient people who can adapt together – not just surviving, but thriving while facing the stress and chaos.

**Leadership is more important now than ever.**

Those who can **move from feeling threatened to feeling challenged by this uncertainty** – and who are able to pull together to achieve shared, desired results – will be the ones who turn this crisis into opportunity, together reinventing their organizations for the future.



# READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP?

## For Executive Teams

**Achieve the highest level of performance.** In the best of times, this team's ability to work together to drive change and execute strategy may be the most critical element in your organization's success.

Today, there is no room for error. The senior team is the single most important driver of everything that will happen next. We can help your executive team become world-class.

Learn more at [ccl.org/executive-team](https://ccl.org/executive-team)

## For Leaders

**Support yourself and take care of your people.** Right now, you may be struggling to keep your people connected and on task while they're dealing with distractions. You've had to be the bearer of bad news during this trying transition. You're managing so much and may need help to figure out how to "show up" as your organization faces new challenges.

You may need a sparring partner to help you make sense of everything you're managing, or a safe space to test ideas and figure things out. We can provide on-demand, virtual coaching, focused *only* on whatever is most important to you right now. Your carefully matched coach can also give you a confidential space to test new ideas, help you maintain energy or regain focus, recapture your sense of clarity and purpose, and navigate tough decisions with major consequences.

Our world-class coaches will help you **prepare mentally, emotionally, and professionally** as you lead your organization through the immediate crisis and an uncertain future.

Learn more at [ccl.org/on-demand-coaching](https://ccl.org/on-demand-coaching)

## For Everyone

**Expand your perspective with complimentary, practical resources on topics of crucial importance today.** We have decades of practical research on topics such as crisis leadership, building resilience, virtual teamwork, and digital learning.

Access our complimentary resources for leaders at [ccl.org/coronavirus-resources](https://ccl.org/coronavirus-resources)

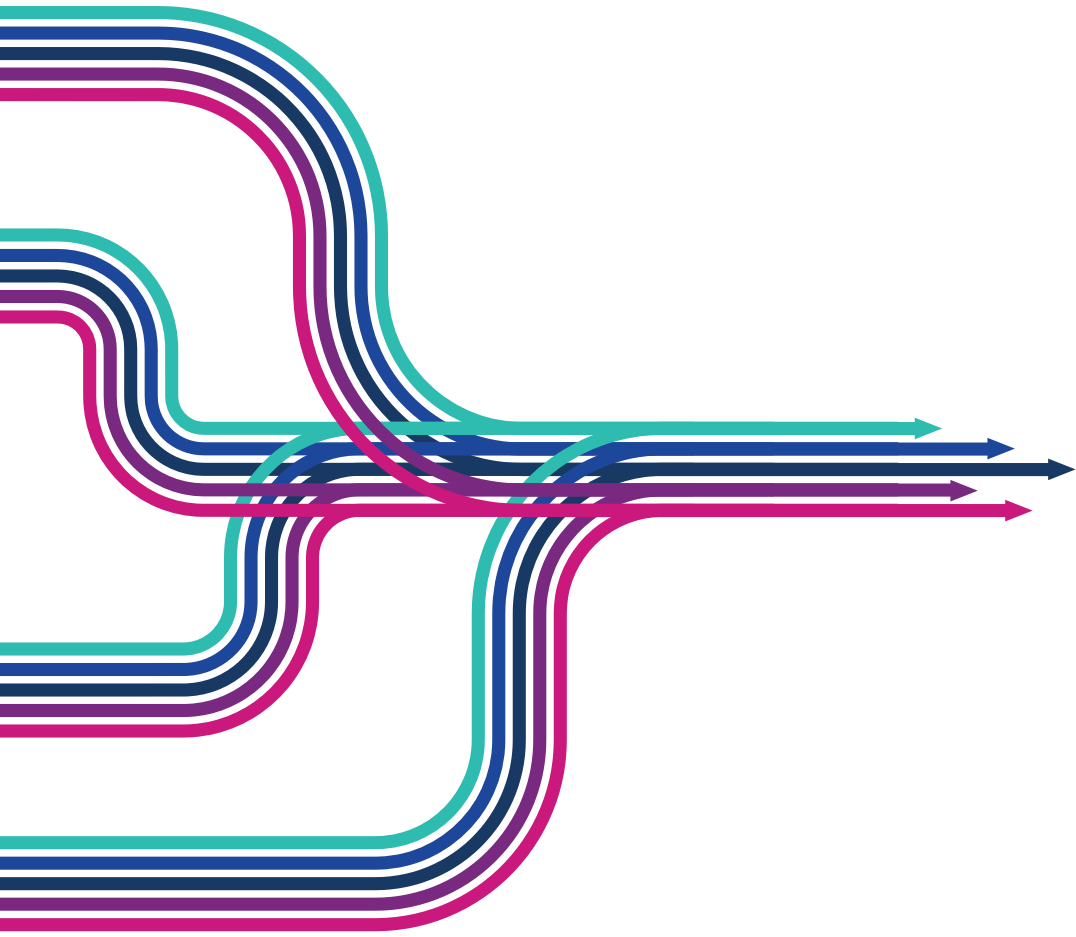
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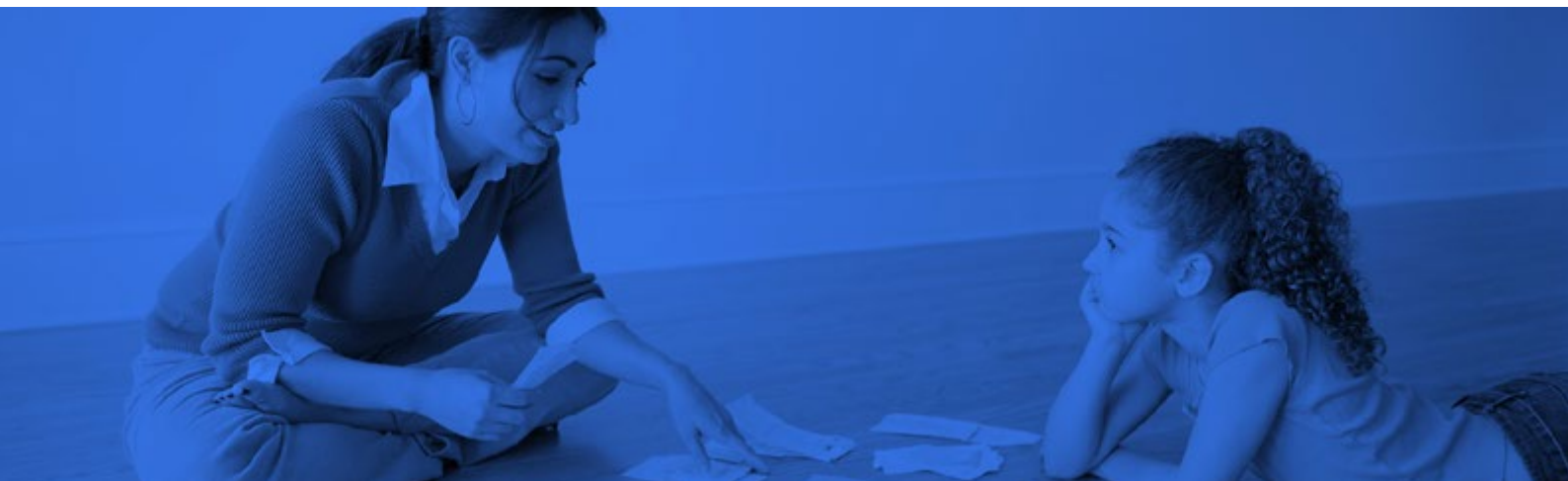
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# THE FORGOTTEN INFLUENCE OF YOUR PERSONAL LIFE AND HARDSHIPS ON LEADERSHIP



By: Jessica Glazer

More often than not, in the midst of a leadership development program design discussion with a client, they'll say something about 70-20-10. "We'd like you to keep in mind **the 70-20-10 model of development**," they say. "Have you heard of that?"

By this point, our faculty members are well-versed in gently pointing out that, yes, we have heard of it, because the research for that model was developed here, at CCL, in the very building in which my colleagues and I sit in today.

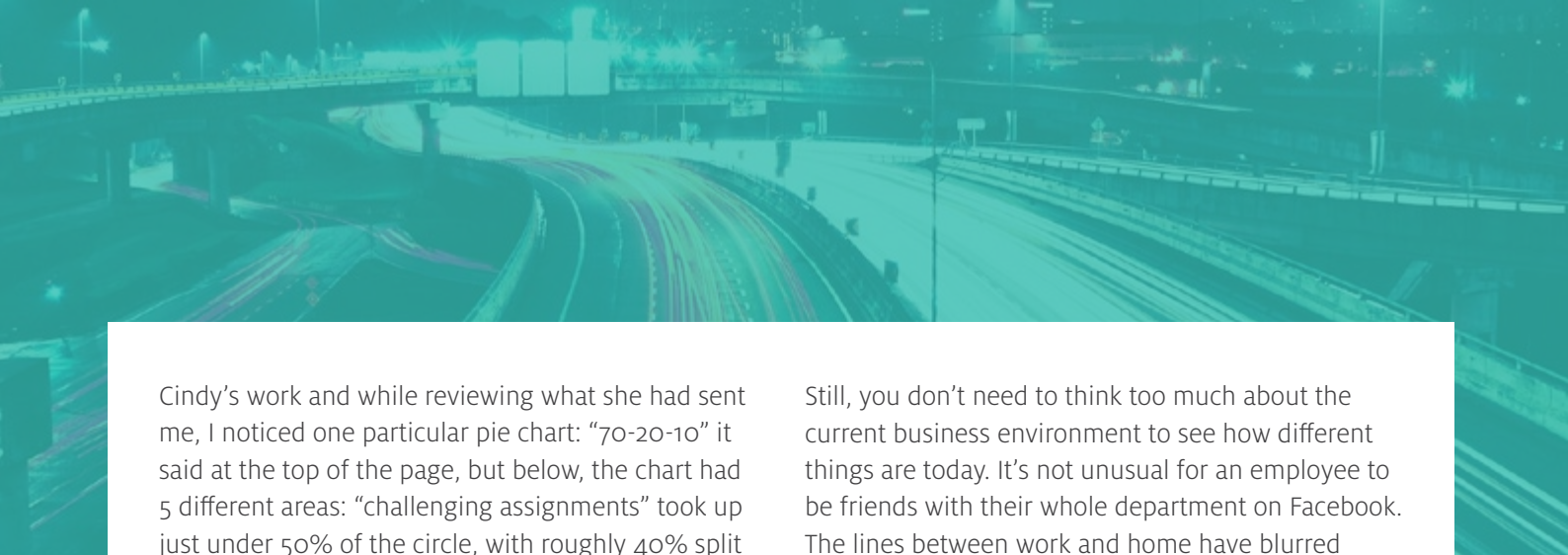
"Fantastic! We like to base most of our designs around that model!" comes the response. And so it has gone for much of the last 30 years, with 70-20-10 becoming a beacon for how leadership development designs should be arranged.

The theory behind it is as follows: 70% of learning should come from challenging on-the-job assignments; 20% of learning should be gleaned from watching and working with others; and a modest 10% represents

formal, in-classroom- or virtually-based learning. Instructional designers often loosely translate that to: "more interaction, less lecture; more pre-and-post-session work and more longitudinal programs in order to ensure learning transfer, fewer day-long seminars filled with soon-to-be-forgotten theoretical concepts."

Is this a good model for learning? Yes. And more so, it's widely accepted as the gold standard, a research-based, long-standing model often cited by development professionals, most of whom may not even know about the original research findings that eventually led to it.

Up until a few months ago, I was one of those development professionals. Then, I had the opportunity to meet with Cindy McCauley, Senior Research Fellow at CCL. Cindy is our leading researcher in the area of **experience-driven development**, which stems from the work of Bob Eichinger and Mike Lombardo, the famed 70-20-10 creators. I needed some slides on



Cindy's work and while reviewing what she had sent me, I noticed one particular pie chart: "70-20-10" it said at the top of the page, but below, the chart had 5 different areas: "challenging assignments" took up just under 50% of the circle, with roughly 40% split between "other people" and "hardships." A final 10% was split between "formal coursework" and "personal life." I was confused.

"What is this?" I asked Cindy, only to have her confirm my suspicions: These were the original results from the CCL research question, "Where do key development learnings come from?" That data found that "hardships" were equally important to "other people," and that lessons from one's personal life aided development in an essential way. And yet, I'd never heard of the **50-20-20-5-&-5 model**.

Cindy explained: the originators of the model dropped hardships and personal life events because organizations had little control over them. Coursework could be replicated, mentors could be assigned, but who could guarantee hardships? Or more importantly, who would want to? After dropping those 2 pesky categories and doing some simple recalculations, the model shook out at the now-trusty 70-20-10 breakdown.

Consider that this model was developed in the late 1980s. Perhaps looking for or focusing on hardships felt unnecessary. If things were going well for an organization, why manufacture a hardship? And were hardships even something to discuss openly at work? Similarly, work wasn't likely considered the place to discuss one's personal life; workplaces were quite a bit more formal, and lines between the personal and professional were more clearly delineated than they often are today.

And in either case, Eichinger and Lombardo weren't wrong: it could be more of a challenge for employers to try to create these types of experiences for all employees (i.e., manufacture a hardship or ask employees to share leadership lessons learned outside of the office).

Still, you don't need to think too much about the current business environment to see how different things are today. It's not unusual for an employee to be friends with their whole department on Facebook. The lines between work and home have blurred significantly, as people bring their emails to bed on their smart phone and as family obligations are split more equally among couples, often requiring more flexible schedules.

In fact, according to several recent studies, millennials report that good work-life balance is one of the most important factors in accepting or continuing with a job or organization. If we don't help employees to mine their personal experiences for leadership skills, we risk not only losing out on prime learning opportunities, but on disregarding a part of their life that they have identified as being of paramount importance.

As for hardships, I've found it impossible to find an organization that doesn't have a full list at the ready. Layoffs, budget cuts, mergers, acquisitions; anything from C-suite scandals impacting morale and public brand to the stress some workers feel about being required to move or risk losing their position in the company. Companies no longer need to manufacture hardships; these days, they're pretty much guaranteed.

Ignoring these hardships in favor of focusing solely on challenging assignments or coursework does a significant disservice to employees. **Pretending hardships aren't there doesn't make them go away.** In fact, ironic mental processing holds that asking employees to ignore a stressful hardship, such as rounds of layoffs, pretty much ensures that they won't be able to focus on anything else.

So where does this leave us, trying to make use of this model? The phrase "If it's not broken..." comes to mind, but the problem isn't that the model is broken — it's that it's incomplete. And the answer to filling that gap has been there all along.



**Organizations can address hardships head on and develop learning opportunities around them rather than trying to sweep them under the rug.** Who could turn their back on the chance to get 20% of learning lessons from that bucket alone? And they can do something similar with the area of personal life, which would both cater to the confirmed preferences of millennials and honor the extra-professional experiences of all employees.

Viewed through a hiring lens, giving the appropriate credence to lessons gained from one’s personal life might even increase the career opportunities for those with non-linear career paths, like employees who took time off to raise children or care for family members, or excellent job candidates who spent time pursuing an artistic passion or serving in the military before moving into their current line of work.

It is unlikely that I will stop hearing “70-20-10” from my clients any time soon. But my hope is that there is an appetite to modernize the revolutionary work of Eichinger and Lombardo, ironically by returning to CCL’s original research findings. It may have just taken us 30 years to grow into it.

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# DIRECTION + ALIGNMENT + COMMITMENT (DAC) = LEADERSHIP



## IT ISN'T JUST ABOUT INDIVIDUALS — LEADERSHIP IS A SOCIAL PROCESS

The list of “[what makes a good leader](#)” is a long one. It’s as if we’ve taken every positive human quality and made it into a requirement for effective leadership. It’s time to step back and take a different approach, because leadership isn’t actually all about individual leaders and their capabilities.

Instead, **leadership is a social process that enables individuals to work together to achieve results** they could never achieve working as individuals.

So, how can you tell if leadership is happening in a team, in a work group, on a task force, or across the organization?

Consider the exchanges between managers and employees, the interactions among team members, the quality of relationships throughout the organization, and the enactment of organizational

processes. Leadership can happen within teams, work groups, task forces, divisions, communities, and whole organizations, and across teams, levels, and functions.

Regardless of the group, for leadership to happen, the interactions and exchanges among people have to create:

- **Direction:** Agreement on what the collective is trying to achieve together.
- **Alignment:** Effective coordination and integration of the different aspects of the work so that it fits together in service of the shared direction.
- **Commitment:** People who are making the success of the collective (not just their individual success) a personal priority.

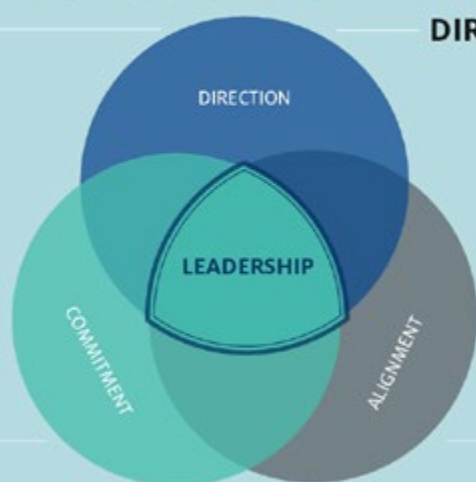
These 3 outcomes — direction, alignment, and commitment (or DAC for short) — make it possible for individuals to work together willingly and effectively to realize organizational achievements. So when we say making leadership happen, we mean making direction, alignment, and commitment happen.

In fact, we think the only way to know if leadership has happened is to look for the presence of these 3 outcomes.

But there isn't "a" single leader making leadership happen. The actions, interactions, reactions, and exchanges of multiple people are producing the DAC.

## HOW LEADERSHIP HAPPENS

### DIRECTION, ALIGNMENT, COMMITMENT (DAC)



**DIRECTION**  
Agreement in the group on overall goals.

**ALIGNMENT**  
Coordinated work within the group.

**COMMITMENT**  
Mutual responsibility for the group.

## UNDERSTANDING DIRECTION, ALIGNMENT & COMMITMENT (DAC)

Here's how to tell whether your team or organization is weak or strong in each area of DAC (direction, alignment, and commitment).

**Direction: agreement in the group on overall goals — what the group is trying to achieve together.**

- *In groups with strong direction:* Members have a shared understanding of what group success looks like and agree on what they're aiming to accomplish.
- *In groups with weak direction:* Members are uncertain about what they should accomplish together, or they feel pulled in different directions by competing goals.

**Alignment: coordinated work within the group and integration of the different aspects of the work so that it fits together in service of the shared direction.**

- *In groups with strong alignment:* Members with different tasks, roles, or sets of expertise coordinate their work.
- *In groups with weak alignment:* Members work more in isolation, unclear about how their tasks fit into the larger work of the group and are in danger of working at cross-purposes, duplicating efforts, or having important work fall through the cracks.



**Commitment: mutual responsibility for the group, when people are making the success of the collective (not just their individual success) a personal priority.**

- *In groups with strong commitment:* Members feel responsible for the success and well-being of the group, and they know that other group members feel the same. They trust each other and will stick with the group through difficult times.
- *In groups with weak commitment:* Members put their own interests ahead of the group’s interests and contribute to the group only when it’s easy to do so or when they have something to gain.

What does DAC look like in action? How can you recognize DAC? Here’s a quick summary of how to recognize whether direction, alignment, and commitment are happening in your organization or team:

	HAPPENING	NOT HAPPENING
<b>DIRECTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a vision, a desired future, or a set of goals that everyone buys into.</li> <li>• Members of the collective easily articulate how what they are trying to achieve together is worthwhile</li> <li>• People agree on what collective success looks like.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is lack of agreement on priorities.</li> <li>• People feel as if they are being pulled in different directions.</li> <li>• There’s inertia; people seem to be running in circles.</li> </ul>
<b>ALIGNMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone is clear about each other’s roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• The work of each individual/group fits well with the work of other individuals/groups.</li> <li>• There’s a sense of organization, coordinations, and synchronization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Things are in disarray: deadlines are missed, rework is required, there’s duplication of efforts.</li> <li>• People feel isolated from one another.</li> <li>• Groups compete with one another.</li> </ul>
<b>COMMITMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People give the extra effort needed for the group to succeed.</li> <li>• There’s a sense of trust and mutual responsibility for the work.</li> <li>• People express considerable passion and motivation for the work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only the easy things get done.</li> <li>• Everyone is just asking “what’s in it for me?”</li> <li>• People are not “walking the talk.”</li> </ul>

## HOW TO INCREASE DAC ON YOUR TEAM

At CCL, we have been using the DAC framework with people across level, sector, function, culture, and demographic for over 20 years. Here’s what you need to implement DAC on your team:

**1. First, assess current levels of DAC in the group.** The best way to do this is to get input from everyone involved. If you rely on just your own perspective, you’re probably missing key information. You can [take our quick, free assessment of DAC levels with your team](#) to gauge the degree to which your team agrees on statements such as:

- *We agree on what we should be aiming to accomplish together.*
- *We have group priorities that help us focus on the most important work.*
- *The work of each individual is well coordinated with the work of others.*
- *People are clear about how their tasks fit into the work of the group.*
- *We make the success of the group — not just our individual success — a priority.*



**2. If you learn that the group has low levels of direction, alignment, or commitment, dig a bit deeper.** Some factors that contribute to weak DAC include:

- Direction hasn't been articulated or talked about.
- We jump into tasks and projects without a plan or connecting it to others' work.
- We don't bring in others with relevant expertise, or manage work assignments effectively.
- Resources aren't appropriately allocated.
- We're unclear about who is responsible for what tasks or who has authority to make what decisions.
- We see duplication of effort, or gaps where aspects of the work fall through the cracks.
- Group members don't see themselves as having the ability or influence to address problems.
- Individuals don't feel like they get the credit they deserve for their contributions to the group.

**3. Identify changes that could improve direction, alignment, or commitment.** There are countless ways to address the problems you find — but this is where your group can tailor efforts specifically to what matters most. You'll want to engage the insights and creativity of the group to come up with changes to address key issues.

You can also draw on outside expertise for ideas and solutions. Keep in mind that direction, alignment, and commitment are group-level outcomes. Any aspect of the group can impact them. To enhance DAC, you might need to change things such as:

- The quality or frequency of interactions among group members.
- The relationships among particular members.
- The formal or informal processes for making decisions or getting work accomplished.
- The skills of individual group members.
- Shared assumptions and cultural beliefs of the group as a whole.

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# STRATEGIES TO CREATE DAC IN YOUR ORGANIZATION OR TEAM

So how do you, as a manager, create DAC and make leadership happen in your organization? Here are 3 important strategies:

**Pay attention to *whether* leadership is happening.** Start looking for evidence of DAC. By paying attention to outcomes, you will not only begin to discern where more is needed, but you will also start to see the kinds of processes and interactions that are producing the desired levels of direction, alignment, and commitment.

**Make *more* leadership happen.** When you notice that there aren't many leadership processes in place, create them. When there are useful leadership processes in place, make sure people have the skills to participate in them effectively. And when existing leadership processes no longer seem to be producing the needed Direction, Alignment, and Commitment, explore new ones. For example, consider:

- To create more Direction: *Does a more diverse group of people need to be involved?*
- To create more Alignment: *When a new strategic initiative is being launched, does your staff have the skills to analyze its implication for their own work?*
- To create more Alignment: *Do you need to meet more regularly with your peers to prioritize work?*
- To create more Alignment: *Are clearer accountability structures needed?*
- To create more Commitment: *Are more honest conversations about proposed changes needed?*
- To create more Commitment: *Can you match members of your staff with projects that they are most enthusiastic about, while still assuring that all the projects are adequately resourced?*

**Improve your own ability to participate in cultivating leadership.** It's useful to continually deepen and broaden your individual skills and abilities. With a broader repertoire of capabilities, you'll be able to participate more effectively in a wide range of processes.

If you're wondering where to focus your development efforts, consider that one lens for examining this question is DAC:

- *If there's one place in your organization where you would desperately like to see more DAC, where would that be?*
- *What would you need to get better at doing so more leadership happens in that setting?*

Of course, the DAC approach isn't a quick fix. But it does provide clarity and a way forward. Talk to people about where direction, alignment, and commitment are happening and where they aren't. Enlist others in your experiments with new leadership processes, and seek input on how to improve your own capabilities.

Because leadership is shared work — at the end of the day, you can only make leadership happen with others.

**Ready to make more leadership happen with DAC? We can help your team increase direction, alignment, and commitment and create a strong leadership culture that supports your business strategy through our [custom Organizational Leadership programs](#).**

# DIRECTION, ALIGNMENT, AND COMMITMENT ASSESSMENT

## Achieving Better Results through Leadership

**Instructions:** On a scale of 1-5, indicate the extent to which each of the following statements describes the way things stand right now in the group. The terms *we*, *our*, *everyone*, and *people* in the statements refers to members of the group.

1	2	3	4	5
Not Descriptive	Slightly Descriptive	Moderately Descriptive	Greatly Descriptive	Completely Descriptive
<b>Direction</b>				
We agree on what we should be aiming to accomplish together.				1 2 3 4 5
We have a clear vision of what the group needs to achieve in the future.				1 2 3 4 5
We understand what success looks like for this group.				1 2 3 4 5
We have group goals that guide our key decisions.				1 2 3 4 5
We have group priorities that help us focus on the most important work.				1 2 3 4 5
Total				
<b>Alignment</b>				
Our work is aligned across the group.				1 2 3 4 5
Although individuals take on different tasks in the group, our combined work fits together.				1 2 3 4 5
The work of each individual is well coordinated with the work of others.				1 2 3 4 5
People who perform different roles or functions in the group coordinate their work effectively.				1 2 3 4 5
People are clear about how their tasks fits into the work of the group.				1 2 3 4 5
Total				
<b>Commitment</b>				
People in the group are committed to the group.				1 2 3 4 5
We take responsibility for the welfare of the group.				1 2 3 4 5
We make the success of the group—not just our individual success—a priority.				1 2 3 4 5
People are dedicated to this group even when we face setbacks.				1 2 3 4 5
We put what is in the best interests of the group first.				1 2 3 4 5
Total				

If the you or the group identifies one or more low outcomes, you can begin exploring what factors may be contributing to these deficits.

Some criteria for deciding if an outcome is low include:

- a total score for an outcome is noticeably lower than the total score for the other outcomes
- a total score for an outcome is less than 20
- 2-3 of the items used to assess an outcome are rated less than four by a majority of group members

# HOW TO HAVE A COACHING CONVERSATION



## 3 STEPS TO COACH YOUR PEOPLE & BUILD A STRONGER COACHING CULTURE

The ability to start — and hold — a coaching conversation is a transformational leadership skill. Through coaching, you help people become more self-aware. You turn experiences into learning opportunities. You reinforce strengths and explore challenges. You help people take responsibility for their actions and their development.

As more and more people in your organization develop coaching skills, you instill a *coaching culture*, which increases:

- Employee engagement;
- Job satisfaction and morale;
- Collaboration;
- Teamwork; and
- Bench strength.

Coaching isn't just for specialized professionals. In fact, nearly anyone can conduct a coaching conversation. Coaches can help people who are ready to identify problems and find solutions. And being a coach — developing others — is part of leadership.

Some of the most powerful coaching experiences are informal exchanges in the hallways, cafeterias, work spaces, and over video calls in the course of everyday work.

When enough people at an organization begin coaching one another, something powerful begins to happen. As a critical mass of people having coaching conversations is reached, relationships strengthen, engagement increases, and performance improves. Interactions across the entire organization, both in-person and virtually, become more effective and together, all these **conversations start to create a better culture.**

# HOW DO YOU HAVE A COACHING CONVERSATION?

**First, identify when there is an opportunity for a coaching conversation.** To recognize when someone is open to having a coaching conversation, pay attention for the following cues:

- “Can you help me think things through?”
- “I’d like to bounce some ideas off of you.”
- “Could you give me a reality check?”
- “I need some help.”

In these moments, you can turn a typical conversation into a coaching opportunity. At that point, remember these 3 guidelines to hold a coaching conversation:

- 1** ➤ **Listen carefully.**
- 2** ➤ **Respond thoughtfully.**
- 3** ➤ **Resist imposing your own solution.**

## HOW TO HAVE A COACHING CONVERSATION



### LISTEN CAREFULLY

Don't assume what the conversation is about or what path it should take.



### RESPOND THOUGHTFULLY

Coaching is about uncovering answers through inquiry, openness & exploration.



### RESIST IMPOSING YOUR OWN SOLUTION

Shift from the norm of telling, problem-solving & giving advice.

# FOLLOW THESE 3 STEPS TO HOLD A COACHING CONVERSATION

**1. Listen carefully.** Don't assume what the conversation is about or what path it should take. Truly listen, allowing space for others to think, reflect, and express themselves. [Start with building your active listening skillset](#), but know that *truly* listening goes beyond active listening, to **listening to understand**.

Listening to understand focuses on the idea that there are multiple levels of information we must tune into during conversations. One level, of course, is the factual information being presented — most of us tend to pay attention primarily to that. But listening for the values behind the topic at hand and the emotions that people bring to an issue is an important part of a better conversation.

That's where we often find unstated objections, sensible reservations, and concealed barriers that might torpedo new initiatives. Stronger and more robust solutions to business challenges emerge when people are really listening to understand one another.

**2. Respond thoughtfully.** Coaching isn't about the quick fix or first solution. It's about uncovering answers through inquiry, openness, and exploration. Start by **asking powerful questions** that draw out more information or stretch the other person's thinking, such as:

- *What else could you do?*
- *What else occurs to you?*
- *Who else have you talked to about this?*
- *Who else is affected in this situation?*

Beyond creating mutual understanding about facts, asking powerful questions like these can help uncover insights that wouldn't have come to light otherwise.

A non-directive prompting question like "*How do you want your team to feel when you announce the new initiative?*" is likely to spark more reflection and lead to greater insights than asking "*When are you announcing the new initiative?*" While the latter question might be helpful in getting the person inquiring up to speed, it isn't particularly powerful and isn't likely to add any real value for the person answering, as they simply repeat a straightforward fact they already know.

Be sure you set a comfortable tone, maintain eye contact, and give plenty of time for them to think and respond to your questions. Encourage them to express themselves — without you agreeing or disagreeing.

**3. Resist imposing your own solution.** Shift away from the common and natural tendency to want to problem-solve or give advice. There are times to direct or give answers, but coaching conversations are about the other person's learning — *not* about your opinion or expertise.

Informed by neuroscience, the real art of conversation is balancing an appropriate **mix of challenge and support**. Providing support includes assuring people that they've been heard and, especially, that their feelings and values are understood. It provides an important sense of psychological safety, builds trust, and encourages honesty and transparency.





# COACHING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE: YOU NEED SUPPORT DURING HARD TIMES



## WHEN LEADING IN A CRISIS, COACHING ON DEMAND CAN HELP

As a leader, people look to you for inspiration.

But in these times of unprecedented uncertainty right now, you're likely being pulled in many different directions. Not only are you required to make strategic decisions that may change the course of your organization, but you're also tasked with providing tactical guidance.

Working long hours and fielding questions from every direction, it's only natural that you might neglect your own well-being. **But remember that not taking care of yourself right now will diminish your ability to support the people you lead.**

In times of crisis, you need support, too.

A coach can help move you from feeling threatened to feeling challenged. Coaching can provide clarity to help

you make decisions about maintaining organizational performance; business continuity; and the safety, well-being, and financial security of your workforce. You may be figuring out strategies for maintaining organizational performance with many people working from home and normal workflows disrupted.

Coaching can also help you work through questions like, *How do I want to "show up" as a leader during this crisis? Am I sufficiently resilient to lead effectively through change?*

In those times, quick doses of [coaching on demand](#) can be helpful. It can give you a confidential space to test ideas, help you manage or regain energy and focus, recapture your sense of clarity and purpose, and navigate tough decisions with major consequences.

# USE A TARGETED APPROACH FOR COACHING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

Besides coaching on demand, there are several other types of coaching which can address many different issues. For example:

- **An executive coach can be a sounding board during times of crisis** and can provide you with a structured approach to leading your organization through unforeseen circumstances. The key is to be clear on desired outcomes and work with a coach in a way that emphasizes improved performance.
- **Senior executives and high potentials may benefit from coaching that helps them develop strategies** for leading in new or complex situations, build on existing strengths, and push their goals forward. One leader may work with a coach to go from “good to great.” Another may use coaching to shorten her ramp-up time in a new role or to help navigate a significant increase in responsibilities.
- **For middle managers, coaching can reinvigorate a job or even a career.** A coach can help a leader identify skills to be developed, key strengths, and strategies for improvement. Coaching can focus on achieving goals within a leader’s current job or move in new directions.
- **Derailing executives can benefit from coaching to improve performance, too.** It can help these previously successful leaders, who for any number of reasons might have jeopardized their prospects, to identify problem areas and make tangible performance improvements that serve the needs of the organization and the individual.

# 4 BENEFITS OF COACHING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

So how does leadership coaching lead to results? **Research shows that coaching can improve performance in at least 4 ways:**

- 1 ➤ Greater self- and contextual-awareness.** Coaching is about you and where you work. You'll gain insight about yourself as a leader within your organization.
- 2 ➤ Greater understanding of others.** A coach helps you understand why others might think and act the way they do. You'll learn about actions you can take to help them or to focus them in a direction that's better for the organization.
- 3 ➤ Enhanced ability to communicate.** A coach works with you to find ways to improve how you convey what's important to you, to the business, and to others.
- 4 ➤ Enhanced ability to coach others.** Once you've experienced the value of coaching for your own development, you'll be much more prepared to notice and leverage coaching opportunities with your team. This capacity will be a key differentiator between a good leader and a great one.

However, a good coaching outcome requires a good coaching relationship. Asking the right questions in the beginning sets the tone for a strong coaching partnership.

If you're ready to invest in coaching to improve your performance, or just need 30-60 minutes a week to get more honed in and grounded, coaching offers a tailored, focused way to connect your performance development with your day-to-day work demands.

**Learn more about our high-impact [Virtual Coaching](#) solutions designed to ignite individual, team, and organizational effectiveness.**

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPATHY IN THE WORKPLACE



## WHY EMPATHY IN THE WORKPLACE MATTERS

It's critical for companies to hire and develop more effective managers and leaders capable of moving their organization forward during both good and challenging times. That requires looking beyond traditional strategies for management development, and cultivating the skills most important for success. One of those skills, perhaps unexpectedly, is empathy.

Empathy has long been a soft skill that's overlooked as a performance indicator. Research from CCL, however, has shown that today's successful leaders must be more "person-focused" and able to work well with people from varying teams, departments, countries, cultures, and backgrounds.

To determine if empathy influences a manager's job performance, we analyzed data from 6,731 managers

in 38 countries. **We found that empathy in the workplace is positively related to job performance. Managers who show more empathy toward direct reports are viewed as better performers in their job by their bosses.** The findings were consistent across the sample: those managers who were rated as empathetic by subordinates were also rated as high performing by their own boss.

The ability to be compassionate and connect with others is critical to our lives, both personally and professionally. Demonstrating empathy – a key part of emotional intelligence – improves human interactions in general and can lead to more effective communication and positive outcomes in both work and home settings.

# DEFINING EMPATHY IN THE WORKPLACE

Empathy is the ability to perceive and relate to the thoughts, emotions, or experience of others. Those with high levels of empathy are skilled at understanding a situation from another person's perspective and reacting with compassion. In the workplace, this simply means that your people are able to establish true, empathetic connections with one another that enhance relationships and performance.

It's important to remember the difference between sympathy and empathy, as the 2 are often confused. Sympathy is typically defined by feelings of pity for another person, without really understanding what it's like to be in their situation. Empathy, on the other hand, refers to the capacity or ability to imagine oneself in the situation of another, experiencing the emotions, ideas, or opinions of that person.

Empathy is often more productive, especially when used in the workplace.

## 4 WAYS LEADERS CAN SHOW EMPATHY IN THE WORKPLACE

Displaying empathy in the workplace can take many shapes and forms. The leaders in our study were rated on their level of empathy as measured by CCL's [Benchmarks® 360-degree](#) tool and were rated by direct reports in the following 4 areas:

### 1 ➤ **Watch for signs of overwork in others.**

Work burnout is a real problem today, and comes at a greater risk during times of intense stress and pressure, such as the current [COVID-19 crisis](#) we're dealing with on a global scale. Many people are stressed, putting in more hours than ever before, and finding it difficult to separate work and home life.

Managers who are skilled at empathy are able to recognize signs of overwork in others before burnout becomes an issue that results in disengagement or turnover. This might mean taking a few extra minutes each week to check in with team members and gauge how they're handling their current workload.

### 2 ➤ **Show sincere interest in the needs, hopes, and dreams of other people.**

Part of leading with empathy involves working to understand the unique needs and goals of each team member and how to best match work assignments to contribute to both performance and employee satisfaction. Team members who see that their manager recognizes them in this way are more engaged and willing to go the extra mile.

### 3 ➤ **Demonstrate willingness to help an employee with personal problems.**

Lines between work and personal life are becoming increasingly blurred, especially during the current crisis situation. Empathetic managers understand that their team members are dynamic individuals who are shouldering personal problems while having to maintain their professional responsibilities. They recognize that it's part of their role to lead and support those team members when they need it most.

Keeping open lines of communication and encouraging transparency is a good way to foster psychological safety and help team members feel comfortable sharing when it's necessary.

### 4 ➤ **Show compassion when other people disclose a personal loss.**

Real connections and friendships at work matter, and empathy is a tool that managers can use to establish bonds with those they're privileged to lead. We've all been through personal loss, so even if we can't relate to the specific loss our team member experiences, we can act empathetically and let them know they're supported.

# HOW ORGANIZATIONS CAN ENCOURAGE EMPATHY IN THE WORKPLACE

Some people are naturally more empathetic than others and will have an advantage over their peers who have difficulty expressing empathy. Most leaders fall in the middle and are sometimes or somewhat empathetic.

Fortunately, empathy is not a fixed trait. **It can be learned.** If given enough time and support, leaders can develop and enhance their empathy skills through coaching, training, or developmental opportunities and initiatives. Organizations can encourage a more empathetic workplace and help managers improve their empathy skills in a number of simple ways:

## 5 WAYS YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN ENCOURAGE

# EMPATHY



1. Talk about empathy.
2. Teach listening skills.
3. Encourage genuine perspective taking.
4. Cultivate compassion.
5. Support global managers.

### 1. Talk about empathy.

Let managers know that empathy matters. Many managers consider task-orienting skills such as monitoring and planning to be more important to controlling the performance of their team members. But research shows that understanding, caring, and developing others is just as important, if not more important, particularly in today's workforce

Explain that giving time and attention to others fosters empathy, which in turn enhances your performance and improves your perceived effectiveness.

### 2. Teach listening skills.

To understand others and sense what they're feeling, managers must be [good listeners](#). Skilled listeners let others know that they're being heard, and they express understanding of concerns and problems.

When a manager is a good listener, people feel respected, and trust can grow. Managers should focus on listening to hear the meaning behind what others are saying by paying attention to not only the words being said, but nonverbal cues such as tone, pace of speech, facial expressions, and gestures.



**3. Encourage genuine perspective taking.**

Managers should consistently put themselves in the other person’s place. For managers, this includes taking into account the personal experience or perspective of their employees. It also can be applied to solving problems, managing conflicting, or driving innovation.

**4. Cultivate compassion.**

Support managers who care about how someone else feels or consider the effects that business decisions have on employees, customers, and communities. Go beyond the standard-issue values statement and allow time for compassionate reflection and response.

**5. Support global managers.**

The ability to be empathetic is especially important for leaders working in global organizations or across cultural boundaries. Working across cultures requires managers to understand people who have very different perspectives and experiences. Empathy generates an interest in and appreciation for others, paving the way to more productive working relationships.

As managers hone their empathy skills, they improve their leadership effectiveness and increase their chances of success in the job. Empathetic leaders are assets to organizations, in part, because they are able to effectively build and maintain relationships — a critical part of leading organizations anywhere in the world.

***These steps can help your organization build more empathetic leaders and a stronger culture. Our [Better Conversations Every Day™](#) program, available live online delivered by CCL experts, or as a scalable, licensed program, can build your people’s coaching skills and help them discover how to really listen to understand one another.***

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