



Measures

Key points

- Whether you drive LD for your whole organization, your team, or for yourself as an individual, you must define what LD success will look like
 - There is no “killer KPI” in LD, and every LD initiative should be evaluated against context and strategic goals
 - Proactively address the impact question in evaluating your LD effort, balancing qualitative and quantifiable outcomes
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Make the case for LD and align organizational stakeholders on a joint understanding of success. Evaluating your LD starts at the beginning of your process, not at the end. As you embark on your work on leadership development, you should define what success will look like and socialize the answer with relevant organizational stakeholders, including the target group of future leaders. In the same vein, you should develop criteria that allows you to assess whether your LD work has had a positive impact on organizational performance and personal leader growth. In discussing what success looks like, you should refer to both the strategic goals and the joint understanding of context. An important aspect may be, for example, that the organization reaches a specific milestone or that a certain number of leaders within your program reach a next level within the organization.

Capture the individual stories of leaders developing in relation to their goals in the context of strategic objectives. Individual leader development happens in practice, supported by feedback and resources. This individual development is a key output of an organizational LD initiative. While qualitative in nature, make sure to capture stories of individual leaders and how they've grown in their jobs, noting what difference the resources and reflection provided by the organization has made. Make sure, again, to tie these stories to episodes with strategic significance, e.g., the opening of a new market, the launch of a new product, or the accomplishment of a major change initiative.

Use quantification if it can be based on formal evaluation and feedback processes and measurable changes. There are times when quantification makes sense. If you run a leadership intervention in one cohort and not in another, you may draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the intervention from the differences between the two. (As with all metrics, take into account other factors and context which may have had an influence on the outcome beyond the LD factor.) If you have well-developed 360-degree feedback processes, which operationalize and quantify certain skills, you would expect to see an impact of your LD work if focused on a measured skill. Another quantifiable outcome would be increasing the relative progress of leaders in a targeted cohort. In contrast to impact on the individual level (in terms of measurable increased skill, ratings, or career progress) system-level outcomes of LD work may be harder to quantify. For example, the positive effects of strengthened personal relationships and broadened networks are plausible, but hard to capture. Outcomes of employee satisfaction and engagement surveys may also give indications but are moderated by many different effects. In the same vein, overall business outcomes may indicate the positive effects of LD efforts, especially if some unit results and achievements can be related to the introduction of LD intervention. The reasoning for such connections, however, should be transparent.

In any case, we recommend that you balance quantifiable and qualitative indicators of leadership development and connect them to strategic priorities to achieve stakeholder buy-in to LD.



Tools

 [See tool section and downloads](#)
