

Corporate Executives' Views on Leadership, Employee Performance & Innovation – A Survey Research Project



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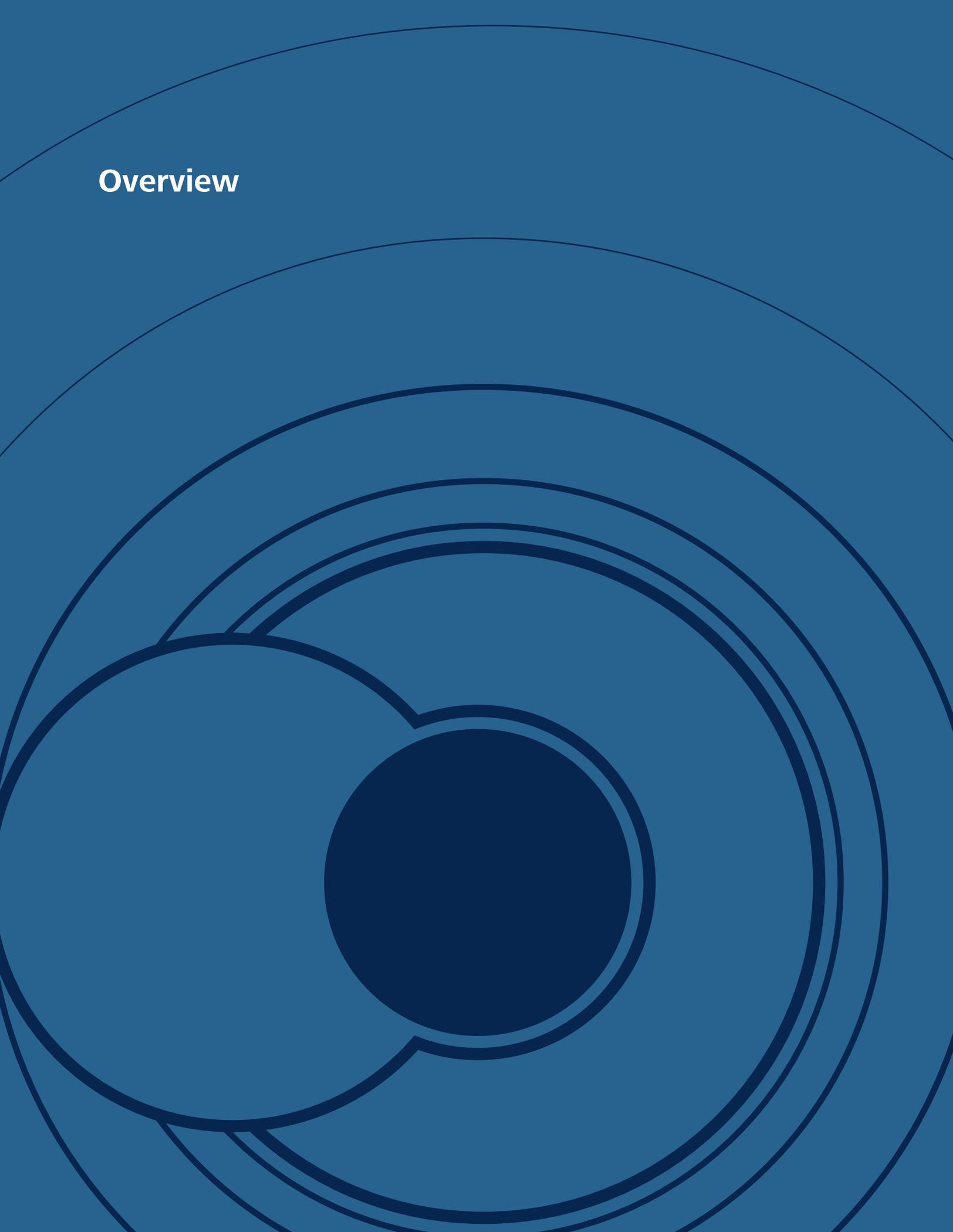
This report highlights findings from a survey among senior executives at companies in the U.S. with revenue of \$1 billion or more. Conducted on behalf of Gap International, questions explored perceptions regarding employee potential and performance, expected investment in innovation over the next year, and more.

The survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive, between September 12 – 30, 2013. A total of 305 interviews were completed.

Note that with a sample size of 305 interviews, the maximum error range surrounding results is +/- 5.6 percentage points (at a 95% Level of Confidence).

Error range (or standard error) is provided to serve as a guideline. Such statistical applications only apply to true random probability samples.

Overview



Attitudes about Employee Performance

The vast majority of these corporate executives agree that (1) they have established methods to help their employees/teams consistently achieve success and (2) they can accurately predict if their teams will deliver the results they commit to achieving. Noteworthy, however: while over 90% at least “somewhat agree” with these statements, only about one-third “strongly agree.”

Similarly, 91% at least somewhat agree that they often draw on other executives to help solve high level business problems ...but this number drops dramatically (to 38%) when one looks solely at the proportion that “strongly agree” with the statement.

72% agree that all employees in their organizations could exceed performance goals (with 19% “strongly agreeing”). However, when asked in a slightly different way, executives surveyed felt that [an average of] 37% of their employees have the potential to be top performers. Only 19% of executives felt that more than 70% of their employees have the potential to be top performers.

Leadership

85% consider it “very important” to maximize organizational talent ...and 83% consider it very important to effectively empower employees without having to resort to micro-managing.

77% think it is very important to build effective inter-departmental collaboration ...and 72% feel that increasing the capacity of the company leaders (such as expanding their thinking and capabilities) is very important.

Investment/Innovation

Executives were provided with a list of 6 corporate investment areas and asked in which ones the company would be investing “most of its innovation efforts over the next 12 months.”

Leading the way was “technology,” with two-thirds acknowledging that this would be an area of innovation investment effort. Incidences for the other five areas paled in comparison, although they still had fairly sizable proportions acknowledging that they would be areas of innovation investment:

For example, 44% cited “optimizing employee performance,” 43% “leadership training,” 43% “operations,” and 41% “research and development.” Trailing these was “cross-functional communications,” with 34% feeling that this would be an area of innovation investment effort.

Summary of Results



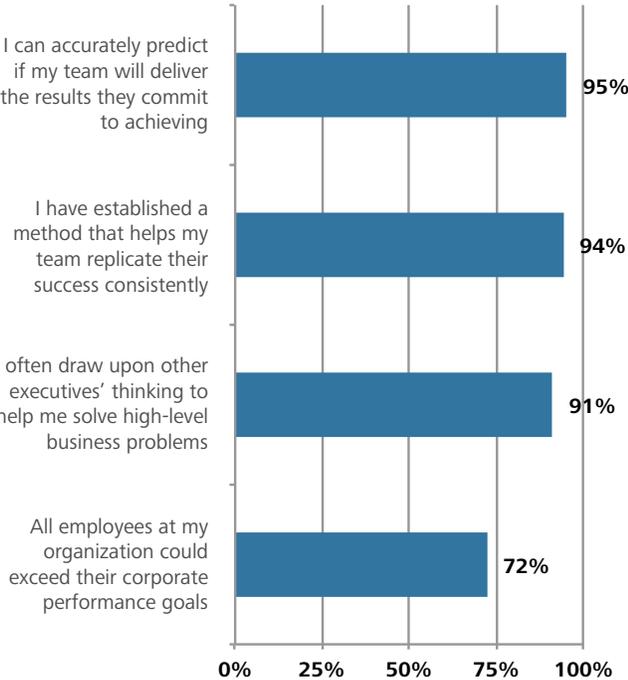
Productivity & Performance



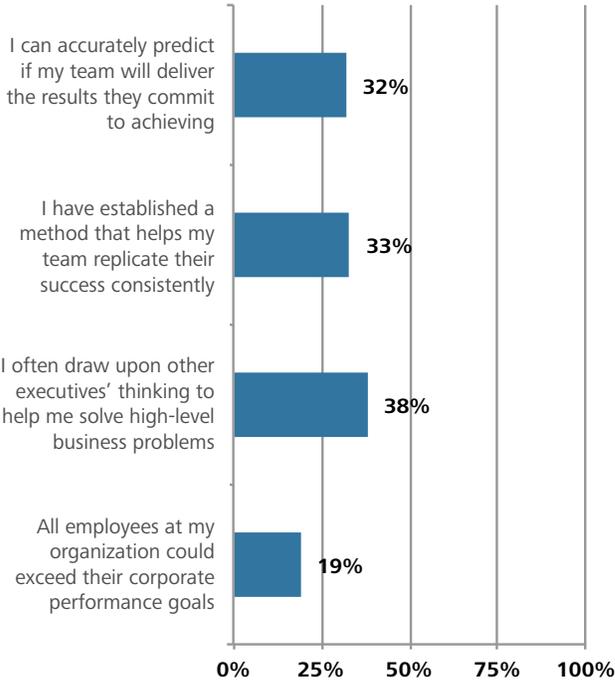
Attitudes about Employee Performance

- The overwhelming majority at least somewhat agree that they have established a method to help the team consistently replicate success. However, only a third “strongly agree” with this statement.
- Similarly, 32% “strongly agree” that they can accurately predict whether their teams will deliver results they commit to achieving.
- 72% at least somewhat agree that “all employees could exceed their performance goals” (i.e., 28% disagree with the statement).
- Nearly all (91%) agree on some level that they often draw upon others to help solve high-level business problems.

% Strongly or Somewhat Agreeing with Statement



% Strongly Agreeing with Statement

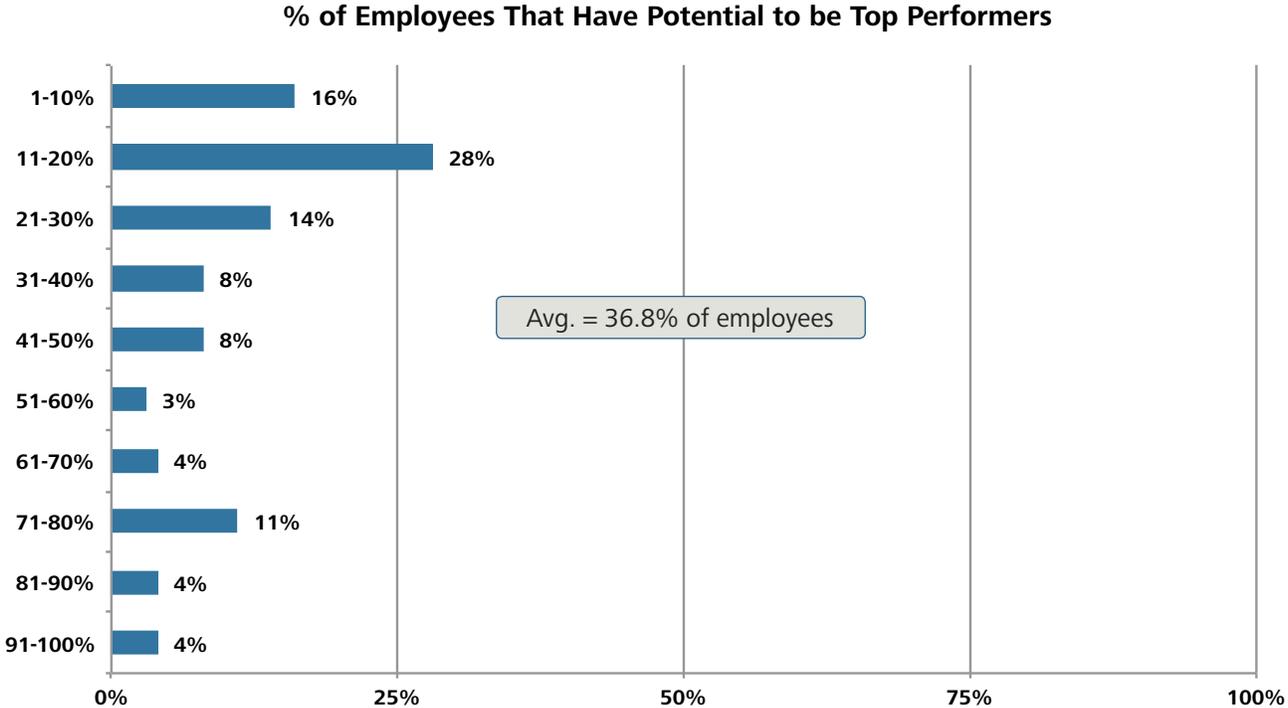


Question: How much do you agree or disagree with the statement?

Sample Size = 305

% of Employees That Have the Potential to be Top Performers

- These executives believe that—on average—37% of their employees have the potential to be top performers.
- Roughly one quarter of executives believe that over half of their employees have such potential.



Question: What percentage of your employees has the potential to be top performers?

Sample Size = 305

Leadership



% Rating Specific Leadership Challenges as “Very Important”

- 85% consider maximizing organizational talent “very important.”
- 83% consider effectively empowering employees without having to micro-manage “very important.”
- Over three-quarters think it is “very important” to build effective collaboration and understanding across teams/departments.

% Rating Specific Leadership Challenges as “Very Important”



Question: How important are the following leadership challenges to you?

Sample Size = 305

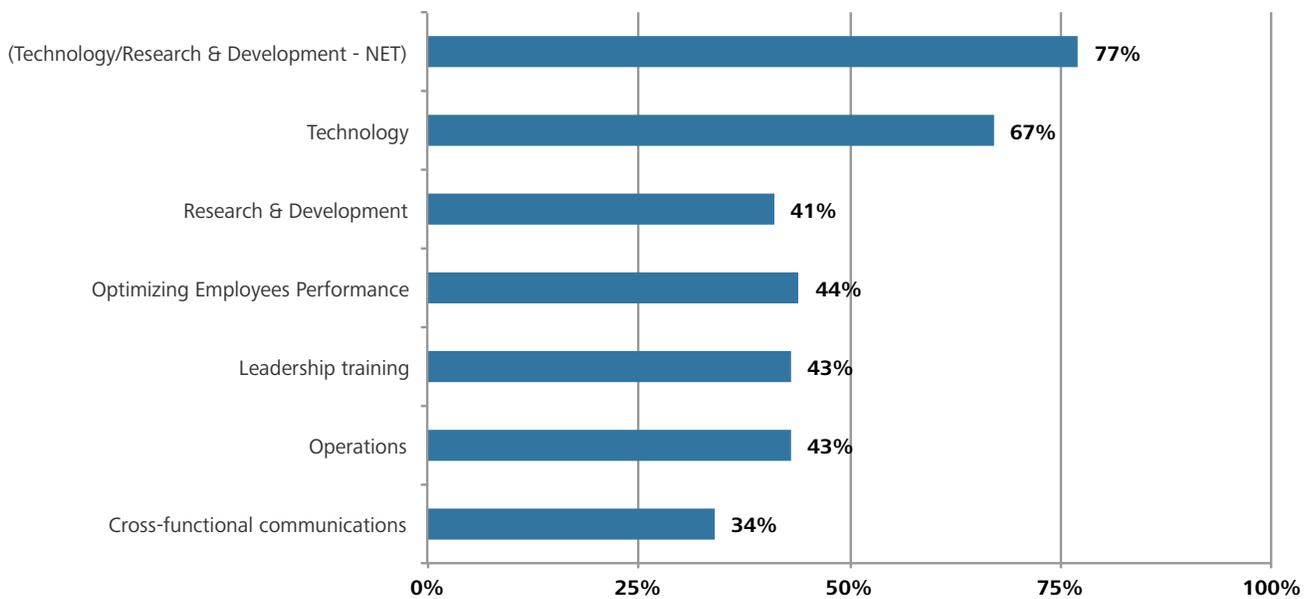
Investment/Innovation



Areas of Innovation Investment

Over the next year, where do executives foresee investing in innovation? Two-thirds say “in technology,” 44% in “optimizing employee performance,” 43% in “leadership training,” 43% in “operations,” and 41% in “R&D.”

Areas where Company will Invest its Innovation Efforts in next 12 months



Question: In which of the following areas will your company invest most of its innovation efforts during the next 12 months? (Select all that apply)

Sample Size = 305

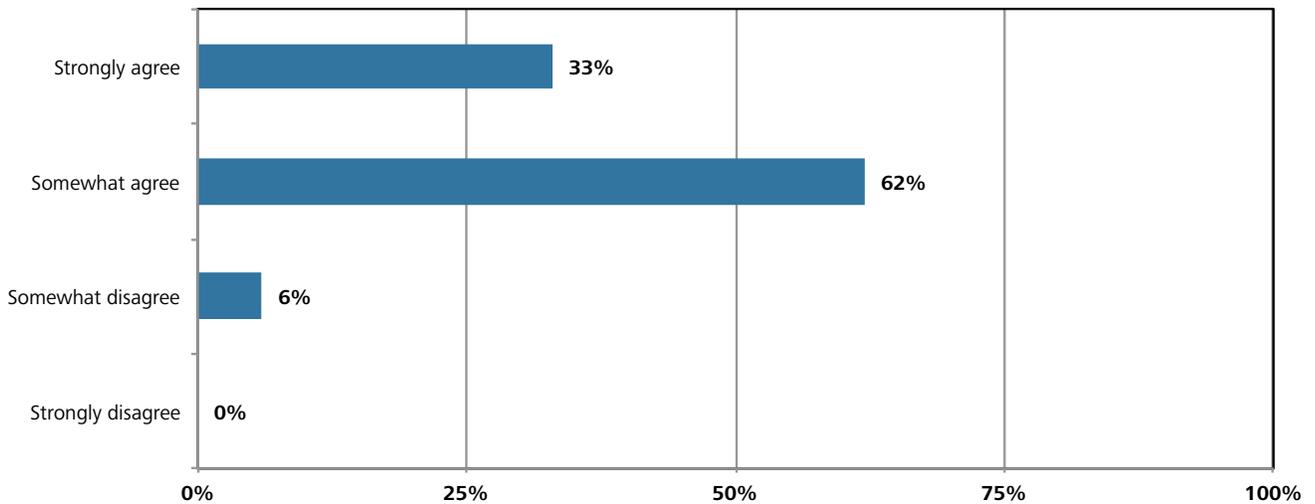
Appendix



Question 1

How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

I have established a method that helps my team replicate their success consistently.

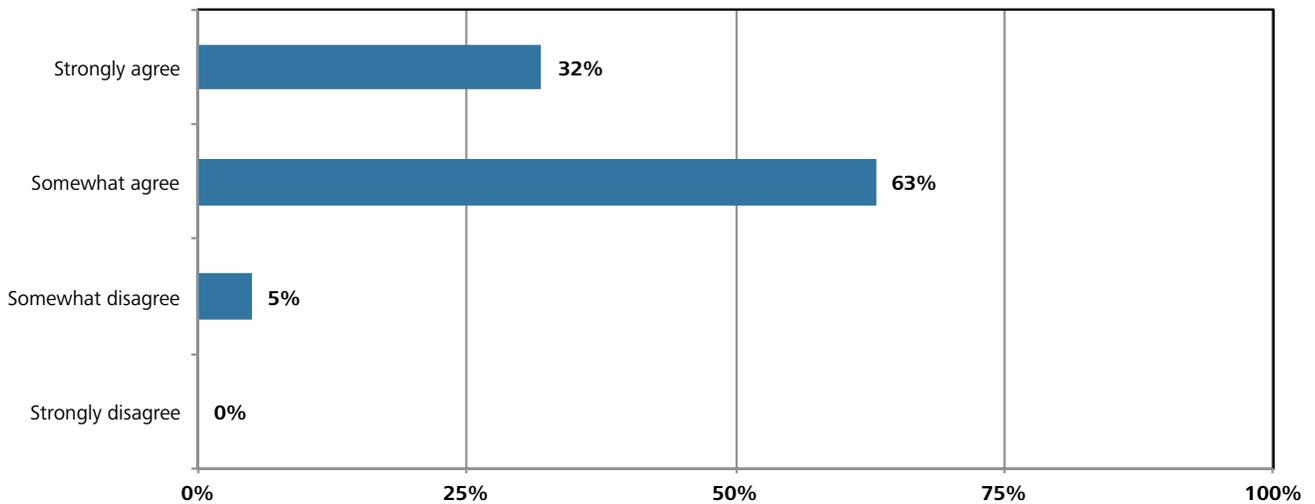


Sample Size = 305

Question 1

How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

I can accurately predict if my team will deliver the results they commit to achieving.

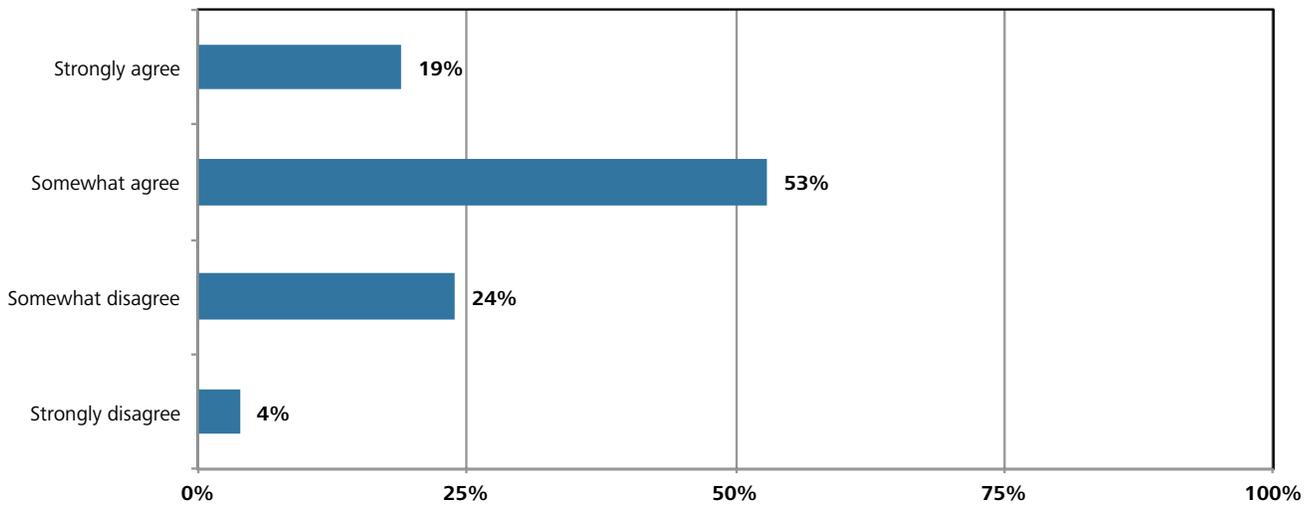


Sample Size = 305

Question 1

How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

All employees at my organization could exceed their corporate performance goals.

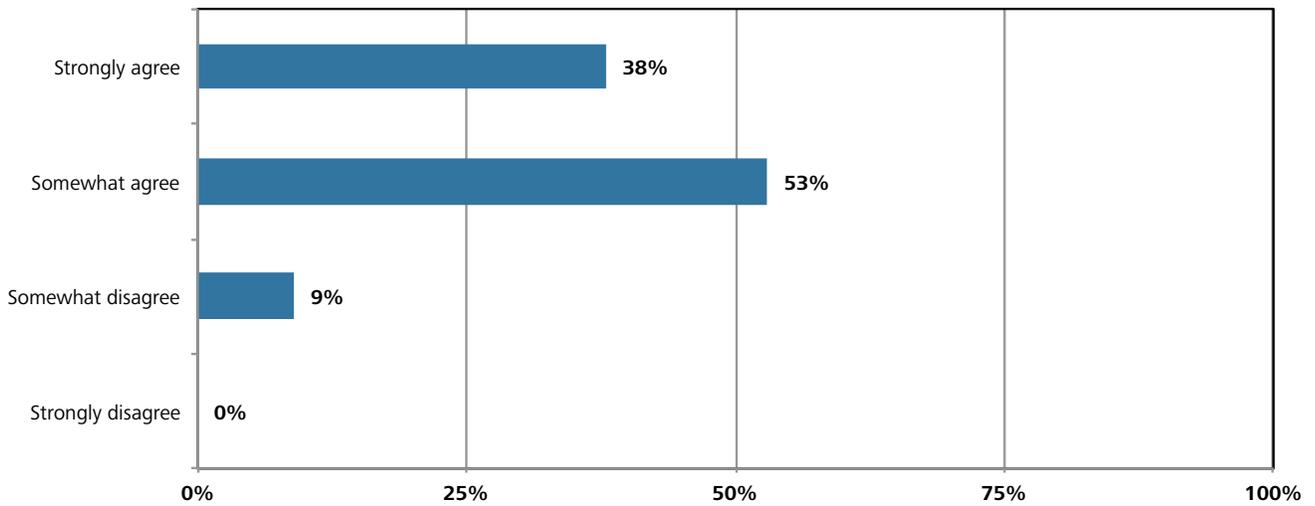


Sample Size = 305

Question 1

How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

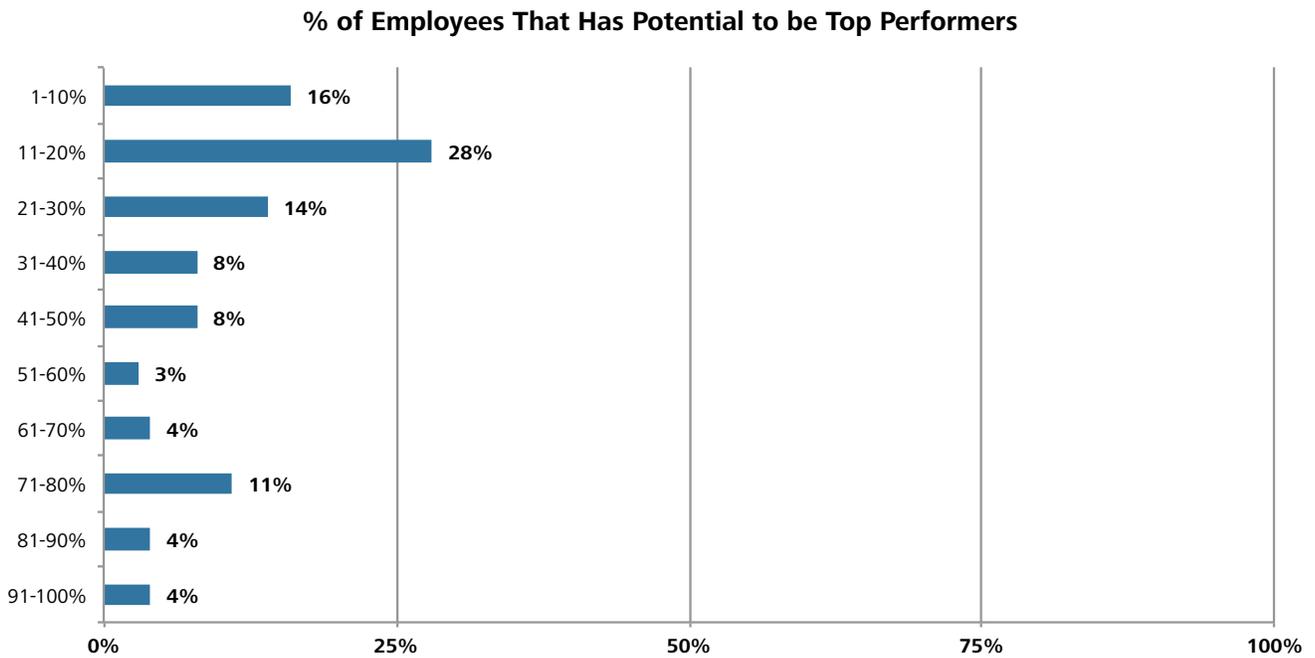
I often draw upon other executives' thinking to help me solve high-level business problems.



Sample Size = 305

Question 2

What percentage of your employees has the potential to be top performers?

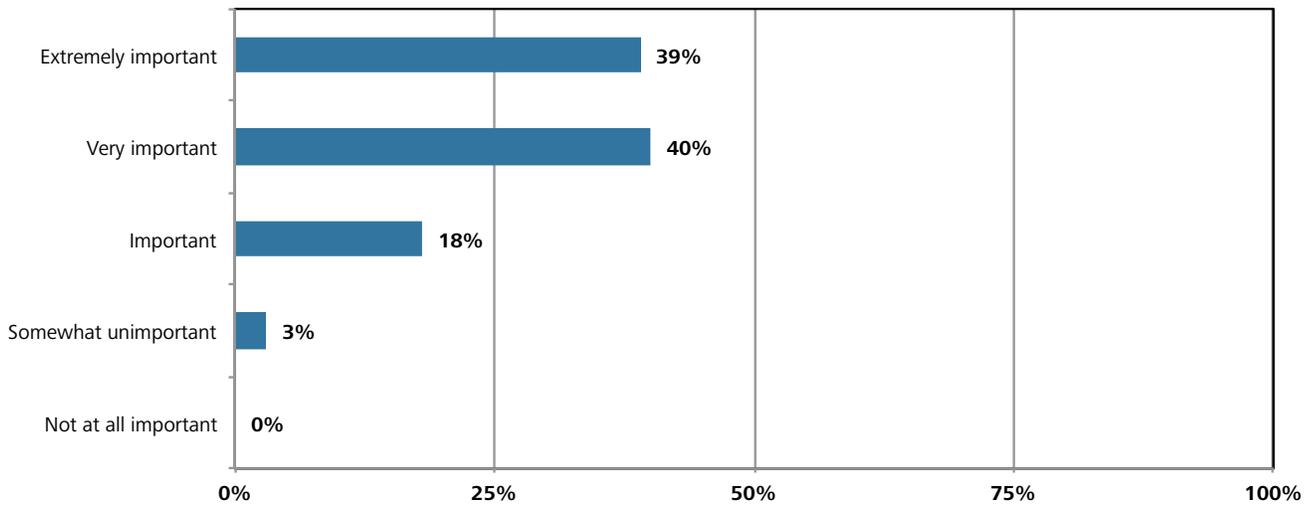


Sample Size = 305

Question 3

How important is the following leadership challenge?

Creating timely, innovative solutions for challenging problems.

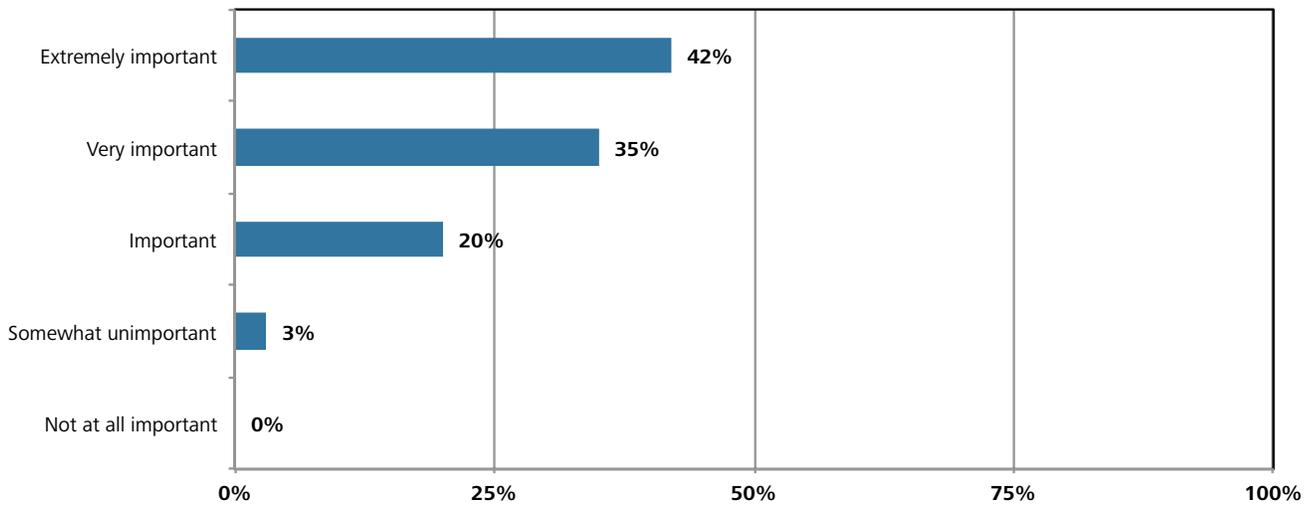


Sample Size = 305

Question 3

How important is the following leadership challenge?

Building effective collaboration and understanding across teams and departments.

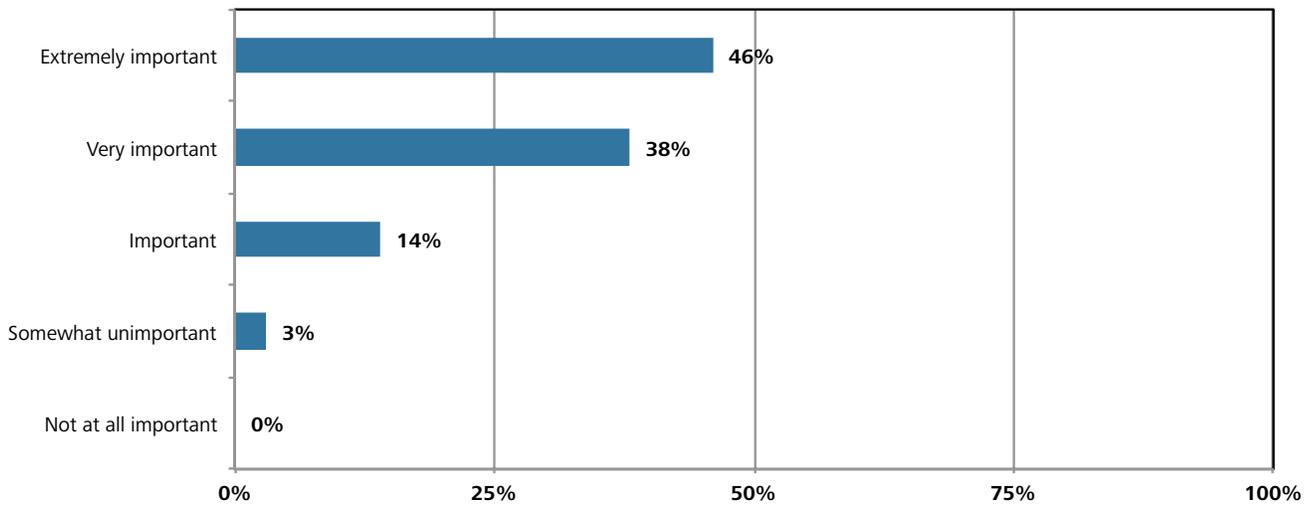


Sample Size = 305

Question 3

How important is the following leadership challenge?

Effectively empowering people to perform without having to resort to micro-management.

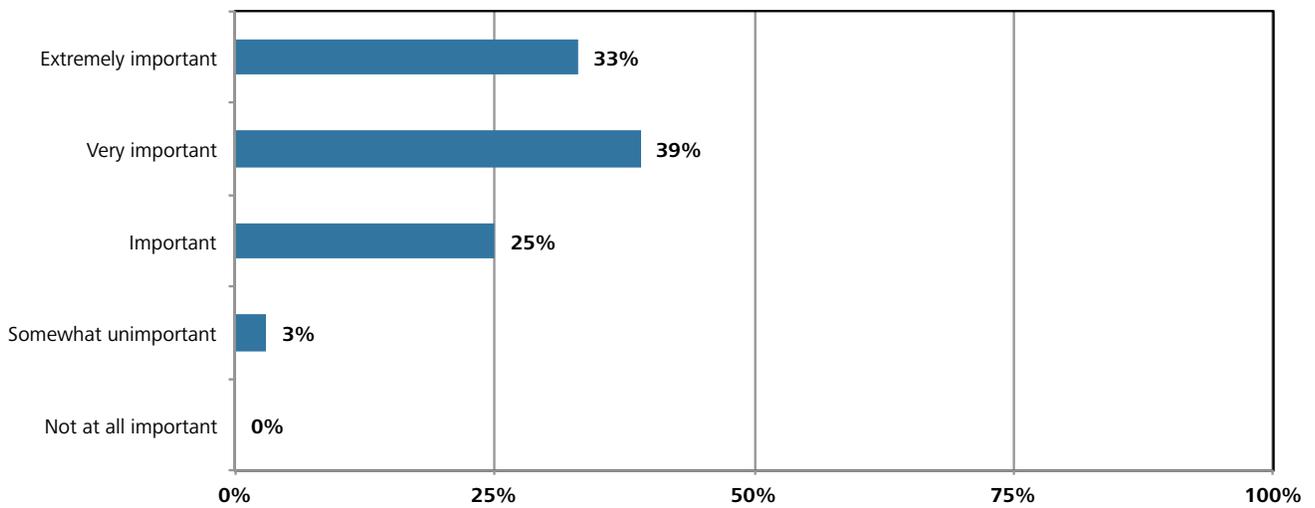


Sample Size = 305

Question 3

How important is the following leadership challenge?

Increasing the capacity of the leaders at my company.

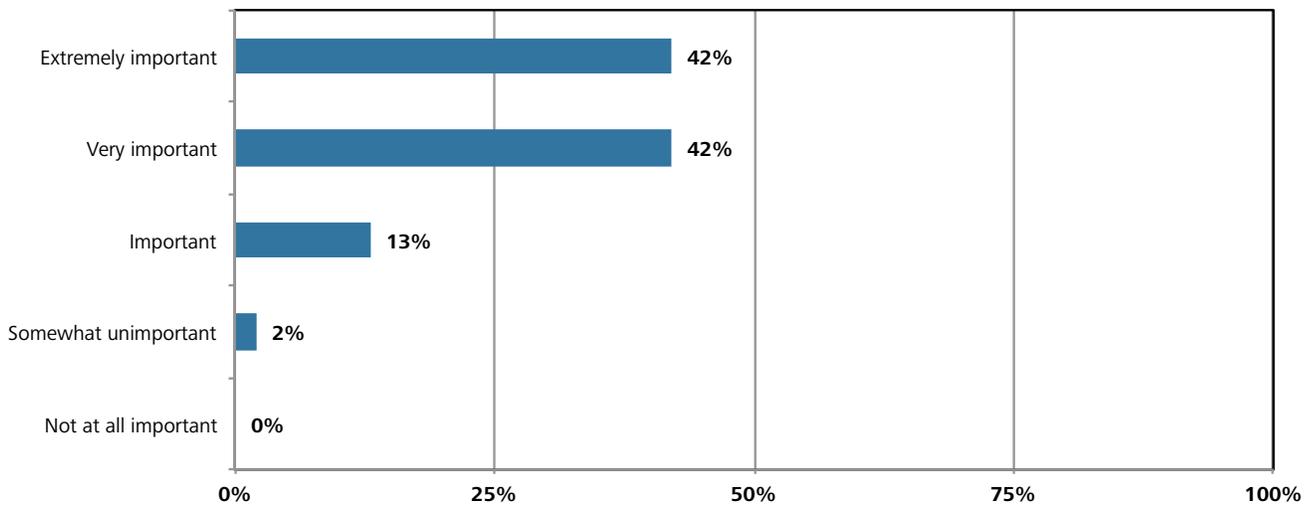


Sample Size = 305

Question 3

How important is the following leadership challenge?

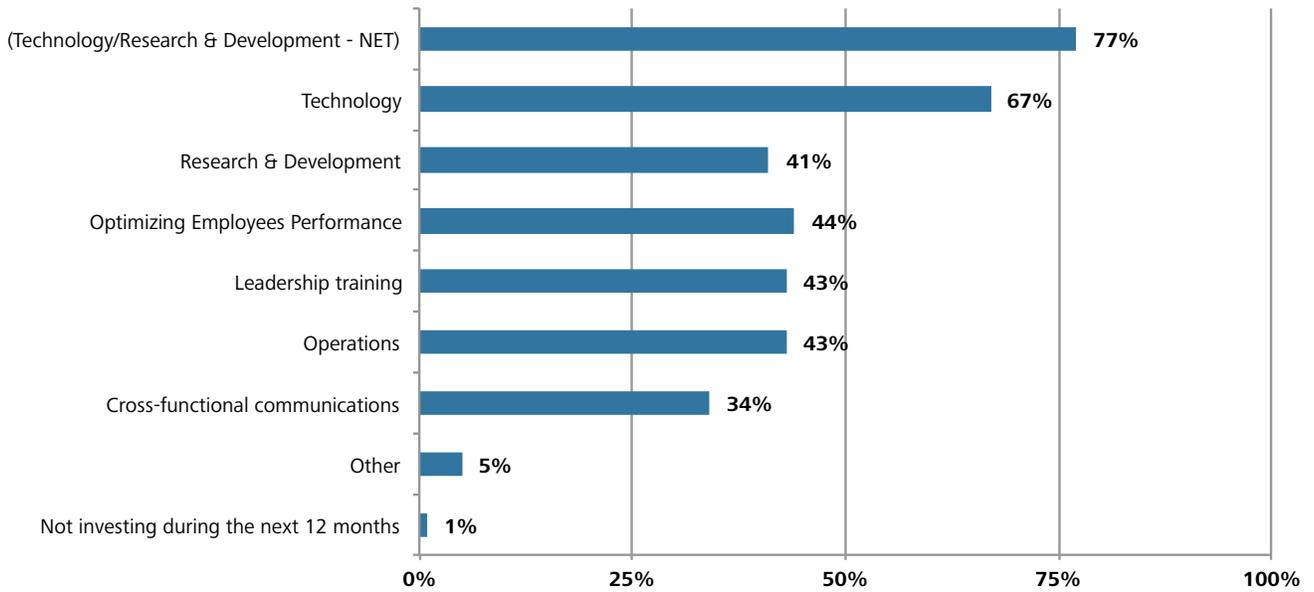
Maximizing the talent in my organization.



Sample Size = 305

Question 4

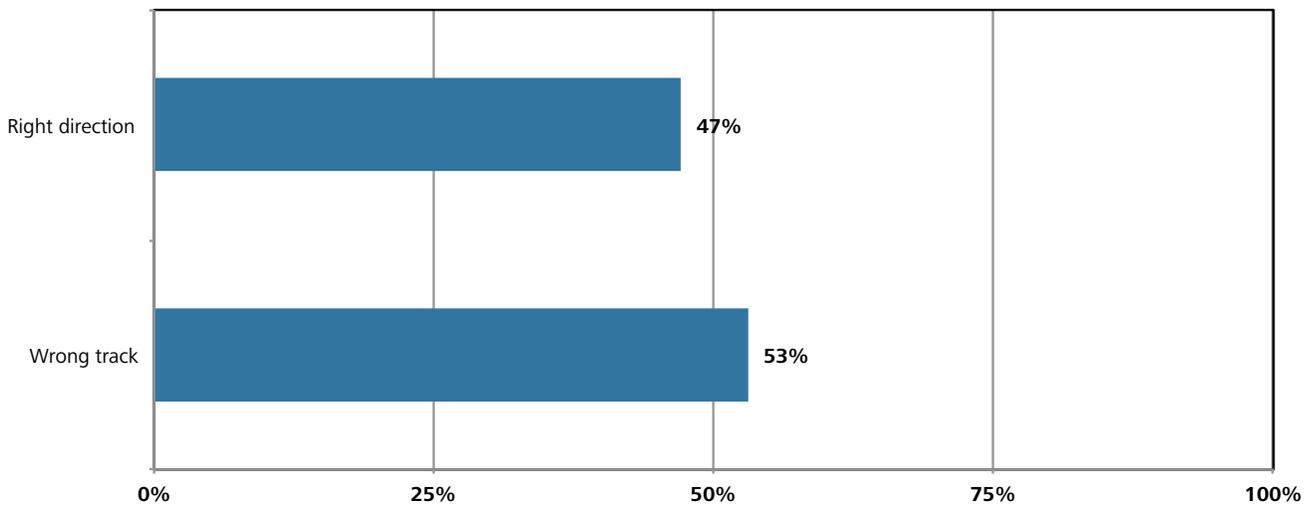
In which of the following areas will your company invest most of its innovation efforts during the next 12 months? (Select all that apply)



Sample Size = 305

Question 5

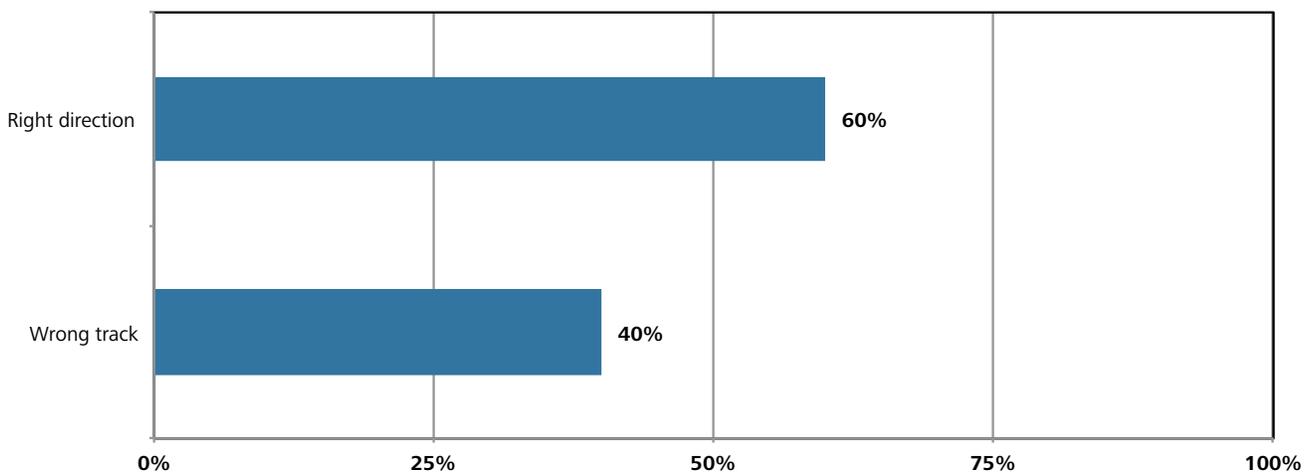
Would you say that things in the country are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?



Sample Size = 305

Question 6

When thinking about the state of affairs today in corporate America, would you say that things are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?



Sample Size = 305

Respondent Profile

Region	#
Northeast	104
Midwest	59
South	76
West	66
Company Gross Revenue	
\$1–\$4.9 billion	165
\$5–\$9.9 billion	40
\$10+ billion	100
# of Employees	
<10,000	154
10,000+	151
Gender	
Male	222
Female	83
Average Age	47.1
Job Title	
C-Level/President/Chairman	122
VP	172
Other	11
Total	305

