



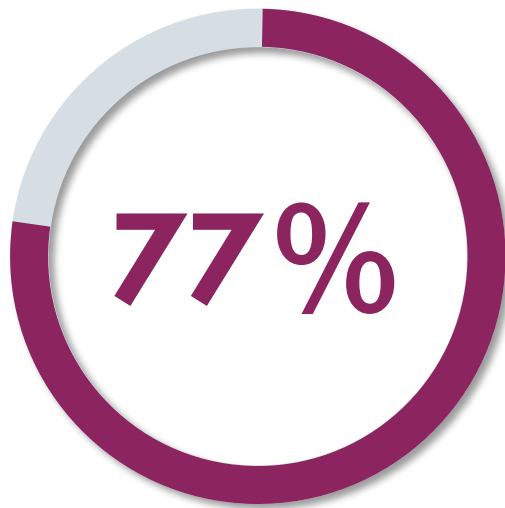
RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE

The Behavior Change Breakdown: 3 Leadership Trends Blocking Performance

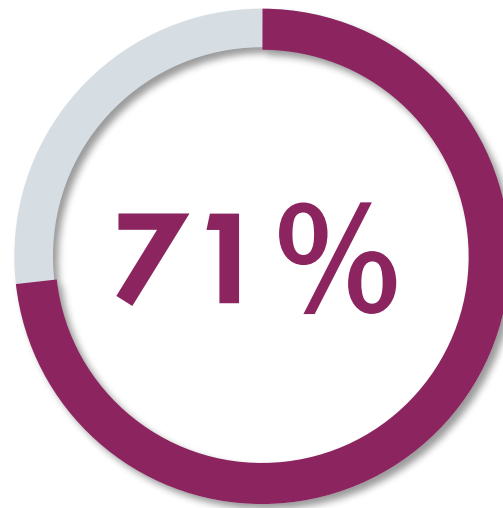


Organizations Struggle to Access and Build Strong Leadership

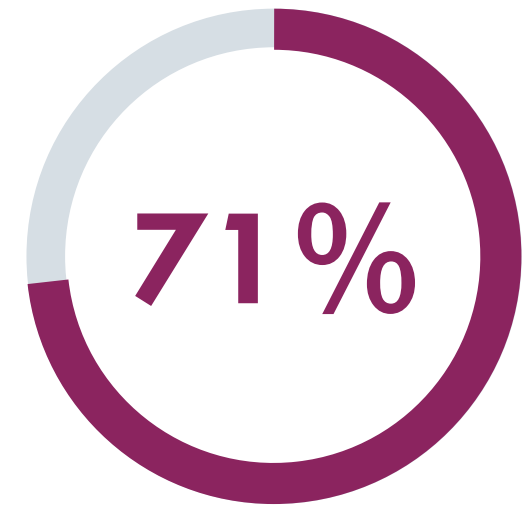
In our 2026 leadership survey, respondents said:



Recruiting and hiring
strong leaders



Building first-time
manager capability

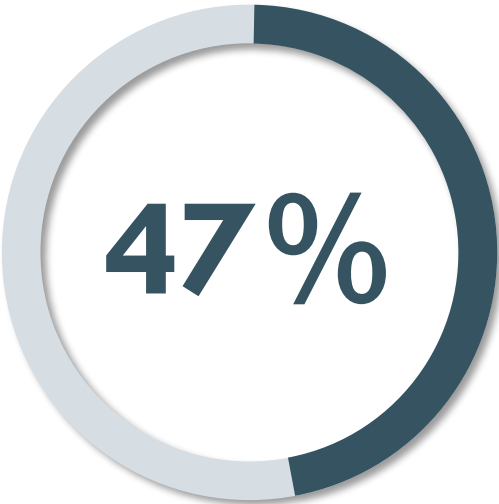


Lead effectively in uncertain
environments

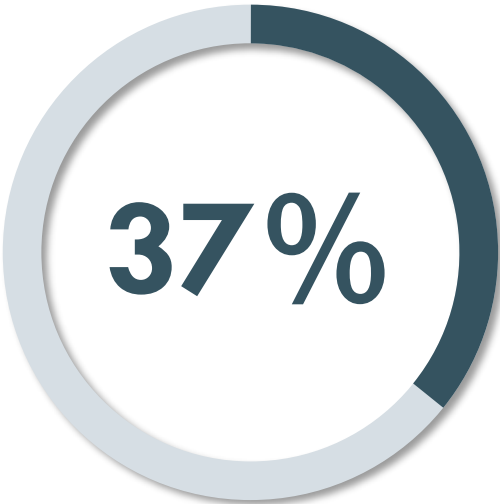
...are very or somewhat challenging

Pipeline Is Growing, But Results Aren't Keeping Pace

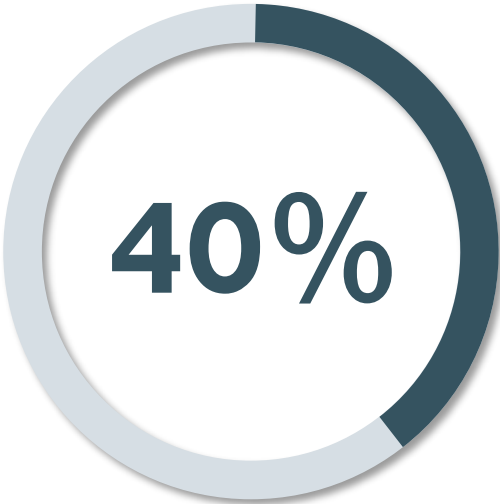
Among B2B sales orgs surveyed in 2026:



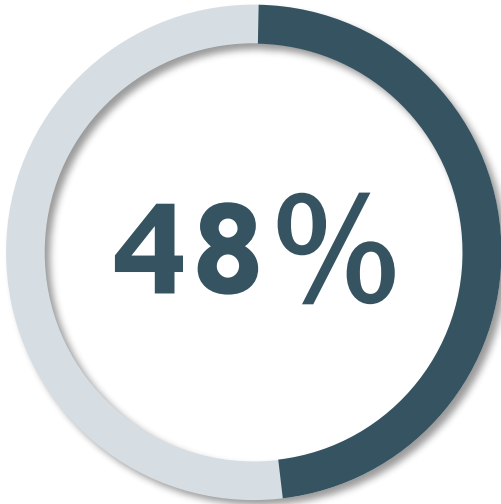
report an increase
in qualified pipeline



report an increase in quota
attainment



report an increase in
opportunities won



report an increase in sales
cycle length

Performance succeeds or fails based on leaders'
ability to transform behavior across the
organization.

Meet the Panel



TREND 1:

Managers Aren't Enabled to Drive Team Performance



1

MANAGERS AREN'T ENABLED TO DRIVE TEAM PERFORMANCE

Among leaders surveyed,

49%

said the proportion of
**managers meeting
performance expectations
failed to improve
in the past year**

LEADERSHIP STUDY

- 68% of leaders find building managers' coaching capabilities challenging
- 71% of leaders say effectively coaching reports for performance and skills is challenging

SALES ORGANIZATION STUDY

- 80% cited “developing sales managers”
- 73% called out “coaching the sales force effectively”

1

MANAGERS AREN'T ENABLED TO DRIVE TEAM PERFORMANCE

We put enormous responsibility on frontline managers.

How can leaders prepare them to excel in all the roles we expect them to play?

1

MANAGERS AREN'T ENABLED TO DRIVE TEAM PERFORMANCE

To diagnose in your org, ask:

If [outcome] needs to change, what do managers need to coach for, and how often?

Do they have the skills and resources they need to do it consistently?

TREND 2:

Leadership Uncertainty Shows Up as Execution Inconsistency



2

LEADERSHIP UNCERTAINTY SHOWS UP AS EXECUTION INCONSISTENCY

Among leaders surveyed,

63%

find maintaining
**accountability and
execution across the org**
somewhat or
very challenging

LEADERSHIP STUDY

- 71% of leaders find it challenging to maintain cross-functional alignment
- 63% of leaders say aligning stakeholders on what effective leadership looks like is challenging

SALES ORGANIZATION STUDY

- 51% of sales orgs say improving coordination among Sales and Customer Success teams to drive retention and growth is “very important”

When leaders say they want more accountability, what should that look like?

And where should it start?

To diagnose in your org, ask:

1. *What's one behavior we're trying to change?*
2. *Have we defined what good looks like?*
3. *Do we have a process in place for tracking it?*
4. *Are managers prepared to coach to it?*

TREND 3:

One-off Interventions Won't Close the Performance Gap



3

ONE-OFF INTERVENTIONS WON'T CLOSE THE PERFORMANCE GAP

Among leaders surveyed,

72%

said **sustaining
behavior change** is
somewhat or very
challenging

LEADERSHIP STUDY

- 64% of leaders reported difficulty providing reinforcement and practice at scale
- 67% struggle to secure time for leadership or manager development

PRIOR SALES ORG RESEARCH

- Top-performing sellers are 83% more likely to have extremely / very effective managers
- Top-performing sales managers are 46% more likely to have received extremely or very effective training

Many orgs invest heavily in training,
only to fail in the follow-through.

How can leaders include manager
development in transformation planning to
close the loop?

3

ONE-OFF INTERVENTIONS WON'T CLOSE THE PERFORMANCE GAP

Before rolling out any training or development, ask:

When our next session wraps, what will the participants do differently at work the next day?

What will the managers do?

AI TREND TO WATCH:

**New Problems,
Same as the Old Problems**





AI TREND TO WATCH: NEW PROBLEMS, SAME AS THE OLD PROBLEMS

In Alchemist's
leadership study,

88%

of organizations
report using AI in at
least one function

In RAIN Group's
sales org study,

15%

are using it
extensively in the
sales process



3 THINGS A LEADER HAS TO BE ABLE TO DO.



A

ARCHITECT THE WORK

Decide where AI belongs, and where it must not go.

SYSTEMS THINKING

DECISION-MAKING

PROBLEM-SOLVING

B

RUN THE WORK

Brief it, check it,
know when it is lying.

CRITICAL THINKING

JUDGEMENT

CURIOSITY

C

COMPOUND THE WORK

Turn one person's
capability into the
team's.

COLLABORATION

CREATIVITY & INNOVATION

ADAPTABILITY

THE EXECUTION CHAIN:

Linking Leadership to Sales Performance





THE EXECUTION CHAIN: LINKING LEADERSHIP TO SALES PERFORMANCE

ALIGNMENT



APPLICATION





THE EXECUTION CHAIN: LINKING LEADERSHIP TO SALES PERFORMANCE

1. **Enable managers to drive team performance** by defining coaching needs and providing the resources to accomplish them.
2. **Lead for consistent execution** by aligning the organization on how excellence is defined, measured, and pursued at every level.
3. **Close the reinforcement loop** by building manager follow-through into every transformation initiative for lasting performance improvement.

Q & A



2 Challenges and Priorities Reports, 3 Important B2B Trends



[Get the Report >](#)



[Get the Report >](#)

ABOUT ALCHEMIST GROUP

Immersive, Experiential Learning for Lasting Behavior Change

Together, Alchemist and RAIN Group are redefining global sales and leadership development with transformative learning experiences and world-class methodologies.

RAIN Group | Sales Transformation

RAIN Group is an award-winning leader in sales transformation, with over 20 years of researching and enabling top sales performance. RAIN Group's modular, multi-modal approach to sales training provides flexible, tech-enabled, and customizable solutions for complex global teams. RAIN Group partners with clients to ensure learning is adopted, creates lasting behavior change, and drives measurable results.

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Alchemist | Leadership Development

Headquartered in London, Alchemist is a global leadership development company specializing in immersive, experiential, and interactive learning. Known for its client-centric approach and innovative design, Alchemist creates learning experiences that are impactful, memorable, and built to drive business outcomes through high-stakes, real-world challenges, live practice, AI-driven simulations, and immediate coaching.

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