

# Leadership in the construction industry



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# Executive summary

For some time the issue of leadership within the construction industry has been the subject of much debate. The industry's need to rise to increasing social, economic and environmental challenges has fuelled this debate and called into question its ability to create leaders that can inspire and affect real change.

This research has examined the issue from the perspective of managers and directors within the construction industry, many of whom work in companies that employ more than 500 people.

The survey results have exposed a stark lack of leadership within the industry, with many respondents being unable to name any influential leaders in construction. Of those individual leaders that are mentioned within the top five highest returns, only one is a practising construction industry professional.

The research suggests that construction companies are failing to provide adequate development of leadership potential; in particular, within larger companies where 18% are not developing their leaders in any way; and where 45% do not have a formal succession plan or leadership strategy.

Over 90% of respondents considered themselves to be above average or excellent when asked how good a leader they were, but it was also evident that companies are failing to meet the expectations of these leaders within the industry.

The research shows that individuals are looking for new experiences, inspiration, training and clear guidance to improve their leadership ability. When asked what has the greatest impact on developing leaders, only 8% said money, and only 3% identified financial benefits as a key factor in helping them develop.

These results would suggest that money is not the prime motivator in creating construction industry leaders of tomorrow. Yet in almost half of construction organisations/ companies, financial benefits, rewards and incentives are identified as the most common way of rewarding and retaining leaders.

Leadership skills were considered to be transferable between different industries, and yet the industry mostly seeks to recruit its leaders internally by developing existing staff through the wrong incentives. This could be viewed as a missed opportunity for the industry to recruit new, improved leadership from elsewhere, or to create appropriate incentives that generate leadership from within.

There appears to be a difference between the traits and qualities possessed by leaders in the construction industry compared with leaders outside the industry. Given the lack of leadership evident in the construction industry this may represent a genuine misunderstanding of what is required by the industry in terms of leadership, or it may infer that the construction industry needs something different to other industries in order to succeed.

The research demonstrates the need to re-assess the leadership qualities and skills required by the construction industry. There may need to be a greater focus on the "softer" skills of relationship management, creativity and emotional intelligence within the industry in order to develop great leaders.

In addition, and on a specific issue, the research describes a lack of leadership at company level for improving the sustainability of the built environment. This is consistent with the findings of a previous Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) report "The Green Perspective"<sup>1</sup> which indicated a lack of leadership on sustainability.

# Introduction

The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) is the leading professional body for managers in construction worldwide. Established in 1834, the CIOB has led the way in establishing, promoting and maintaining standards of excellence in the construction industry.

CIOB members are drawn from a wide range of professional disciplines working within building and construction supply chains, including clients, consultants and contractors as well as specialists in regulation, research and education.

The purpose of this research is to investigate leadership in the construction industry through the perceptions of construction industry professionals.

It will explore the profile of an effective leader in the construction industry, the availability of leadership, and the ways in which the industry is recognising, developing and retaining its leaders.

The findings of this research will help identify any skills gaps and recommend ways to improve leadership development in the construction industry.

# Background information

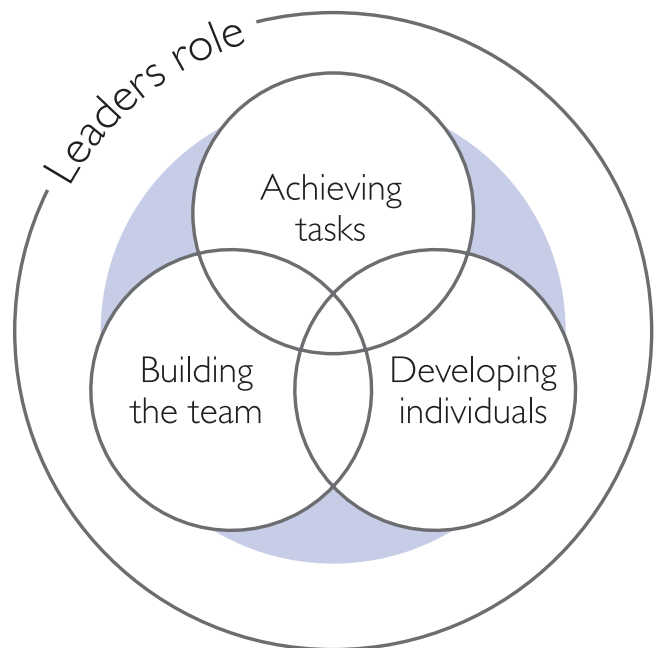
## What is leadership?

There is no single definition of leadership. It is a complex, emergent process that can be described in many different ways, using different components, styles and traits.

In general terms it is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective. The following points summarise some of the different ways in which leadership has been defined:

- Effective leaders are alike in one crucial way: they all have a high degree of emotional intelligence (Butler & Chinowsky 2006)<sup>1</sup>. This idea was popularised by Daniel Goleman (1995)<sup>2</sup>. The model comprises of four domains: self awareness, self management, social awareness and relationship management.
- According to Naoum (2001)<sup>3</sup> leadership is aligning people towards common goals and empowering them to take the actions needed to reach them.
- In construction, Chan's (2008)<sup>4</sup> case study involving fifteen leading figures in the UK construction industry identified three factors instrumental in leadership development: people, places and events.
- Adair (1973)<sup>5</sup> defines leadership in the form of a diagram (see below):

## The functional leadership model



<sup>1</sup> Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Behaviour in Construction Executives, C.J. Butler and P.S. Chinowsky (2006)

<sup>2</sup> Emotional Intelligence, D. Goleman (1995)

<sup>3</sup> People and Organisational Management in Construction, Shamil Naoum, London (2001)

<sup>4</sup> Leaders in UK Construction: the importance of leadership as an emergent process, P. Chan (2008)

<sup>5</sup> Action-centred leadership, J. Adair (1973)

With so many different definitions, it could be argued that “ideal leaders” do not exist, however, it is possible to extrapolate that certain factors contribute to a strong leadership style. It can be argued that effective leadership combines cognitive characteristics such as self awareness, self management and social awareness, with more practical (kinaesthetic) characteristics such as the ability to empower individuals, build teams, align people towards common goals and manage relationships.

## Management vs. leadership

Management and leadership are two very different concepts. Many studies draw a fine line between the two.

Research has shown that the terms ‘leaders’ and ‘managers’ are often used interchangeably, although there are fundamental differences between the two.<sup>6</sup>

Managers can be characterised as people who imitate, establish clear targets, make short term decisions, solve short term problems, enact visions and do things right. They employ the so-called “hard” skills such as planning, directing, organising and keeping score.

On the other hand, leaders employ many of the “softer” skills. They direct and guide people; influence thoughts and behaviours; motivate; encourage work towards goals; take risks; innovate; have a long-range perspective; have their eye on the horizon; create visions and do the right thing.<sup>7</sup>

In most cases, managers are appointed whereas leadership has to be earned.

## Leadership development programmes

There are many courses available for people to develop their overall leadership and management skills through universities, business schools, training providers and professional institutes in the UK and around the world.

While many of these training providers are prepared to tailor their courses to suit the needs of different industries, leadership training courses and development schemes aimed specifically at professionals from within the construction industry are in short supply.

## Skills shortage

The existing skills shortage is another problem which could have profound affects on leadership within the construction industry, although it has been suggested by some industry commentators that with strong leadership we might not have a skills shortage.

A ConstructionSkills study has shown that since the early 1990s the number of older workers - aged 60 and over - has doubled, whereas the number aged 24 and under has fallen by 27 per cent<sup>8</sup>. This will have a knock-on effect on the numbers of leaders emerging in the industry which could potentially be the reason for the lack of leadership courses in the UK.

The CIOB's Skills Shortages Survey 2008<sup>9</sup> found that there is a skills shortage at the managerial level. The industry will take a long time to recover from this shortage in skills because of the duration of education training and work experience necessary to develop a competent manager.

## Methodology

The survey was conducted using a web based questionnaire which respondents could access through the CIOB website ([www.ciob.org.uk](http://www.ciob.org.uk)).

Respondents were asked general demographic questions regarding their employment status, their company and their profession within the industry in order to explore the diversity of the sample within the construction industry.

An email was sent to approximately half of the CIOB's membership (19,025 individuals), informing them that the survey was online, and the survey was also available to the wider industry through the CIOB website.

Open questions were included to give respondents the chance to express the following: who they considered to be the most influential leader both inside and outside of the construction industry; what their best and worst leadership qualities were and who had significantly influenced them in terms of developing their leadership skills.

## The sample

The sample consisted of 655 construction industry professionals, the majority of which (63%) described themselves as senior, middle or junior management. An additional 16% of the sample was comprised of company directors.

93% of respondents were men. 7% were women.

71% of respondents were located in the UK. 29% were located in the rest of the world.

Just under half of all respondents (44%) worked for an organisation employing more than 500 people.

<sup>6</sup> People & Organisational Management in Construction, Shamil Naoum, London (2001)

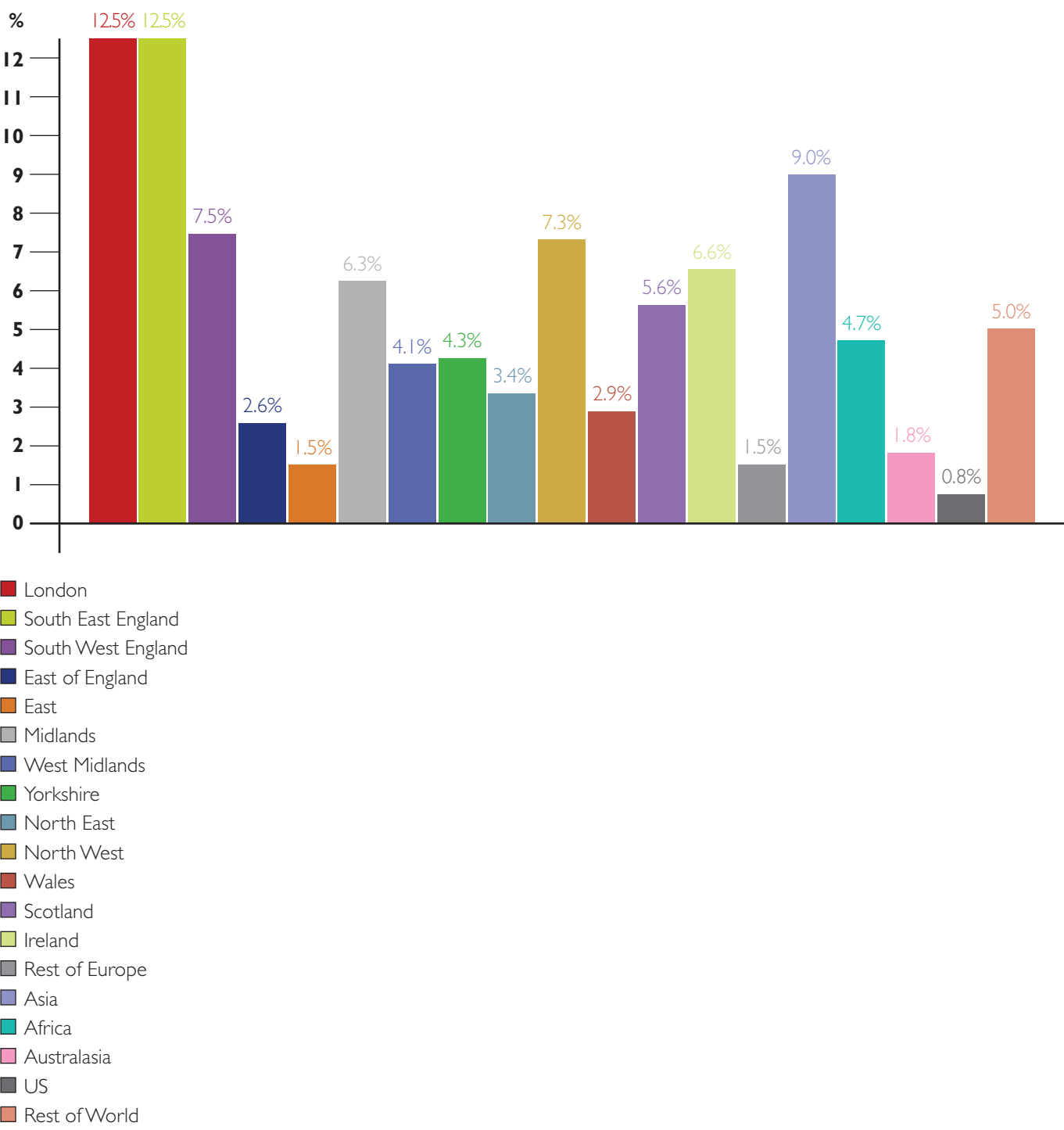
<sup>7</sup> People & Organisational Management in Construction, Shamil Naoum, London (2001)

<sup>8</sup> Institute of Leadership & Management [http://www.i-l-m.com/members/2363.aspx?articleid=18657534&articleheading=Construction+industry+'faces'+skills+shortage'](http://www.i-l-m.com/members/2363.aspx?articleid=18657534&articleheading=Construction+industry+'faces'+skills+shortage)

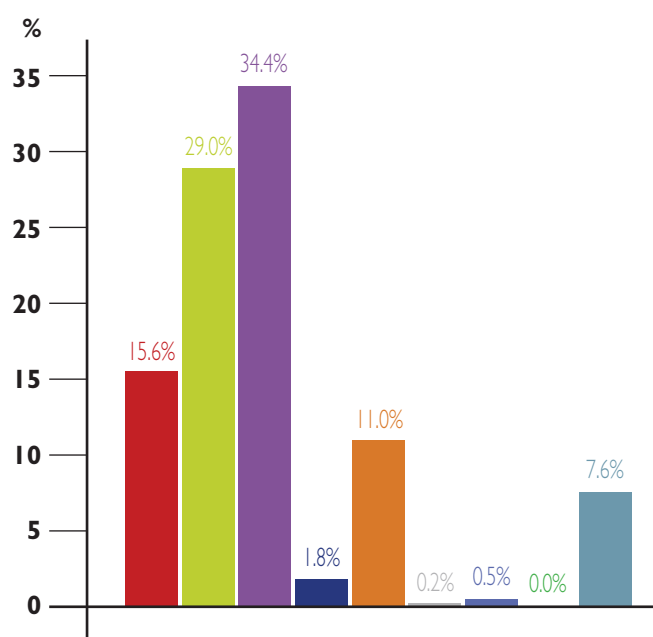
<sup>9</sup> Skills Shortages in the Construction Industry (2008) <http://www.ciob.org.uk/resources/research>

# Results

## 1. Where are you located?



## 2. Which description best suits your profession?

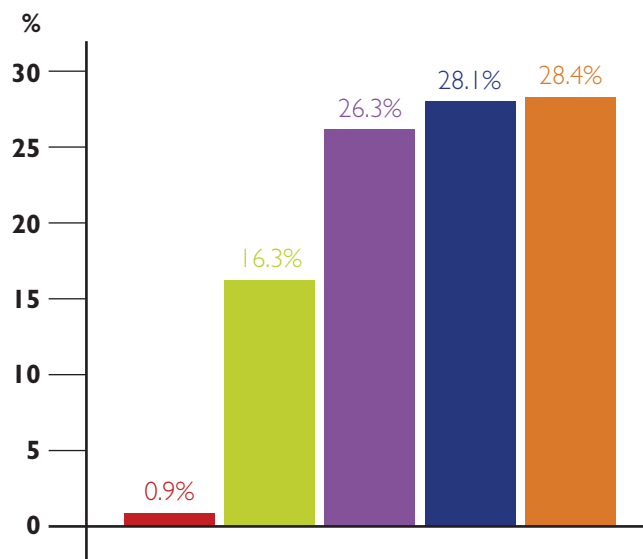


- Company director
- Senior management
- Middle management/junior management
- Supervisor
- Other professional
- Clerical/administrative
- Skilled manual
- Unskilled manual
- Other; please specify

"Other" responses included academic, student, consultant and contractor:

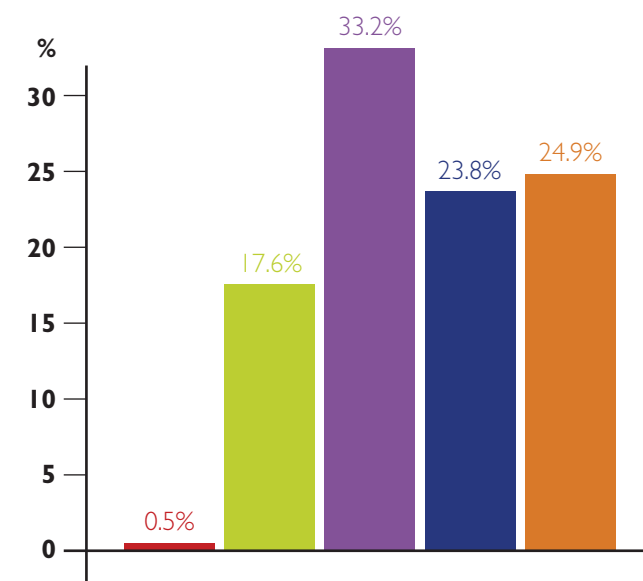
## 3. How old are you?

### 3.1 The age demographic of all respondents



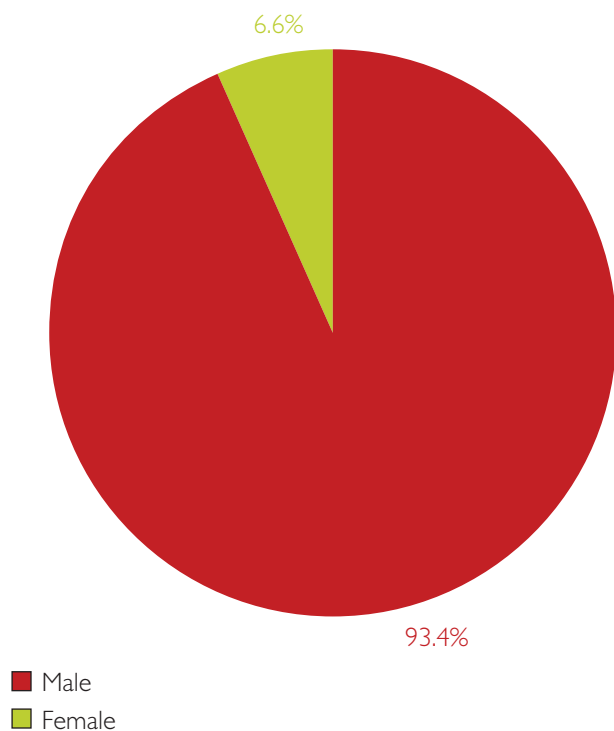
- 0-20 years
- 21-30 years
- 31-40 years
- 41-50 years
- 51+ years

### 3.2 The age demographic of international respondents

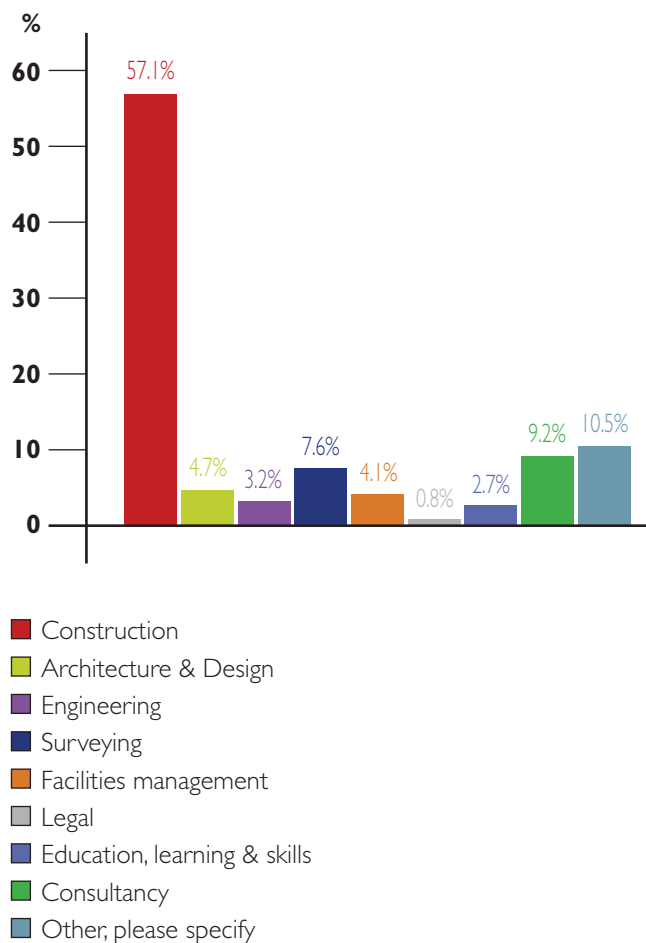


- 0-20 years
- 21-30 years
- 31-40 years
- 41-50 years
- 51+ years

#### 4. What gender are you?



#### 5. Which sector do you work in?

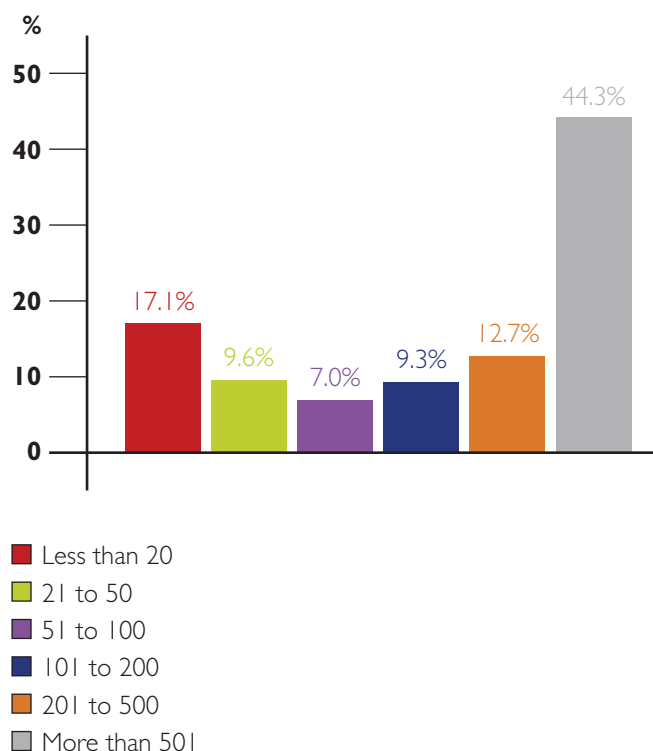


The majority of respondents (57%) work in the construction sector.

“Other” answers included health and safety, manufacturing and distribution, property development, local government and building control.

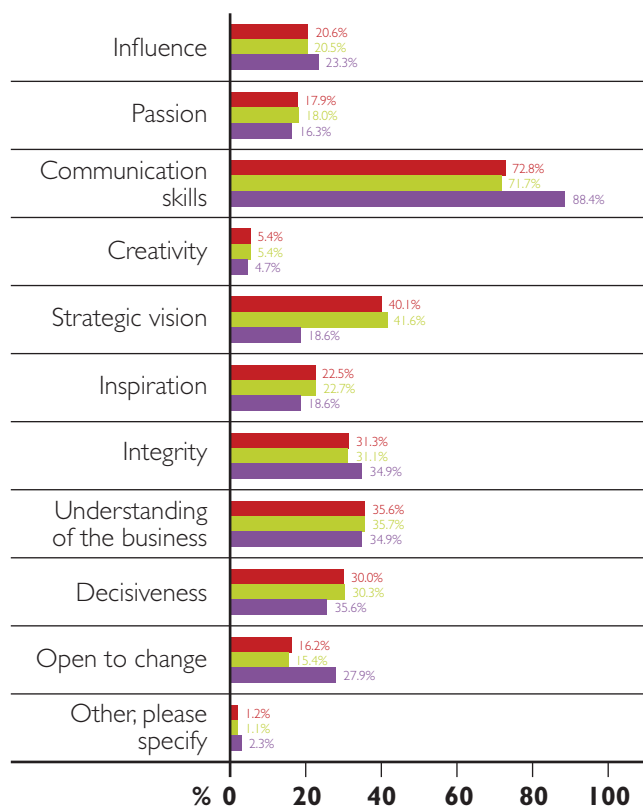


## 6. How many people are employed by your organisation?



Just under half of all respondents (44%) work for an organisation employing more than 500 people.

## 7. What do you think are the three most important qualities of a leader?



■ All  
■ Men  
■ Women

### All respondents – top five highest returns

- 1 Communication skills
- 2 Strategic vision
- 3 Understanding of the business
- 4 Integrity
- 5 Decisiveness

Unsurprisingly, given the dominance of males in the survey sample, men ranked the same top five highest returns as above.

However, female respondents rated the qualities of a leader in a different way. They felt that 'integrity' was of higher importance, and regarded 'open to change' as a key quality, both of which featured in their top five traits.

### Female specific sample – top five highest returns

- 1 Communication skills
- 2 Integrity
- 3 Understanding of the business
- 4 Open to change
- 5 Decisiveness

## 8. Who do you consider to be the most influential leader within the construction industry and why?

Top 5 highest returns	
1	None / don't know
2	Ray O'Rourke
3	Sir Michael Latham
4	Sir John Egan
5	Government bodies and representatives

Other responses included Sir Norman Foster; Garvis Snook, President of the CIOB, Keith Clarke and Richard Rogers to name a few.

Analysis of the reasons why respondents chose these answers reveals the most common traits for each (top 5 highest returns):

### Ray O'Rourke

- 1 Ability to get results
- 2 Vision
- 3 Passion
- 4 Ambition
- 5 Charisma

### Sir Michael Latham

- 1 Influence
- 2 Vision
- 3 Ability to get results
- 4 Integrity
- 5 Knowledge

### Sir John Egan

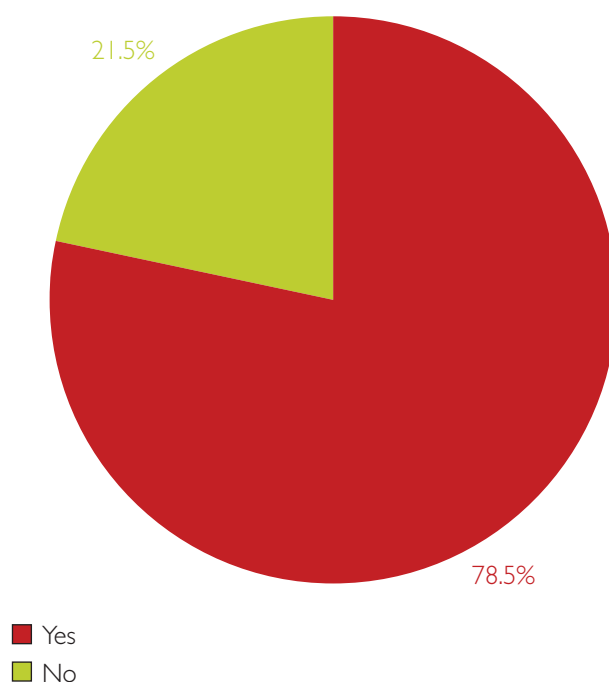
- 1 Ability to get results
- 2 Revolutionary
- 3 Influence
- 4 Vision
- 5 Knowledge

### Government bodies and representatives

- 1 Position as a regulator
- 2 Ability to set, fund and implement an agenda

Overall highest traits regarded in these leaders	
1	Ability to get results
2	Strategic vision
3	Influence
4	Understanding of the business / knowledge
5	Passion

## 9. Would he/she be able to lead another industry?



The majority of respondents felt that leadership skills from leaders within the construction industry were transferable to other industries.

## 10. Who do you consider to be the greatest leader outside of the construction industry and why?

Top 5 highest returns	
1	Nelson Mandela
2	Sir Richard Branson
3	Bill Gates
4	Sir Winston Churchill
5	Baroness Margaret Thatcher

Overall highest traits regarded in these leaders	
1	Vision
2	Integrity
3	Inspirational
4	Charisma
5	Communication skills

Other responses included Tony Blair, Sir Alex Ferguson, Sir Alan Sugar, Gordon Brown and Warren Buffet to name a few.

Analysis of the reasons why respondents chose these individuals reveals the most common traits for each (top 5 highest returns):

### Nelson Mandela

- 1 Integrity
- 2 Vision
- 3 Passion
- 4 Inspirational
- 5 Dedication

### Sir Richard Branson

- 1 Vision
- 2 Charisma
- 3 Strategic thinker
- 4 Passionate
- 5 Personable

### Bill Gates

- 1 Vision
- 2 Communication skills
- 3 Altruistic
- 4 Inspirational
- 5 Empathy

### Sir Winston Churchill

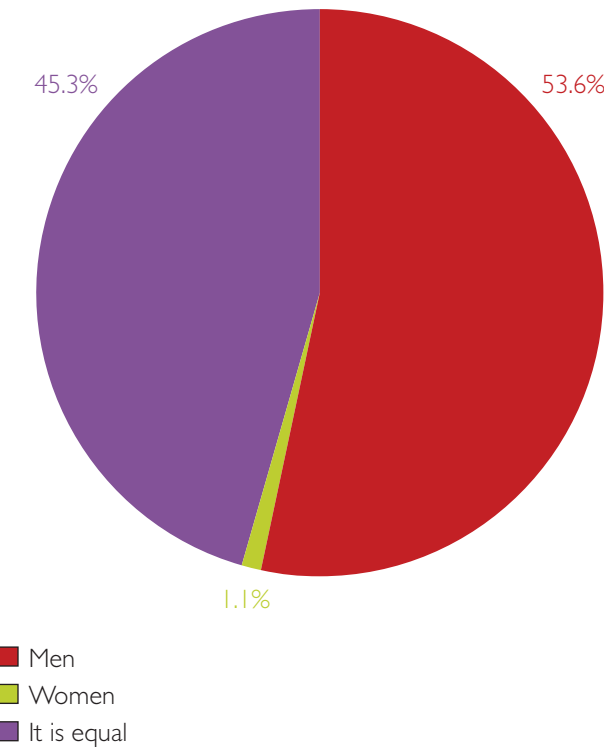
- 1 Inspirational
- 2 Charisma
- 3 Vision
- 4 Dedication
- 5 Integrity

### Baroness Margaret Thatcher

- 1 Courage
- 2 Vision
- 3 Determination
- 4 Conviction
- 5 Decisiveness

11. In your opinion, who are more likely to be leaders?

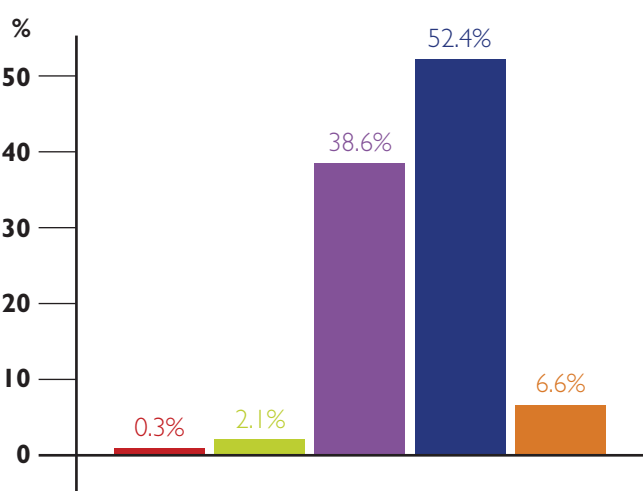
a) Gender



The results show that 54% of all respondents (male and female) considered that leaders are more likely to be male, while 45% considered leadership opportunities to be equal.

Analysis of the female responses shows that a larger proportion (58%) considered leadership opportunities to be equal. 42% of female respondents considered males as more likely to be leaders. However, female respondents did not feel that women were more likely to be leaders (0%).

b) Age

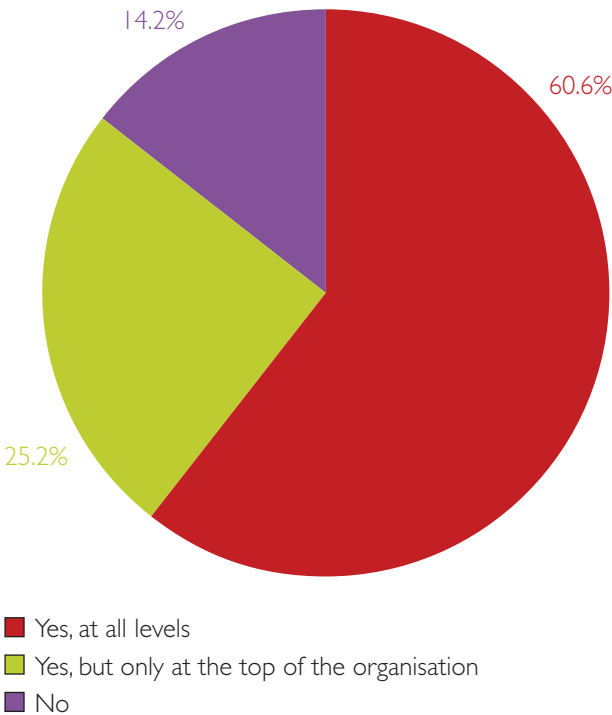


All respondents:

- Under 25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56+

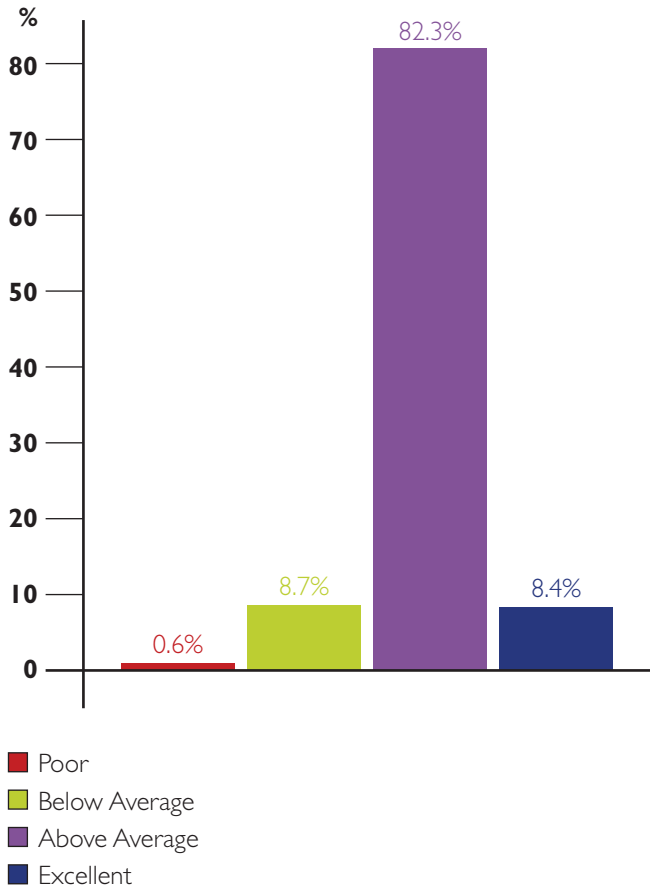
Over half of the respondents felt that leaders are more likely to be between the ages of 46 and 55. Analysis of the female responses show that women felt that those aged between 36 and 45 were more likely to be leaders.

**12. Is leadership present throughout your organisation?**



Only 14% of the sample considered there to be no leadership of any kind throughout their organisation.

**13. How good a leader do you think you are?**



Over 90% of respondents considered themselves to be above average or excellent as a leader.

**14. What are your best leadership qualities? (respondents could give up to three open text answers)**

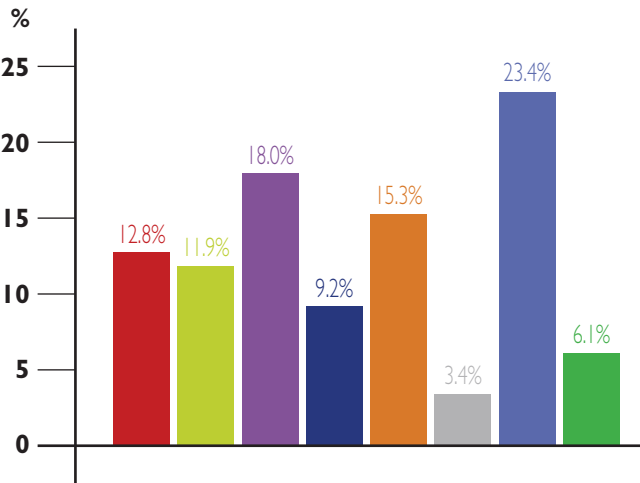
Top 5 highest returns (number of mentions)	
1	Communication skills (226)
2	Decision maker (112)
3	Integrity (97)
4	Ability to listen (95)
5	Understanding (71)

N.B. Communication skills recorded twice as many returns as its nearest rival ‘decision maker’

**15. What are your weakest leadership qualities? (respondents could give up to three open text answers)**

Top 5 highest returns (number of mentions)	
1	Not having enough time (112)
2	Don't delegate enough (56)
3	Impatience (49)
4	Poor communicator (44)
5	Lack of decisiveness (36)

**16. What would most help you improve as a leader?**



- Education / skills / qualifications
- Responsibility
- Training
- Inspiration
- Clear guidelines or direction
- Financial benefits, rewards and incentives
- New experiences (e.g. secondments)
- Other, please specify

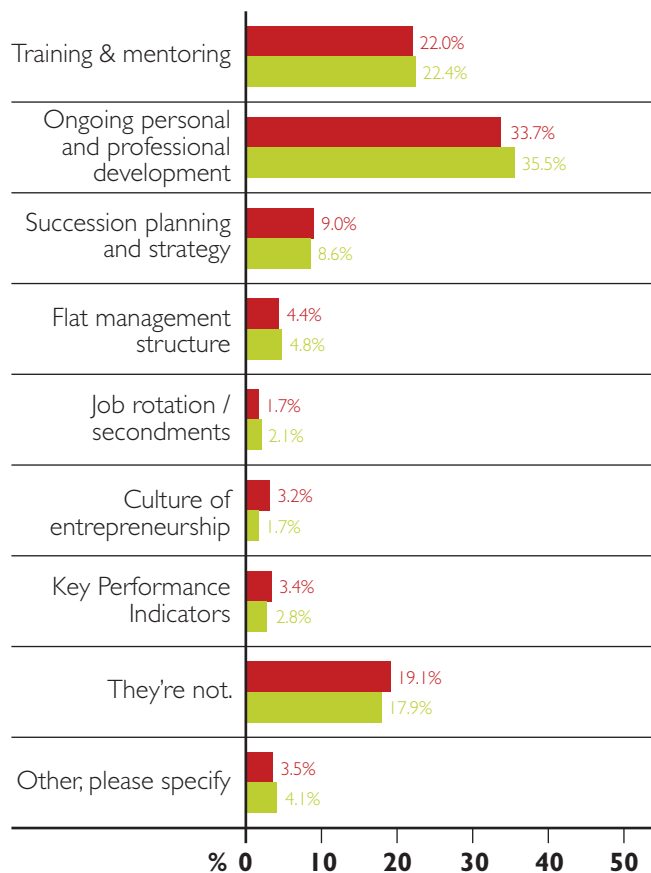
Respondents identified new experiences as the most valuable way to improve leaders.

“Other” responses included mentoring, more time, general management training and skills, public speaking training, authority and patience.

**17. Who has significantly influenced you? (respondents answered in an open text box)**

Top 5 highest returns	
1	Superior manager (43%)
2	Other leaders (within and outside construction) (8%)
3	Parents (6%)
4	Work colleagues (6%)
5	Lecturer / teacher (5%)

## 18. In your organisation, how are leaders developed?



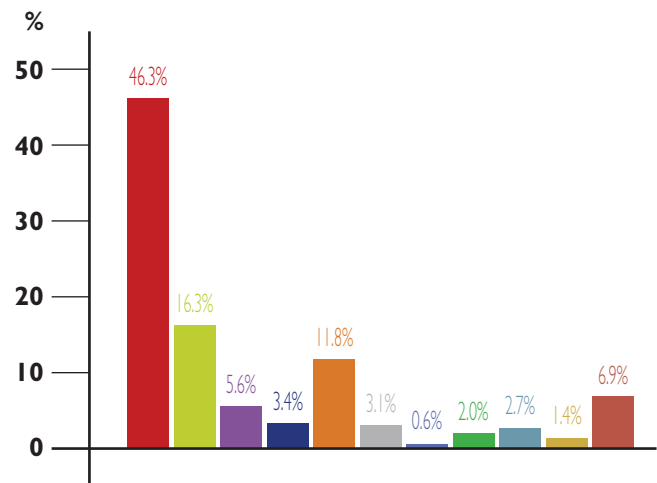
■ All respondents  
 ■ Companies employing more than 500 individuals

Ongoing personal and professional development ranks highest in terms of how leaders are currently developed. Interestingly, the third most popular answer to this question was “they’re not”.

“Other” responses included long term service; depends on your line manager; via a selection centre; via the old boys’ network; luck; and through opportunities to work on other tasks.

18% of respondents working for companies employing more than 500 people did not believe their organisation developed leaders in any way at all.

## 19. In your organisation, what is the most common way of retaining and/or rewarding leaders?

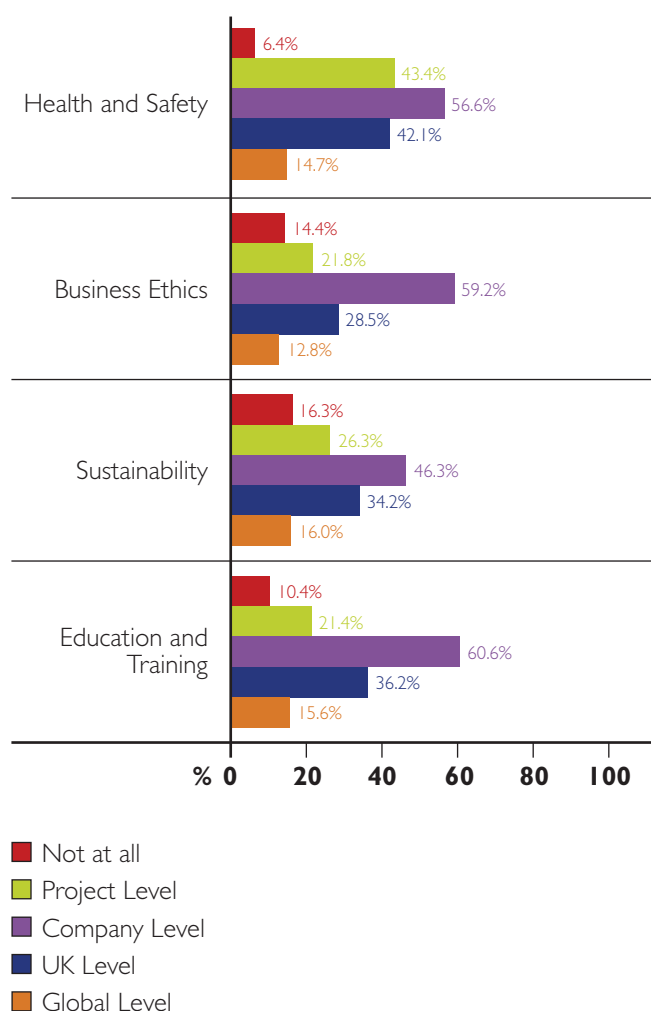


■ Financial benefits, rewards and incentives  
 ■ Personal development plans  
 ■ Succession planning  
 ■ Talent management  
 ■ Empowerment  
 ■ Flat management structure  
 ■ Job rotation / secondments  
 ■ Mentoring  
 ■ Training  
 ■ Outsourcing external expertise and advice  
 ■ Other, please specify

Financial benefits, rewards and incentives are identified as the most common ways to retain and/or reward leaders.

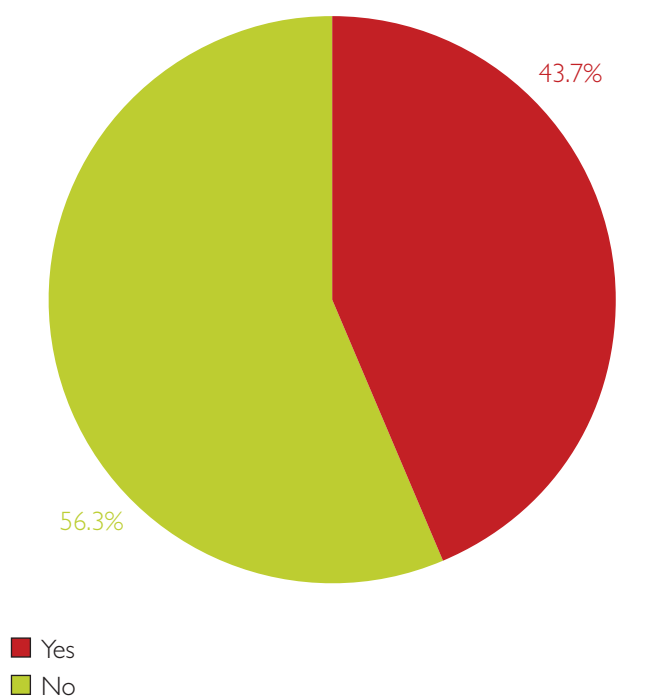
“Other” responses included all of the above, nothing, promotion, recognition and job satisfaction.

**20. Do you believe that adequate leadership is present in the following areas of the construction industry?**  
All four levels can be selected for each category.



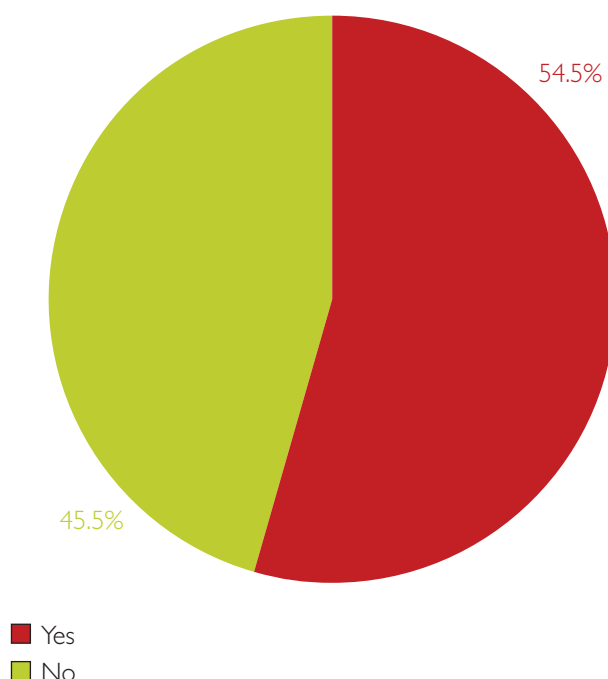
**21. Does your organisation have a formal succession plan or leadership strategy?**

**21.1 All respondents**



Over a half (56%) of all respondents worked within an organisation that has no formal succession plan or leadership strategy.

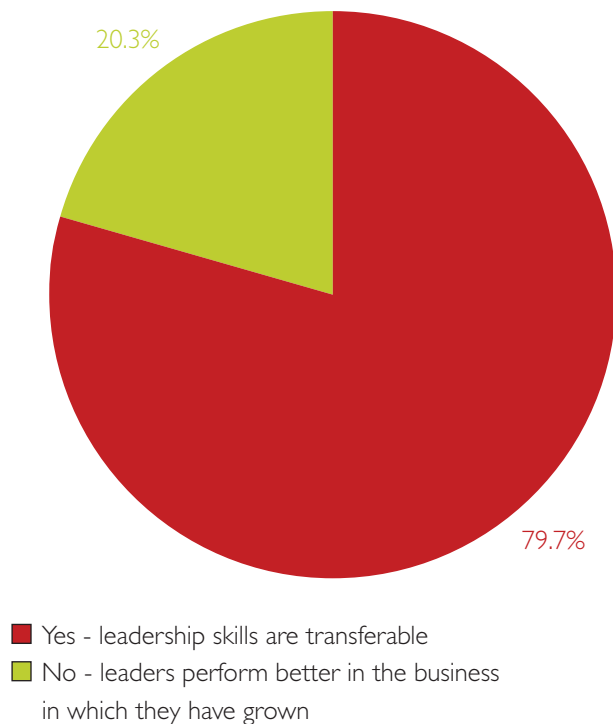
**21.2 Companies employing more than 500 individuals**



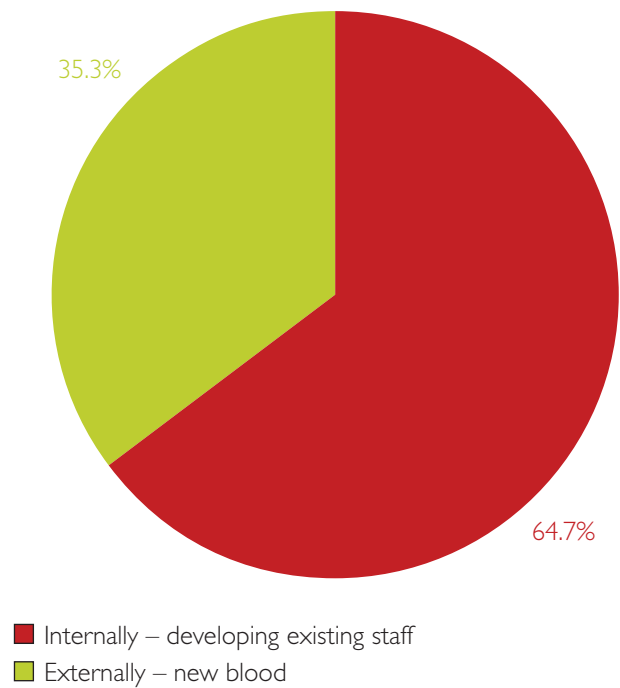
46% of companies employing more than 500 individuals do not have a formal succession plan or leadership strategy.



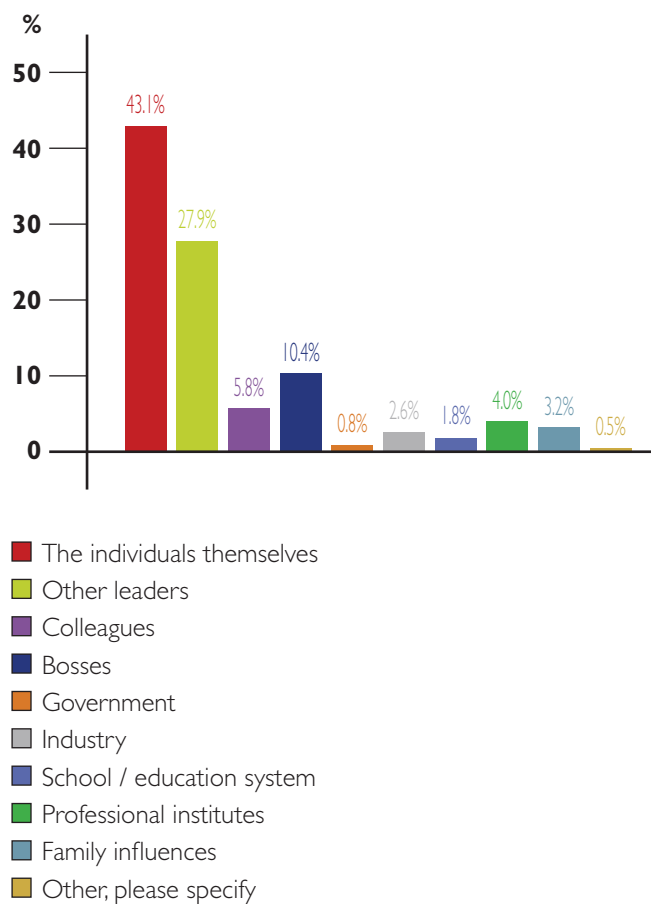
**22. Do you believe that leaders from one industry can perform well in other organisations/industries?**



**23. How does your organisation intend to recruit its next leader?**



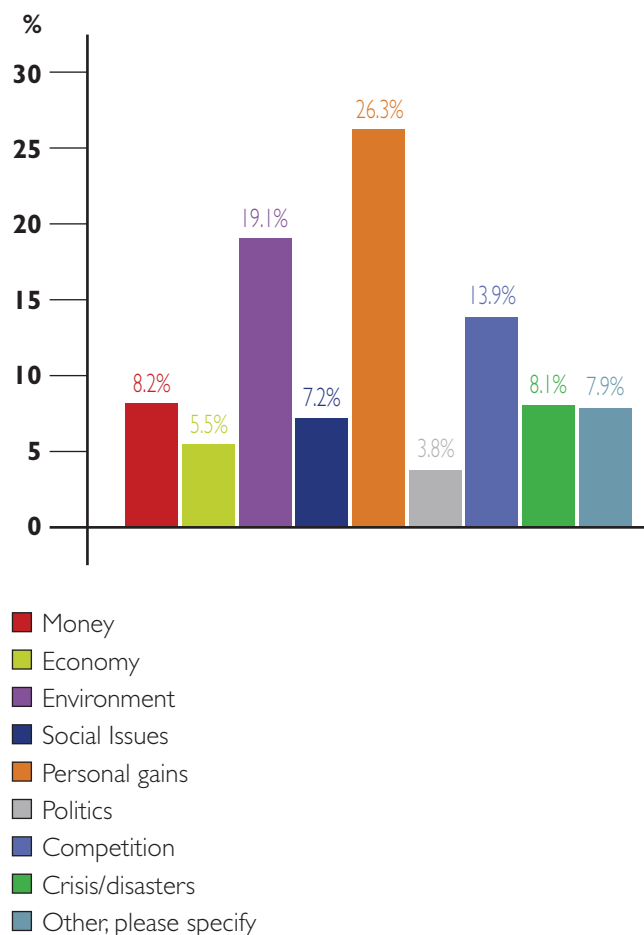
## 24. Who do you believe has the greatest impact on developing leaders?



Almost a half (43%) of respondents believe that it is the individuals themselves that have the biggest impact on developing leaders.

“Other” responses included culture / society.

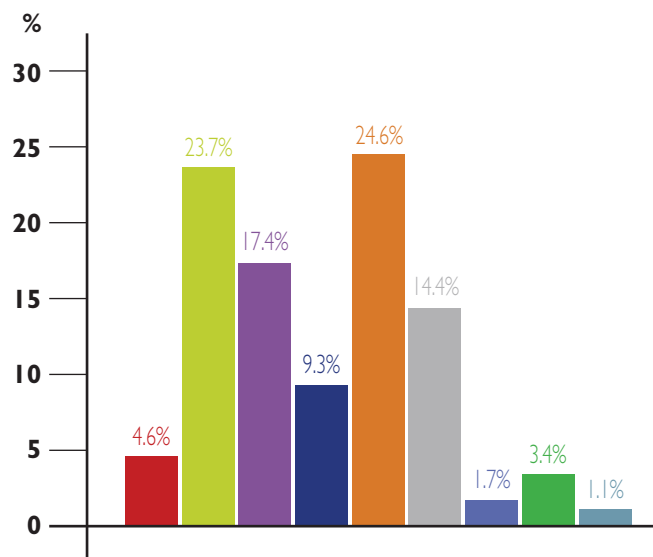
## 25. What do you believe has the greatest impact on developing leaders?



Personal gains are identified as having the greatest impact on developing leaders.

“Other” responses included opportunities, ambition, necessity, charisma, manager and genetic make-up.

## 26. What do you believe is the greatest barrier to potential leaders becoming leaders?

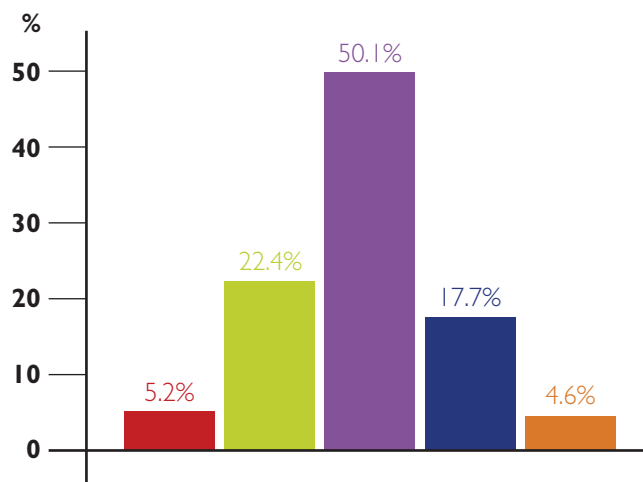


- Society / national culture
- Organisational culture
- Autocratic management
- Lack of skills / training
- Lack of opportunity
- Self confidence
- Lack of incentives
- Political environment
- Other, please specify

Lack of opportunity and organisational culture are identified as the greatest barriers to potential leaders becoming leaders.

“Other” responses included lack of personal ambition, old fashioned attitudes, average age of industry leaders and family commitments.

## 27. What should the CIOB do to develop or attract leaders?



- Conduct research and provide data
- Work alongside other government and industry bodies to promote and provide leadership
- Create leader development programmes
- Recognise leaders (through events/awards)
- Other, please specify

# Discussion

## The profile of an effective leader for the construction industry

This research suggests that 'good communication skills', 'strategic vision', and 'understanding of the business' are the most important traits for a leader to be effective in the construction industry (question 7). The traits of existing industry leaders (question 8) reveals that the 'ability to get results' is also a key factor for success.

Analysis of why individuals are considered to be the greatest leaders of all time shows that 'vision', 'integrity' and 'communication skills' came through (again) as important traits, but that 'charisma' and 'inspirational' were also ranked highly (question 10). These represent "soft" leadership skills and imply that it may be an individual's personality and their ability to inspire people that set the great leaders apart from others. While communication skills are still recognised as a trait present in the greatest leaders of all time, it does not feature as highly as a main quality in overall leadership.

"Soft" leadership skills appear to be less prevalent in the construction industry, but when asked "What are your strongest leadership qualities" respondents considered 'integrity', 'ability to listen' and 'understanding' in their top five returns. This suggests that there is significant untapped potential in the industry, and in particular within the membership of the CIOB (who made up the majority of respondents to this survey).

The results show that women, in particular, may be looking for these "softer" skills in construction industry leaders. While acknowledging the small sample size of women, it is worth noting that females responding to this survey rated 'integrity' and 'open to change' as key leadership qualities. This could be an important differentiation for the industry if it wants to address the gender imbalance that exists within the construction industry, and encourage more female leaders.

In terms of age (question 3), the research suggests that construction industry leaders are more likely to be 46-55, but analysis of the female respondents indicates a slightly younger profile of 36-45. Answers to the open text box sections throughout the survey (e.g. question 27) highlighted the need to attract more young people into construction to address the ageing demographic of the industry, and encourage younger people into leadership positions.

Although leaders in construction are more likely to be men at the current time, the research suggests that there are equal opportunities for women (question 11).

## Existing leadership in the construction industry

The survey asked respondents to name the person they felt was the most influential within the construction industry. The results have exposed a stark lack of leadership in the construction industry, with the highest proportion of respondents answering 'none' or 'don't know'.

In addition to this 'the government' was seen as being the fifth most influential leader within the construction industry, which could also signify a lack of clear construction leaders.

Ray O'Rourke received the second highest ranking for his ability to get results, vision, passion and ambition. Sir Michael Latham was noted for his ability to influence, his vision and his ability to get results. Sir John Egan scored highly for his ability to get results, his revolutionary approach to the industry, and his ability to influence. Of these three, Ray O'Rourke is the only practising construction industry professional.

In contrast to this, when asked "How good a leader do you think you are?" 90% of respondents considered themselves to be above average leaders (question 13), and only 14% thought there was no leadership at all in their organisation (question 12). This would suggest that there is a great deal of untapped potential within the industry, or a misunderstanding of what leadership is present and/or required.

An analysis of the female respondents shows a slightly different pattern emerging. Although their most common response was still 'none' or 'don't know', they ranked the position of project manager as the second highest return. This could suggest that females are influenced more by the individuals they have direct contact with, as opposed to key industry figureheads, and could be an important factor to consider in developing new female leaders or leaders that will be effective when working with women.

## Availability of leadership skills in the construction industry

The research explored the self perceived best and worst leadership traits of construction professionals (questions 14 and 15). Given that 'communication skills' was identified as the most important leadership quality (question 7) it is interesting to note that respondents recognised 'communication skills' as being their strongest quality. This would reaffirm that the majority of respondents felt they were above average leaders (question 13).

Weakest leadership qualities were identified as not having enough time, not delegating enough, impatience, poor communication skills and a lack of decisiveness. Not having enough time could be the result of not delegating sufficiently. Equally, impatience could signal why respondents don't have enough time, if in fact they are doing all the work themselves because they feel others won't deliver the work in the timeframe needed. This could suggest poor management skills and lack of confidence in staff, but it could also be symptomatic of an industry under pressure.

The results indicate that there is untapped leadership potential within the industry. It also identifies areas of weakness, many of which could be addressed through industry training and other leadership development programmes. Improving communication skills and general management skills are two areas in particular that are highlighted by the research as a priority.

## **Transferable leadership skills**

The majority of respondents felt that leadership skills are transferable between different industries. This presents both an opportunity and a risk for the construction industry. It suggests that there is an opportunity to recruit new leaders into the industry from elsewhere, but it also raises the issue of construction industry leaders being head-hunted to work in other industries.

Despite this finding, the research shows that 65% of respondents work for organisations that recruit their next leaders internally by developing existing staff (question 24), which would suggest that the industry is missing an important opportunity to recruit new skills into the industry.

## **Identifying, retaining and developing leaders**

### **Investment in leaders**

When asked about organisational leadership development programmes, respondents indicated that continuing personal and professional development was the most common way in which this was achieved. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is generally the responsibility of an individual to progress their own career. Training and mentoring were also identified as ways that organisations develop their leaders. However the third most common response was that leaders are not developed at all.

Given that a large proportion of the sample consisted of people working for construction companies employing more than 500 people, the research exposes a major under-investment in developing leaders internally. Indeed, out of the sample of 290 individuals working for companies employing more than 500 people, as many as 52 (18%) did not believe their organisation developed leaders in any way at all. Furthermore, 56% of respondents reported that their organisation did not have a formal succession plan or leadership strategy.

The survey also explored how organisations retained and/or rewarded its leaders. In this instance organisations fared much better, with almost a half offering financial benefits, rewards and incentives to employees. However, this does not match the expectations of employees who are looking for new experiences, training and clear guidance.

### **Ways to improve leaders**

Respondents identified new experiences as the most valuable way to improve their leadership ability. This would include mentoring or secondment programmes or anything else that gives an individual a new hands-on experience and exposure.

Clear guidelines and direction were also identified as being important to improving individual leaders in the industry. This reinforces the importance of corporate strategic planning, empowerment and developing leaders at all levels of seniority.

Education, skills, qualifications and training clearly have an important role to play. As one respondent commented: "There is an absence of general management training and skills within the industry with an over-emphasis on technical skills. Over the last 20 years the best potential leaders in the country have been snapped up by modern industries such as IT, telecoms, financial services etc because careers in the built environment have artificial barriers to entry.... We need to see more leadership programmes within the industry taking young talent, irrespective of background, and fast tracking them to senior management and leadership roles. This is how we will get the talent and multi-disciplinary thinking which we need to cope with the challenges of the future."

It is worth noting that only 3% chose financial benefits as key to helping them improve as a leader - yet companies use this as the most common way to retain and reward leaders (question 19).

## Key influences

In order to improve leadership in the construction industry it is important to understand who influences leaders and what has the biggest impact on developing leaders.

This research discovers that superior managers have the biggest influence on construction industry professionals (question 17). 'Other leaders' (both inside and outside of the construction industry) were also identified as having a big influence. In question 10, respondents associated 'vision', 'integrity' and 'inspirational' as key qualities of other leaders and this information could be used as a way of producing leaders for the future. The effect of having an inspirational manager, with integrity and vision could be seen as the catalyst for improving leadership qualities within the construction industry.

Parents also ranked highly in terms of key influences, which could suggest that they play an important part in shaping leadership qualities. Fathers, in particular, were mainly seen as the primary source of influence for respondents. This could be as a result of the industry being male dominated and to some extent the industry taking its roots from family owned businesses that are passed down through the generations.

When asked "who has the biggest impact on developing leaders" almost half of all respondents (43%) considered it to be the individual themselves. Unsurprisingly this shows that self motivation is central to any individual's success as a leader.

In terms of what has the biggest impact on developing leaders, only 8% of respondents said "money".

## Barriers to effective leadership

'Lack of opportunity' and 'organisational culture' were identified as the two greatest barriers to leaders reaching their full potential. This is consistent with respondents identifying 'new experiences' as the most valuable way to improve their leadership ability, and with the under-investment of organisations and companies in leadership development. It is also consistent with the discovery that companies do not seem to be meeting their employees' expectations and needs.

The weakest leadership qualities (above) also indicated a lack of general management skills in the workforce, and the need to improve communication skills. However this may simply be symptomatic of an industry that is over stretched during a period of economic down-turn.

## Sectoral leadership

The research explored the presence of leadership in four different areas of construction:

- 1 Health and safety
- 2 Business ethics
- 3 Sustainability
- 4 Education and training

The results showed that there was a higher level of leadership at company level in all four areas when compared to project, UK and international levels. This suggests that developing leadership at the company level could potentially have the most impact. It could also infer that there is a greater need to address the lack of leadership at project, UK and international levels.

Business ethics had the weakest level of leadership at UK level compared to the other three, but leadership was relatively high at company level.

Sustainability had the weakest level of leadership at company level compared to the other three areas, which is an important gap for the industry to address given the urgency of the sustainability agenda at the current time.

Leadership for health and safety was strong at project, company and UK level, perhaps reflecting the zero-tolerance policies, industry initiatives, and high level of investment in this area.

# Recommendations

The results from this research show that there is a strong case for construction companies to invest more in leadership development programmes tailored specifically for construction industry professionals.

These leadership development programmes should include education and training (particularly communication skills and general management training), work experience, mentoring schemes and secondment programmes. They should also include strategies for identifying the leaders of the future, and for rewarding and celebrating success.

The CIOB believes that if the industry is to develop leaders of the future, then construction must look to positively develop its working cultures; and break down any organisational barriers that don't recognise, and provide opportunities for those that show leadership potential.

The research identified that recognition of effective and successful leaders within the construction industry would help to promote leadership and inspire others. Self motivation and inspiration were regarded as key factors in developing leadership potential. Celebrating and communicating leadership success, which raises an individual's profile should also be continued where it exists, and developed where it doesn't.

# The Chartered Institute of Building

The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) represents for the public benefit the most diverse set of professionals in the construction industry.

The CIOB's role is to:

- Promote the importance of the built environment.
- Lead the industry to create a sustainable future worldwide.
- Encourage leadership potential.
- Set the highest standards in quality, safety and qualification.
- Create an industry where excellence prospers.

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