



FUTURE-READY LEADERSHIP: TIPS FOR IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING HIGH-POTENTIAL LEADERSHIP TALENT

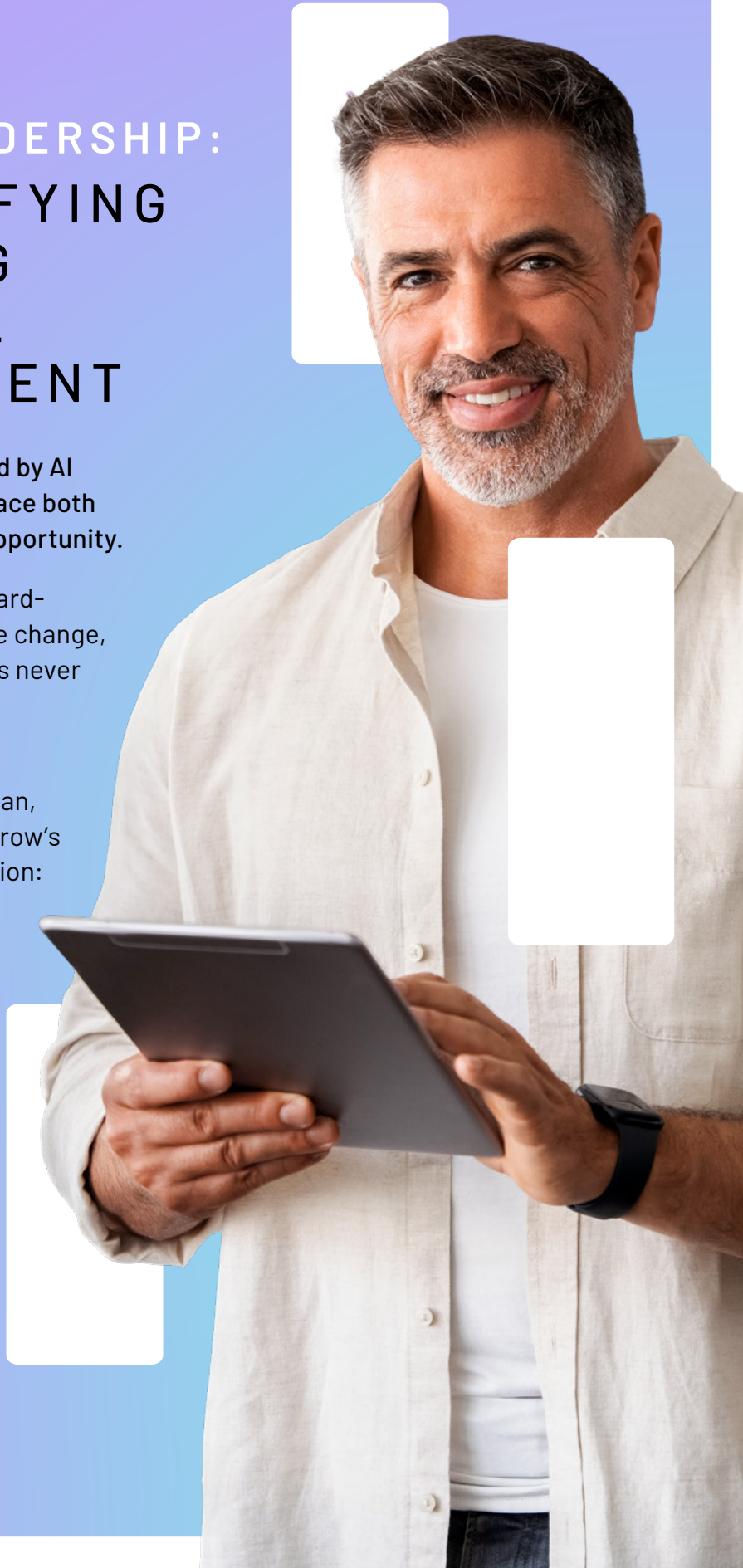
As organizations prepare for a future shaped by AI and other technology advancements, they face both significant disruption and unprecedented opportunity.

In this evolving landscape, the need for forward-thinking, adaptable leaders who can navigate change, foster innovation, and inspire their teams has never been more critical.

To meet this challenge, it is essential for organizations to build a robust succession plan, not just for today's challenges, but for tomorrow's opportunities. This raises an essential question: how can organizations accurately identify which current managers and leaders have the potential to rise to top positions, and assess their readiness to do so?

Equally important is putting clear strategies in place to nurture and retain these high-potential leaders, ensuring they have the support and development needed to grow and thrive.

7 **INSIDE:**
practical tips to help you identify,
develop, and retain high-potential
leaders in your organization



SEVEN
PRACTICAL
TIPS TO
HELP YOU
IDENTIFY, DEVELOP,
AND RETAIN
HIGH-POTENTIAL
LEADERS IN YOUR
ORGANIZATION:

1

Define what leadership potential means for your organization

Clarifying what leadership potential means within your organization is essential for **building a strong leadership pipeline**.

Start by aligning your leadership team on the qualities needed for success in critical senior roles. This includes defining the core attributes that matter most, such as aspiration, agility, strategic thinking, and commitment to growth. It's important to look beyond current performance and identify individuals who demonstrate the capacity to take on broader, more complex responsibilities. Involving senior leaders in shaping this definition ensures alignment with your business goals and future direction.



Clearly define leadership potential in your organization by focusing on future-ready traits and aligning with strategic goals.

2

Focus on what lasts: transferable skills for leadership success

In a fast-changing world, relying on job-specific skills can be a risky strategy.

To identify high-potential leaders, organizations must look beyond technical expertise and prioritize transferable leadership qualities that enable individuals to thrive in evolving roles and environments. Key traits include a strategic, future-focused mindset, the ability to navigate complexity and ambiguity, and learning agility.

High-potential leaders must adapt quickly, embrace feedback, and evolve with shifting demands. Emotional intelligence is equally critical, as effective leadership depends on the ability to influence, collaborate, and engage others while fostering a positive and transformative work culture. Organizations should actively seek out leaders with the qualities needed to shape a compelling vision, drive large-scale change and transformation, and cultivate a healthy, high-performing workplace.



Prioritize transferable leadership skills, such as strategic thinking, learning agility, and building teams, to identify leaders who can thrive in evolving roles.



3 Use data-driven insights to identify potential

To accurately assess leadership potential, organizations should establish objective, data-driven criteria rather than relying solely on tenure.

This includes identifying which individuals have exceptional upward potential, who are ready for growth, and who should continue developing in their current roles. While past and current performance metrics offer useful insights, they only provide part of the picture. To gain a more complete understanding, leverage validated psychometric assessments, talent analytics, and **360-degree feedback** to evaluate a leader's broader impact and the environment they create. It's also essential to assess ambition, drive, and willingness to take on more complex responsibilities, as these factors strongly indicate readiness for senior leadership roles.

Using a robust, objective framework grounded in well-defined criteria ensures that high-potential identification is both accurate and fair. This supports inclusive, consistent, and accurate decisions in leadership development and succession planning.



Use data-driven insights, including assessments and feedback, to fairly and accurately identify leadership potential beyond tenure or past performance.

4 Build formal succession plans and pipelines

Proactive succession planning ensures you're ready for the future.

To build a strong leadership pipeline, organizations must first identify the critical senior roles and map clear succession pathways for each. This should be supported by formal individual development plans tailored to high-potential leaders and aligned with future role requirements. Executive-level sponsorship is essential to ensure alignment and successful implementation of succession programs. Progress should be tracked over time, both at the individual and program level, to evaluate effectiveness. Succession plans must also be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect changes in the organization and the broader business environment.



Build succession plans that focus on readiness and growth, supported by development plans, executive sponsorship, and regular progress tracking.



Carefully plan internal communications about high-potential programs

Another key consideration is how **high-potential identification** is communicated internally.

Transparency around who is identified, and why, can significantly impact engagement and retention. If individuals are labeled as 'high potential', they may develop heightened expectations about their career trajectory and become frustrated if progress doesn't match their pace. Conversely, those not identified may feel overlooked, which can affect motivation and even lead to attrition.

Clear, thoughtful communication and ongoing development conversations are essential to managing these dynamics effectively.



Plan out your communication strategy carefully, determine the appropriate level of transparency, and ensure the messages sets expectations clearly.

Offer stretch assignments to accelerate development

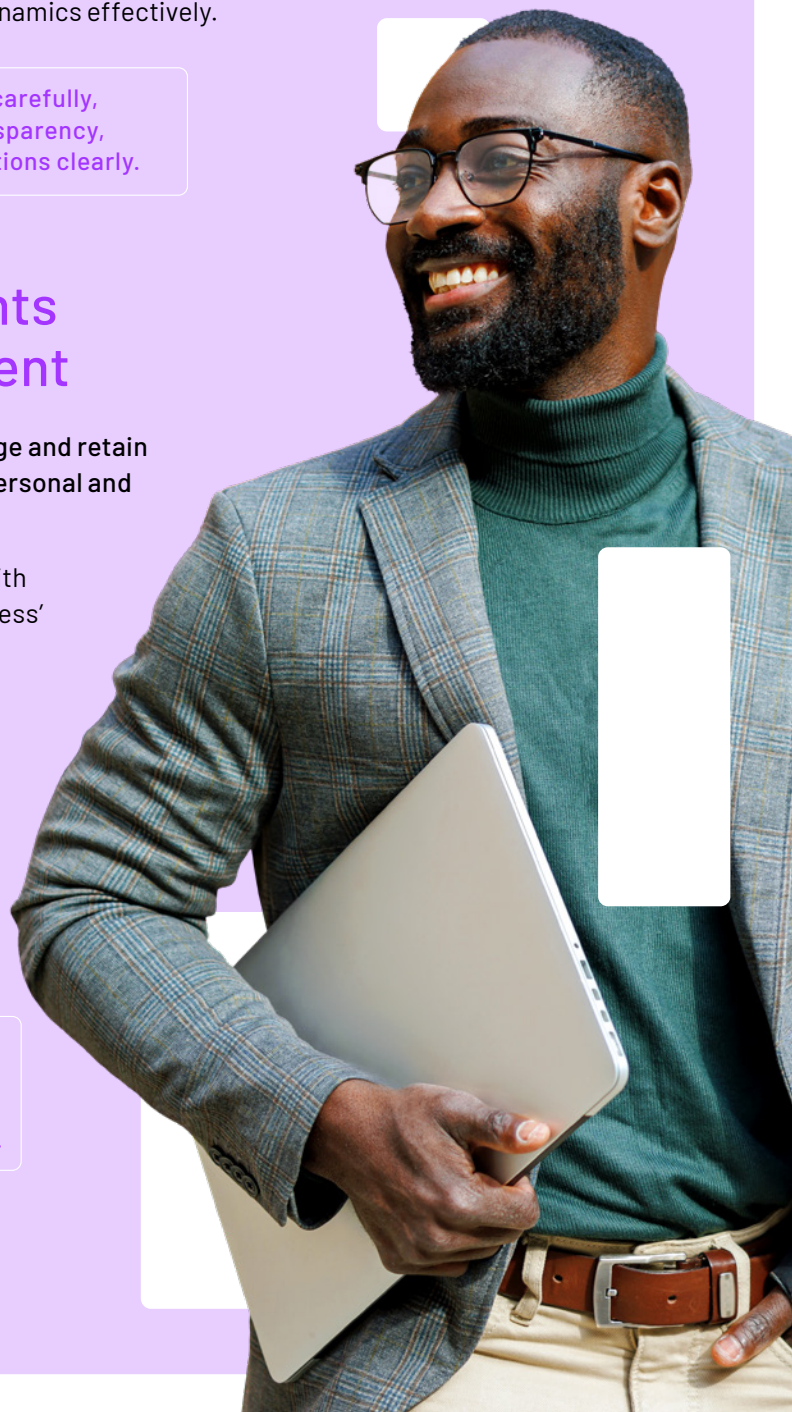
Stretch assignments are a powerful way to engage and retain high-potential leaders while accelerating their personal and professional growth.

These assignments should be carefully aligned with the individual's development needs and the business' strategic goals. Supporting lateral moves across different functions, contexts, or geographies, such as through role rotations, special projects, or crisis assignments, broadens leadership experience and perspective.

To maximize their value, set clear development objectives for each stretch assignment and actively track and support progress throughout the experience.



Leverage stretch assignments to accelerate development, broaden experience, and retain high-potential leaders through meaningful challenges.



Build a culture of growth by investing in feedback, coaching, and mentoring

To support the growth of high-potential leaders, it's important to give regular, constructive feedback that focuses on their performance, highlights their strengths, and identifies areas for development.

It should also be directly linked to the key transferable leadership skills needed to succeed in complex roles. Encouraging self-awareness and reflection helps leaders better understand their impact and areas for growth. Pairing them with experienced mentors and offering both internal and external coaching further supports their development journey.

Additionally, fostering a strong feedback culture through peer-to-peer feedback and coaching reinforces continuous learning and leadership refinement across the organization.



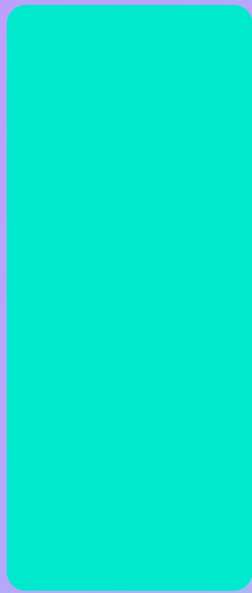
Invest in feedback, coaching, and mentoring to build self-awareness, support continuous growth, and foster a strong leadership development culture.



Identifying and developing tomorrow's leaders today

Identifying and developing high-potential leaders is not just a talent strategy, it's a business imperative. As the pace of change accelerates, organizations must invest in leaders who can navigate complexity, drive innovation, and inspire others.

By applying these practical tips, you can build a future-ready leadership pipeline that ensures long-term success. The leaders you nurture today will shape the resilience, agility, and performance of your organization tomorrow, so invest wisely.



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