



CCHL Professional Leadership Development

HR/OD Think Tank on Leadership Development Priorities for 2022 - Executive Summary

December 9, 2021

Introduction

The landscape of leadership development has changed since the pandemic began, particularly in healthcare. Some programs have been paused and virtual delivery options have been embraced out of necessity. New topics have arisen, including burnout, resilience, leading virtual teams, and building back better. As vaccination rates increase nation-wide, the coming year may indeed provide renewed opportunities for training and leader support. As a Canadian leader in leadership development, CCHL organized a Think Tank to bring an HR/OD community of professionals together and level set in terms of priorities for 2022.

Purpose

- To provide a forum for HR/OD/LD professional colleagues across the country to share experiences and best practices,
- To consolidate the most pressing leadership development needs and support for health leaders in the current context, and
- To develop a community of peer colleagues nation-wide.

Approach

We experimented with a three-pronged approach:

- A brief survey completed by participants before the Think Tank
- Notes from the Think Tank **focus groups**
- Additional points from the CCHL's ongoing contact with partner organizations and international **research**.

Participation

- 20 survey responses
- 31 Think Tank participants
- 8 small group leaders and CCHL staff

Results

What

What *training*, development, or support do leaders in your organization need most in the next 6 months?

Top two responses were:

1. Burnout/mental health/psychological safety (for leaders themselves and addressing these issues with their teams)
2. Core leadership skills and management essentials, particularly for new managers

Other mentions: a strong design to connect (e.g., communities for practice), coaching, engaging, and retaining staff, change management/leadership, resilience, emotional intelligence, leading remote teams, and integrating LEADS language across the organization and building it into HR/OD functions.

Who

Which leaders would you **prioritize** for development in the next 6 months?

The top three responses in both the pre-survey and focus groups were:

1. Directors
2. Executives
3. Managers

Other mentions: front-line leaders and new managers. There were many references to high turnover among leaders and staff, hence the interest in providing core leadership training for managers and focusing on engagement and retention. Support for executives as they navigate the challenges and opportunities was also highlighted, along with 360 assessments for senior leaders.

Two interesting perspectives were, “Nobody and everyone; we’re all tired”, which reflects the ambivalence with which most appear to be wrestling, and “we don’t have a lot of people who are leaders”. The latter represents an opportunity to seek out positive deviants (i.e., effective leaders) and begin leadership development, particularly beginning with executives.

How

What *form(s)* of development would work best for your leaders?

Top answers were:

1. Virtual sessions (interactive)
2. Typically, *short* (from 5-minute microbursts to short interventions at lunchtime (< an hour))
3. Supported by coaching and mentoring
4. A *variety* of activities and forms, with a Learning or Leadership Development Plan (LDP)
5. *Ways of connecting*, formally (such as small groups or Think Tanks) or informally (through communities for practice, buddy systems, etc.)

Note: some voiced a preference for in-person learning and hybrid models, along with self-directed, asynchronous, on-demand options.

Implications

HR/OD professionals might consider the following questions:

1. To achieve *strategic priorities* in your organization in the current pandemic context, given your people's capacity, on what should leaders be *focusing*?
2. What *knowledge* and *leadership capabilities* are needed most to advance those focuses?
3. *Which leaders* should be prioritized for development and support?
4. Which leadership development and support *interventions* would most effectively enable this learning? Given your *internal capacity*, what are you able to offer yourself? What areas might you need *external support*?
5. How can you communicate the relevance and importance of training (i.e., *why now?*)?
6. How can you create ways for leaders to *connect*?
7. Which HR/OD professionals from *other organizations* can I look to for support and sharing best practice?

Next Steps

CCHL will be hosting a **follow-up Think Tank** with HR/OD professionals and health leaders from our membership community. An invitation will follow shortly.

For more information on any of our programs or services, contact us at:

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