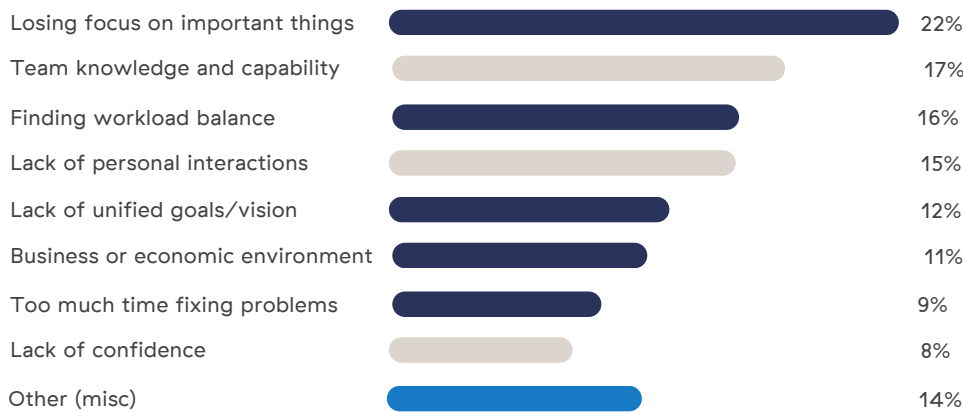


ADEPTION INSIGHTS

Our leadership development experiences guide leaders through a three-step process, to ‘Be Conscious, Be Curious, Be Better’ (B3). The first step, Be Conscious, helps leaders ‘wake up’ and make sense of their current context — what’s important, what’s working, and the challenges they’re facing in reaching their goals. Here are the top challenges leaders shared across thousands of responses in recent experiences:

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE TO ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS?



62%
of the challenges leaders face stem from complexity, ambiguity, and urgency*

Figure 1. Percent of participants who identified with each theme (multiple responses possible). *Percent of leaders who had at least 1 of the themes: Losing focus on important things, Finding workload balance, Lack of unified goals/vision and Business or economic environment

A majority of the challenges leaders are facing today (62%) stem from **complexity** in the business environment, **ambiguity** around vision, goals and priorities, and **urgent demands getting in the way of strategic work**. As organizations face accelerating change, they need agile leaders who can deal with this complexity and lead through uncertainty. This is a significant industry challenge.

WHAT IS YOUR PLANNED ACTION TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?



55%
of actions leaders set relate to navigating complexity*

Figure 2. Percent of participants who identified action plans to solve their challenges (multiple responses possible). *Percent of leaders who had at least 1 of the themes: Focus schedule and priorities, Communicate more effectively, Clarify strategy and targets, Seek challenges and opportunities

Over half (55%) of the actions leaders set themselves in Adeption experiences also relate to navigating complexity — from changing how they manage their time, to prioritizing strategic clarity. Examples of actions taken by leaders (thematic to protect anonymity) include:

- Using frameworks to shift how they lead, prioritize and delegate tasks, and transform how they deal with challenges.
- Reframe reflection time as ‘review and plan’ to take a broad, strategic view, and avoid slipping into rumination.
- Ask for guidance early and proactively seek out different perspectives.



“ Adaptive Leadership is the top leadership trend that will drive success in 2024.

Forbes, [Brent Gleeson & Mathew Lehnig](#)

ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP

Imagine an organization where everyone is equipped and confident to manage change, where independent, innovative thinking is the norm, and where a collaborative culture values experimentation and iteration. This vision is what can propel our industry forward.

Adaptive Leadership, originally popularized by Ronald Heifetz in his book "The Practice of Adaptive Leadership," describes leaders who can take people out of their comfort zones and tackle the toughest challenges. Heifetz's model consists of:

- **Observation:** Taking a broader and more strategic view, by 'getting on the balcony'.
- **Interpretation:** Utilizing 'what if' scenarios to hypothesize about observed patterns and data.
- **Intervention:** Applying an experimental and iterative approach to problem-solving.

Integrating Adaptive Leadership with Vertical Development practices in leadership development programs can help grow leaders who think, feel, and act in more complex, systemic, and interdependent ways. This is the foundation of Adeption's B3 methodology.

IN ACTION

Leaders are facing growing complexity and rapid change at work. So how can we support them without exacerbating their challenges in these conditions? Commentary from our coaches and facilitators includes:

DEVELOPING NEW HABITS + BEHAVIOURS

We're seeing leaders **embed new habits and rituals into their daily routines** — in particular making time to 'get on the balcony'.. Reflecting on priorities regularly helps leaders make logical, informed decisions, also boosting their confidence.


ADVANCING BEYOND BEST PRACTICES

Many leaders **mistakenly treat adaptive problems as technical ones**. By providing space and time to understand the context deeply, and fostering a safe environment of experimentation, we can guide leaders toward innovative solutions to adaptive challenges.

CREATING SUSTAINABLE ECOSYSTEMS

As leaders grow their own agility, we see them begin to develop the same skills in others, and champion a culture of experimentation and innovation — **creating learning organizations and enabling transformation**.

TOOL

Vertical Development offers a framework to build individual capacity by changing the way our mindset operates. It can help us think, feel and act in more complex, systemic and interdependent ways. [Read More](#) 

By implementing these strategies (and perhaps as development practitioners viewing the challenge as an adaptive one ourselves!), we can equip today's leaders to navigate the complexities of tomorrow's world more effectively.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Adeption has delivered leadership development experiences to thousands of leaders over 10+ years, empowering them to ‘learn how to learn’ and drive their own continuous development forward. Coaching conversations on our digital platform help leaders to unpack their challenges and experiment with new approaches through deliberate on-the-job practice. We wanted to look at some of the themes that emerged from participant responses to help inform better leadership development journeys.

The questions analyzed were:

Actions Taken: Actions set were sampled from 17 programs undertaken with 17 organizations. Sub-sampling was used to prevent large programs from being over-represented in the sample, so no organization represents more than 14.3% of the sample. This sample is not intended to be a representative demographic on leaders. Since actions were set in response to specific prompts, these were sub-categorized if there was a leading component in the prompt (e.g. My action: In the next two weeks I will do this in order to get the best out of my people...). The sub-categories were People (where actions were being prompted towards what they’ll do with their teams/direct reports), Myself (where actions were being prompted towards internal reflection and development, and Organization (where actions were prompted towards organizational goals). Actions were theme-tagged using an in-house predictive model, then individually read and reviewed to ensure all tags were correct. Actions were allowed to have up to 2 theme tags each.

Challenges: Challenges were answers to the question “What is your biggest challenge to achieve your goals?” (or close variation) that was asked in 11 programs across 11 organizations. Sub-sampling was used to prevent large programs from being over-represented in the sample, so no organization represents more than 17% of the sample. This sample is not intended to be a representative demographic of leaders. Thematic exploration was initially done using Latent Dirichlet Allocation, then refined manually. Once the themes had been finalized, all responses were manually tagged. Answers could be tagged with as many thematic tags that were relevant.

ABOUT ADEPTION

How Adeption can help you grow agile leaders for the future of work.



ASSESSMENTS

A scalable solution for individual or team growth as a one-time development boost or regular pulse-check.



WORKSHOPS

Designed to enable behavioral shift through iterative action and experimentation in the “flow of work” while fostering collective leadership intelligence.



PLATFORM

The digital platform uses AI to scale development and support pull-based learning. A coach on-demand, leaders access tools, insights and support at their point of need.



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Using our B3 methodology across all touchpoints, programs are designed to grow agile leaders within a supportive development ecosystem.

[FREE DEMO](#)

[TALK TO US](#)