

Lead with Impact:  
**Trends Shaping  
Leadership  
Dynamics**



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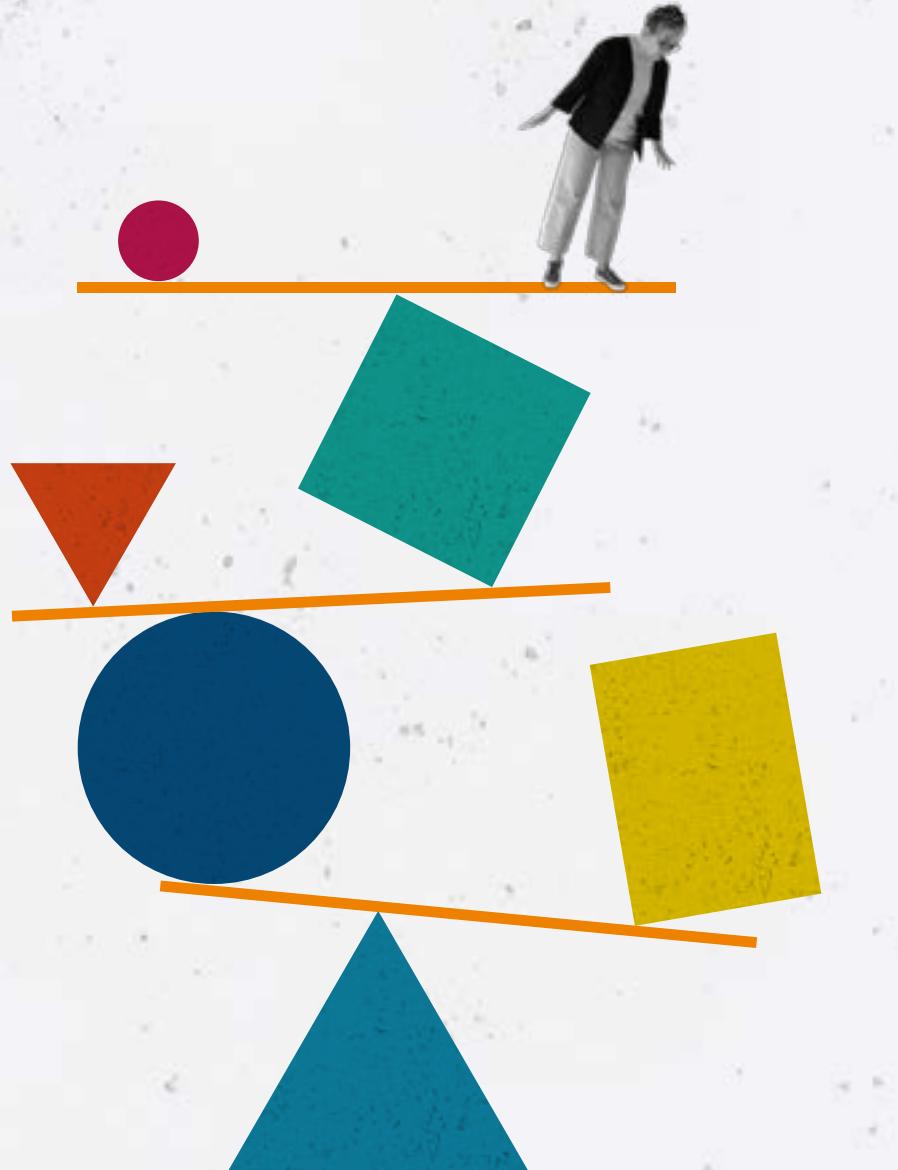
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# The State of Leadership



# The State of Leadership

In the world, and the world of work, we are surrounded by mass amounts of uncertainty, from political unrest to the looming threat of a recession. Trust in organizations is low, and employees are trying to discern what is real, what is authentic, and what they can rely on. It is the leaders who can recognize the forces that feed into this uncertainty that will prove to be successful and impactful in the coming years.

In this eBook, we will cover five factors that are impacting leaders and how you can adjust to best engage and lead your employees.



# The Five Factors Impacting Leadership



# Generational Influences

2025	2030
<b>63.8%</b>	<b>74.7%</b>

**% of workforce made of Millenials and Gen Z workers**

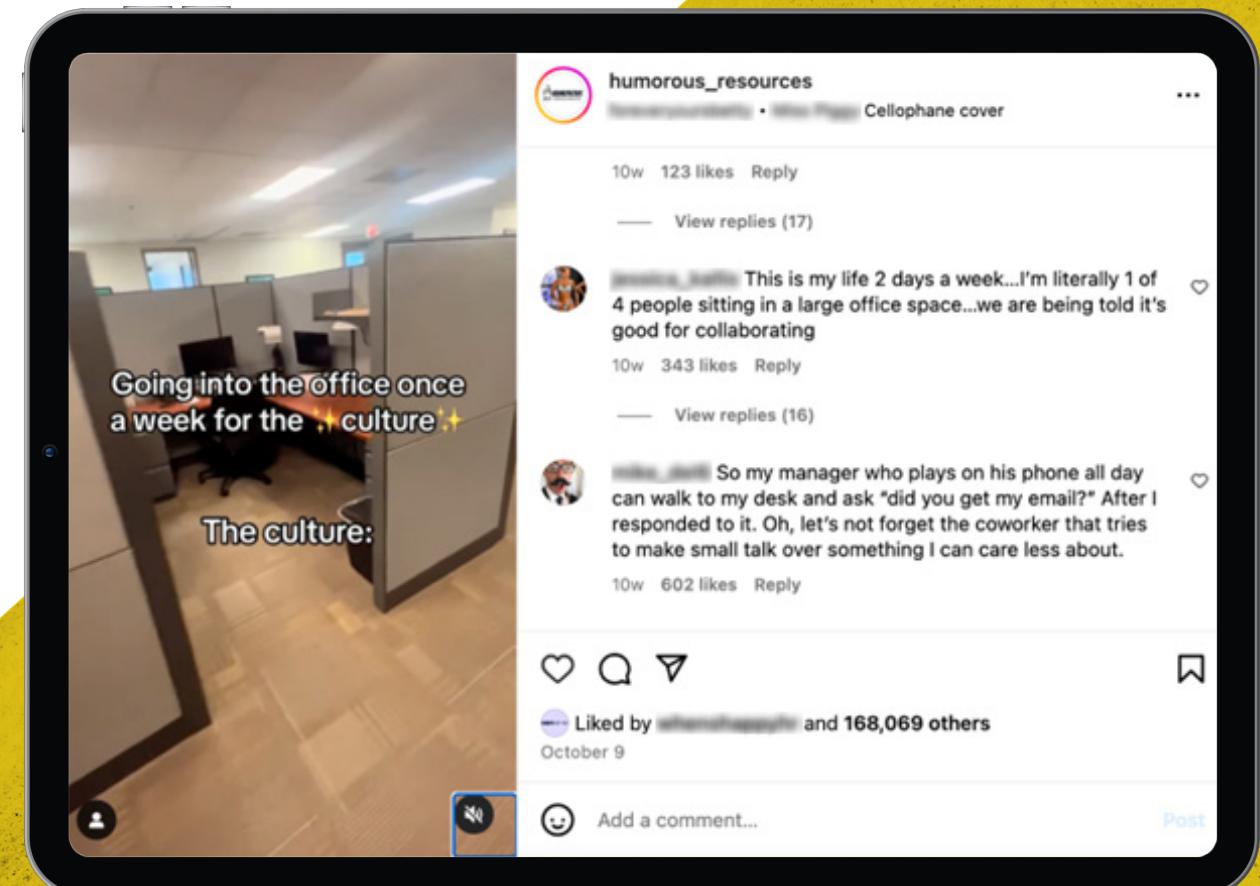
Each generation of leaders is influenced by the generations that came before them, who created a blueprint for leadership that they often modified, but largely followed. It's no secret that Millennials and Gen Zers are changing that dynamic once again, making an impact on how organizations get work done and the definition of career success. Technology is part of their DNA, and they embrace that technology to help them be more efficient, stay connected, manage their investments, or take on a side gig. Because of this, we have seen a shift in the

way employees think and feel about their careers, putting an emphasis on work/life balance, working to live, and not living to work, while also looking to be fulfilled by their roles. Because of this, they don't view career success as traditionally linear and understand that success looks different for everyone. They are more empowered to define their jobs, job conditions, and career success on their own terms. For leaders, this means understanding their mindset and supporting your employees in finding their own meaning of career success.

Source: "Tomorrow's Talent: How To Hire, Retain, & Keep Them Talented", Learn In.

# Distributed Workforce

The tug-of-war over distributed work persists, leaving organizations grappling with the optimal combination of where—on-site, remote, or a hybrid structure. But what is the “right” approach to support productivity and connection? And who makes the decisions? And why? And while each organization is vested in their chosen position, many employees are calling out the inconsistencies in how hybrid work success is managed and measured. Hybrid work is a complex and ongoing puzzle, and getting clear on the rationale for the organization’s chosen model is key. The fact is that regardless of location, leaders must redouble efforts to stay connected with their people and combat fatigue and burnout.



# The Rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

**75%** of organizations expect to **adopt AI technology** in the **next five years**

**50%** anticipate it will lead to **job growth**

**25%** anticipate it will lead to **job losses**

Awareness of AI is continuing to grow, but its impact is still unclear for leaders. While 75% of organizations say they will adopt AI in the next five years, 50% say it will add jobs, and 25% say it will eliminate jobs. The truth is that the precise impact is murky, and that murkiness is stoking fear. When leaders do talk about AI, much of the conversation revolves around its danger and how to regulate its use. Even more unclear than the regulation of AI is the impact it will have on people leadership skills. With such a large number of organizations adopting AI, leaders need to shift the focus to harnessing AI to their advantage, and embrace learning, especially focusing on cognitive skills, setting themselves and their employees up for success.

Source: "Climate action and AI can create more and better jobs. Here's how", World Economic Forum.

# Metamorphosis of DEI

**99%** of Gen Zers  
view **DEI as important**



Gen Z is changing the way that the workforce functions with their different ways of working and the demands they put on employers. This includes Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), but DEI is in a state of metamorphosis. Despite the fact that 67% of job seekers consider a company's DEI policies when determining where to work, organizations are slow to adopt a comprehensive approach to DEI. There has been skepticism about past efforts, insinuating that they have been ineffective, which has significantly impacted and slowed future plans. Some organizations are backtracking, facing resistance, and even laying off DEI roles. Those who remain committed are re-evaluating their training, policies, and structures to take a more systemic approach, with increasing pressure to measure their efforts to garner ongoing support.

Source: "What Companies Need To Know About Gen Z's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Expectations", Tallo.

Source: "What Job Seekers Really Think About Your Diversity and Inclusion Stats", Glassdoor.

# Demand for Upskilling and Reskilling

**85%** of the jobs that will exist in 2030 haven't **been invented yet**

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) predicts that AI and machine learning will transform 1.1 billion jobs over the next decade. Because of this, organizations will begin to experience wide skills gaps that their employees currently can't fill unless they implement upskilling and reskilling programs now. There will also be an increase in functions that become obsolete due to the emergence of technologies like AI. By identifying those now, leaders can help reskill the individuals that currently hold these positions and prepare them for new roles rather than laying them off. Beyond merely meeting demands, these initiatives build internal talent pipelines, enhance job satisfaction, and contribute to improved business outcomes.

Source: "Why Upskilling And Reskilling Are Essential In 2023", Forbes.



# Small Changes Lead to Big Impact

With all these factors in play, the expectations for leaders are high. Leaders need to shift their mindset and, perhaps, their approach to leading. By thinking "**head, heart, hand, and soul**," leaders can implement small changes that demonstrate they are focused on what organizations, and their teams, need today and in the future to be successful.

# Head



Audit your thinking, understand AI's implications, and foster critical thinking in the age of automation. Shift mindsets on career paths, acknowledging that the definition of career success is different for everyone, and embrace hybrid work rather than fight to "get back to normal." With all of these changes, employees need and want a different kind of support from their leaders. Rather than a traditional "boss" approach, try coaching and mentoring your team members.

# Heart



Connect with your people. Authenticity is key to being a good leader, so start with being authentic with your own values, needs, and stressors. When you are self-reflective, you can better understand your people and their needs. When you embrace authenticity, you can regroup on core concepts like trust and better engage with your employees. Employee well-being goes beyond surface-level gestures. Understand and address burnout's underlying causes by evaluating priorities and workloads and making genuine connections between work and people.

# Hand



Workloads can sometimes get overwhelming, so keep the conversations open and offer a helping hand when necessary. Leaders must also comprehend AI as an asset, fostering reskilling and coaching to adapt to the evolving work landscape. Help your employees define and refine their skills on their path to success by coaching rather than bossing.

# Soul



Think differently about the connection that you forge with your people. Connect to a larger purpose, values, and social responsibility. Reflect on what motivates you and understand what motivates your team. You can do this by sharing personal stories, fostering a sense of shared purpose, and cultivating a positive vision for the future.

# What Does It Mean to Be a “Successful Leader”?

The definition of success is constantly evolving and changing and looks so much different now than it did 10 years ago. Rather than aspiring to the corner office, leaders can achieve success and lead effectively from their home office with their cat or kids making appearances in their Zoom meetings. This goes for your employees as well. They don't define success as wearing a suit, meeting in board rooms, and working so hard they don't have time to take care of themselves. They are looking for a more balanced, mindful, and authentic life.

For leaders to be successful, they need to embrace the uncertainty, leverage the technology, and let go of the past paradigms. Adjust your mindset to that of those you lead and become a valued coach rather than an overbearing boss. Build connections with your people, and the element of trust will create great working relationships and allow you to effectively lead.



# About the Author



## Leah Clark

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Leah Clark is a leadership development professional, author, and founder of LeaderConnect, with over 28 years of experience in her field. Leah has a unique perspective on the mindsets and skillset that are critical to leadership success and brings that perspective to her coaching and consulting. Leah's clients benefit from her collaborative approach to crafting a well-connected and thoughtful leadership development strategy. Leah holds a Master of Arts; Organizational Psychology, Columbia University and a Bachelor of Arts; English and Sociology, Boston College.



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