



CRITICAL EYE

The peer to peer Board Community

# HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR RESEARCH 2023

RESHAPING THE FUTURE



Taken at our Human Resources Director Retreat 2023, this research provides some interesting insights into the challenges HRDs and Chief People Officers are facing.

We've seen some interesting shifts in the data. For example, 35 percent of HRDs said investment in technology is the biggest change they are seeing in their organisations, up from 16 percent in 2022 when organisational agility came top of the list. Similarly, where the workforce was the most challenging internal stakeholder for HRDs last year, they have highlighted the CEO in 2023.

Comparing these figures with our wider research, it's great to see HRDs aligning with their Boards when it comes to priorities. Retaining key talent and developing skills was top of the agenda for HRDs, which was the same outcome recorded when we surveyed Chairs and non-executive directors at the start of the year. Interestingly,

honing their ability to influence the Board was a top area of improvement for HR leaders.

In polls taken during the Retreat, less than half (43 percent) said their organisation's culture was in the right place against a difficult economic backdrop. HR leaders will need to play a key role in addressing this, particularly as businesses seek to grow and transform in an increasingly competitive landscape.

It is encouraging to see that 60 percent intend to focus more on leadership development in 2023, but it needs to be a higher priority at the top of the organisation. Indeed, most HRDs told us it takes six months or more before this topic makes it onto the Board agenda.

With people and talent continuing to be a top priority across the C-suite, it's clear HRDs and Chief People Officers will play a leading role over the next 12 months. Organisations accept that the right mix of technology and talent is vital to success in 2023.



**Jamie Wilson**

Managing Director, Group Services  
Criticaleye

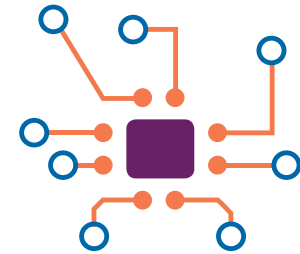
## KEY FINDINGS FROM CRITICALEYE'S HRD RESEARCH 2023



**The CEO** is the HRD's most challenging internal stakeholder



**40%** report the management team is too tactical



**Investment in new technology** is the biggest change in organisations



**90%** agree mentoring improves the performance of senior executives



**60%** say management teams are too inward-looking



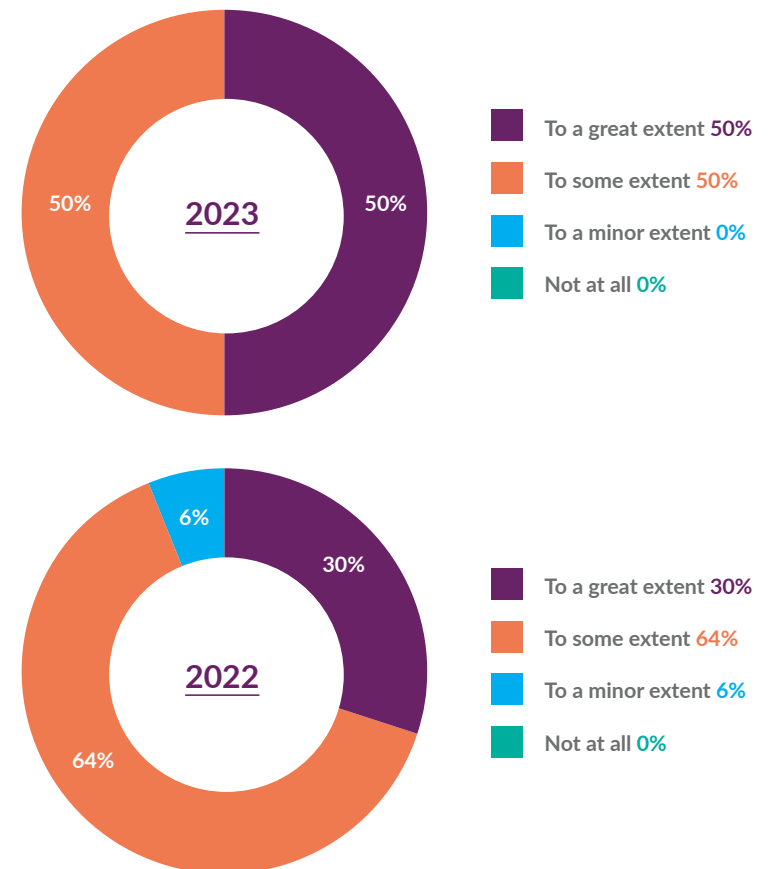
**Building alignment in the leadership team** is where HRDs need to improve

# STRATEGY

Criticleye offers senior executives a unique opportunity to discuss and reflect upon strategy with peers and experts

# Confidence in the top team's ability to navigate uncertainty has risen since 2022

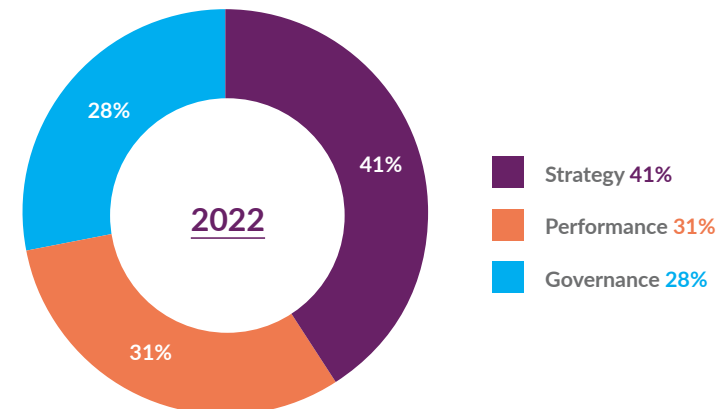
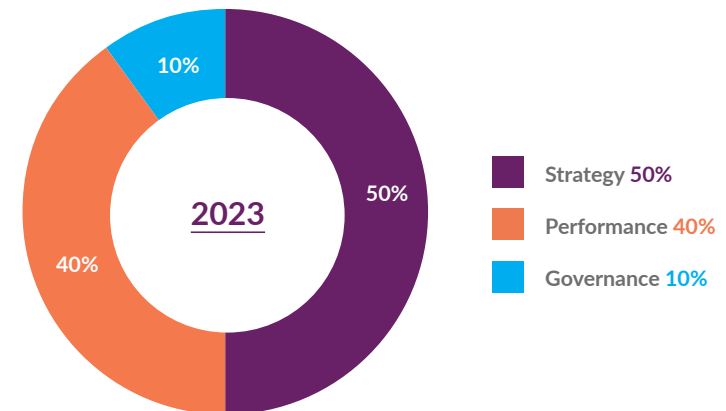
Does your senior leadership team have the ability to navigate strategic uncertainty?





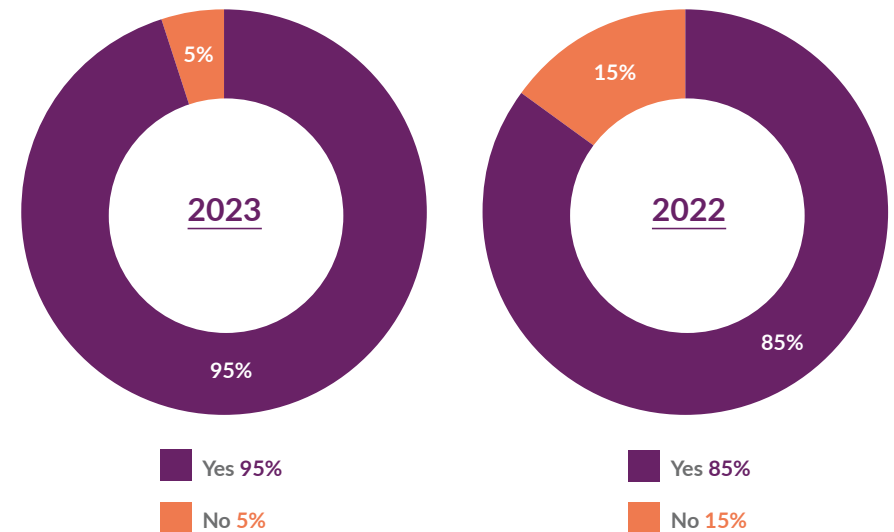
HR leaders say  
improvement  
is needed in  
the quality of  
strategic debate

In which of the following areas do you need to improve  
the quality of debate in the executive team?

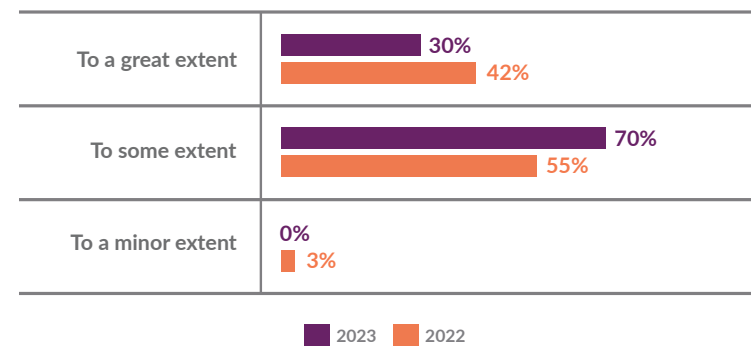


Although HRDs are aligned with their CEO, confidence in executives' ability to deliver on strategy has dropped since 2022

Are you aligned with your CEO on strategy?

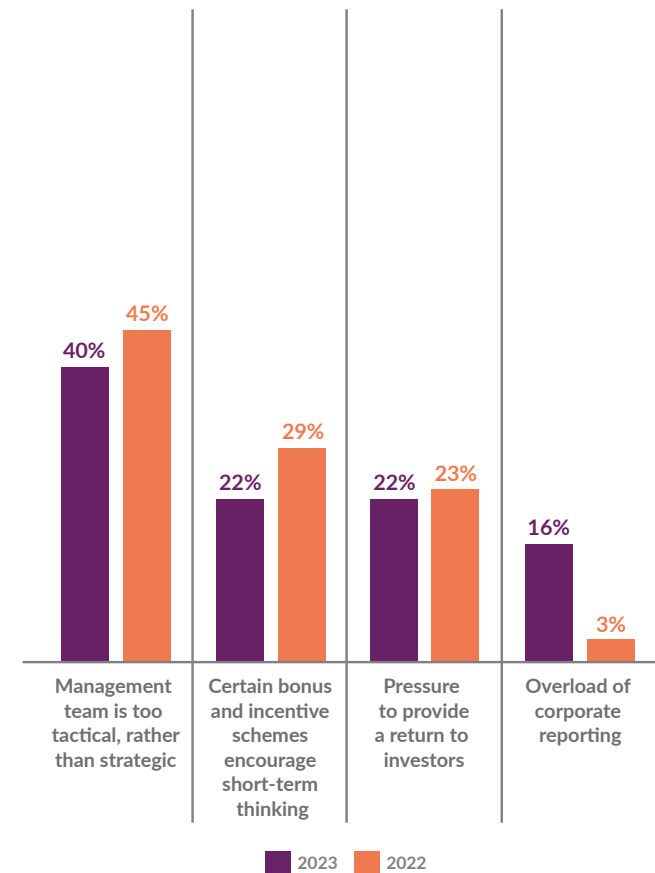


Does your executive team have the ability to execute on the medium to long-term strategy?



Being tactical rather than strategic remains the primary reason management teams focus on short-term goals

Why do management teams become too focused on short-term goals?





# HRDs are aligned with Boards on talent as the top priority for businesses

## Priorities in 2023

1. Retaining key talent and developing skills
2. Diversity, inclusion and belonging
3. Culture
4. Organisational design
5. Sustainability / ESG

## Priorities in 2022

1. Retaining key talent and developing skills
2. Diversity, inclusion and belonging
3. Hybrid working
4. Sustainability / ESG
5. Organisational design

## Chairs & NED priorities in 2023

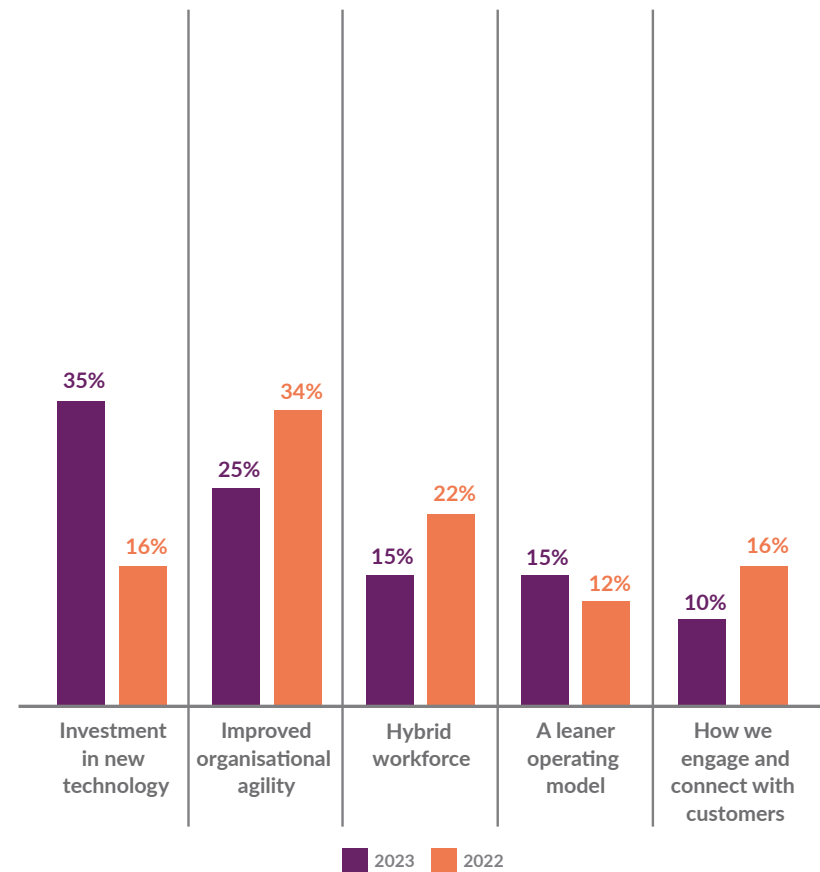
1. Retaining key talent and developing skills
2. Leadership capability
3. Financial performance
4. Strategic alignment
5. Organisational design

## CEO priorities in 2023

1. Retaining key talent and developing skills
2. Sustainability / ESG
3. Diversity, inclusion and belonging
4. Strengthening leadership capability
5. Innovation

HR leaders see  
technology as having  
the biggest impact on  
organisations in 2023

Where do you see the biggest changes  
occurring in your organisation?

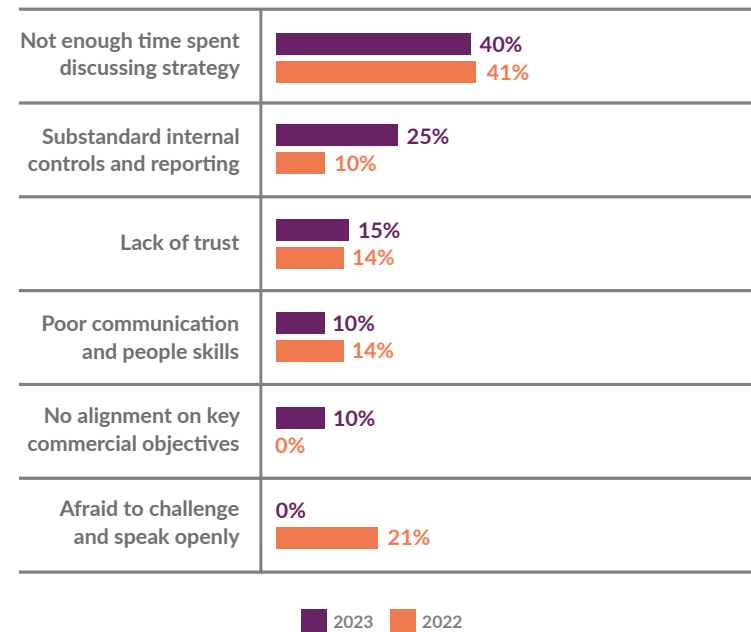


# LEADERSHIP

Criticleye enables and develops great leadership with the perfect mix of discussion and high-impact case studies

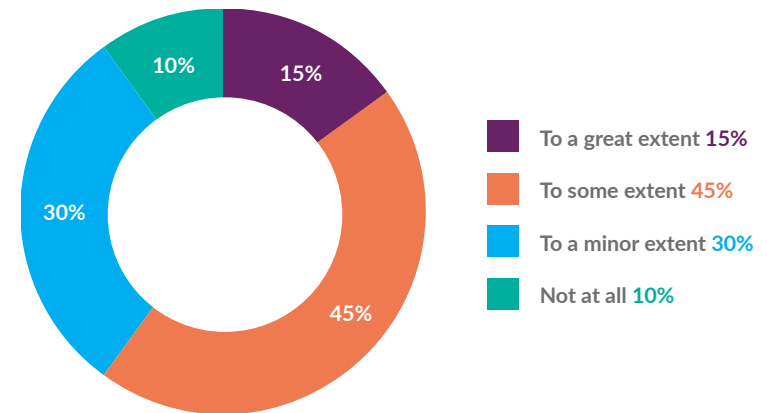
## Executives need to invest more time and energy into strategic discussions

What do you regard as the primary reason for failure in your management team?

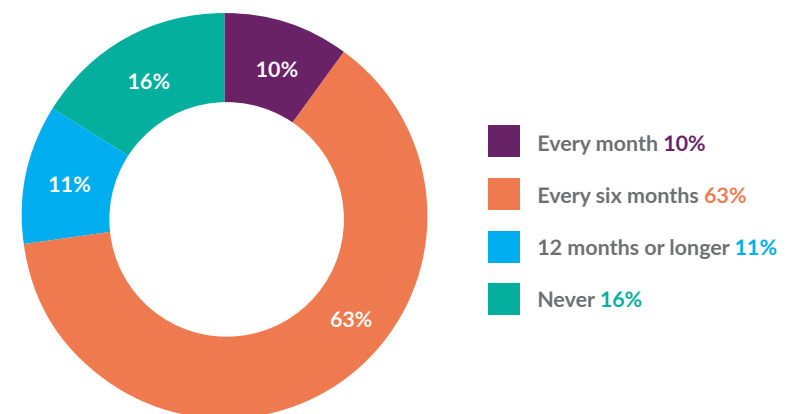


Although HRDs believe management teams are too inward-looking, most wait six months or more to discuss development with the Board

Is your management team too inward-looking and focused on the day-to-day?

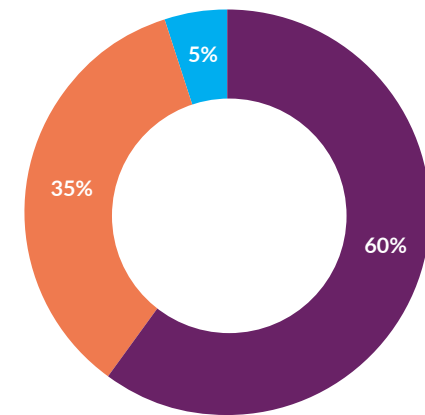


How often do you meet with the Board to discuss the leadership development needs of senior executives?



HRDs agree  
leadership  
development  
needs to be a top  
priority within  
organisations

Is leadership development for senior executives  
a priority within your organisation?



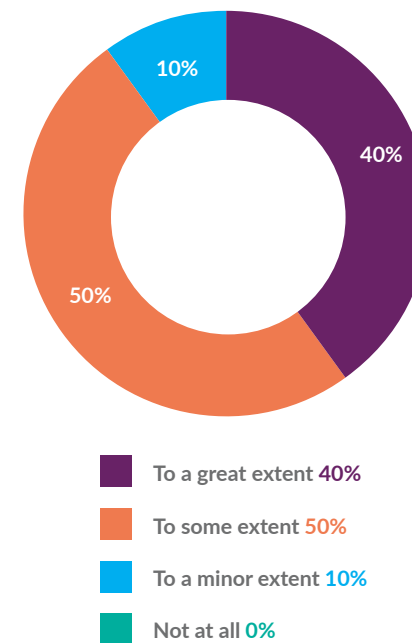
- We intend to focus more on this area 60%
- Yes, we invest heavily in leadership development 35%
- It's not something we prioritise 5%
- We prefer to hire senior execs externally 0%



## Mentoring improves the performance of senior executives

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Does external mentoring improve the performance of senior executives?



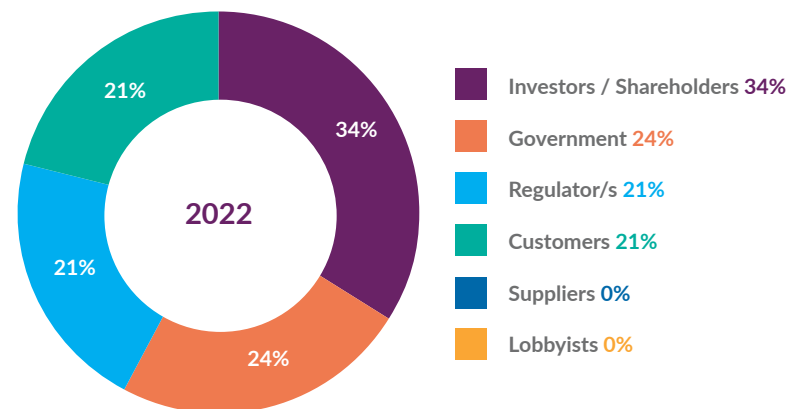
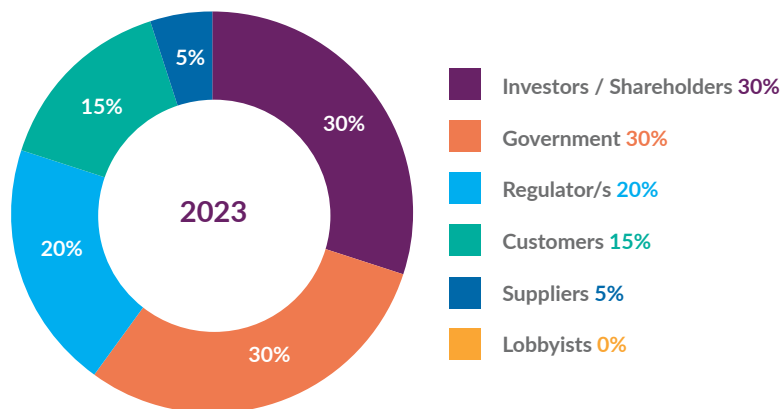
[www.criticaleye.com](http://www.criticaleye.com)

# STAKEHOLDERS

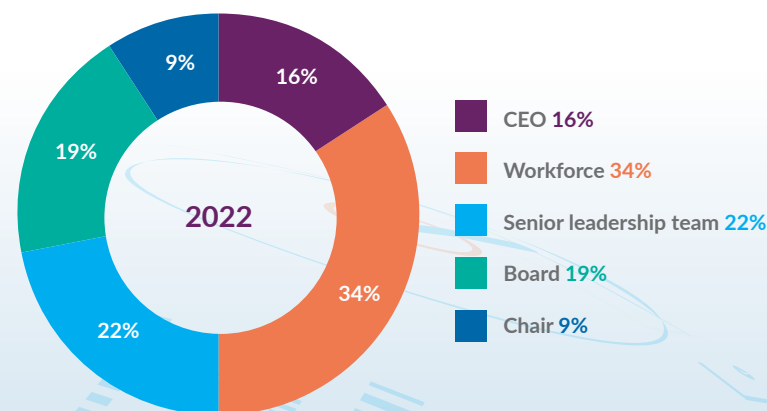
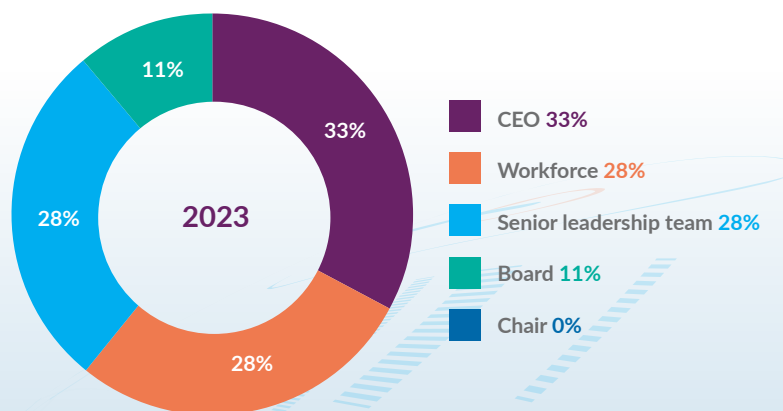
Criticleye provides the right reference points to manage and navigate increasingly important stakeholder relationships

# The CEO has become the most challenging internal stakeholder for HRDs

## Who is your most challenging external stakeholder?



## Who is your most challenging internal stakeholder?



# HRDs revealed the top three areas where leaders need to improve

## CFOs

1.

Building alignment in the senior leadership team

2.

People skills and communication

3.

Seeking inspiration / fresh thinking from other sectors

## CEOs

1.

People skills and communication

2.

Building alignment in the senior leadership team

3.

Seeking inspiration / fresh thinking from other sectors

## HRDs

1.

Building alignment in the senior leadership team

2.

Seeking inspiration / fresh thinking from other sectors

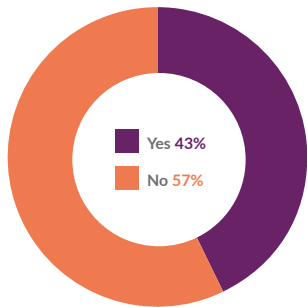
3.

Ability to influence the Board

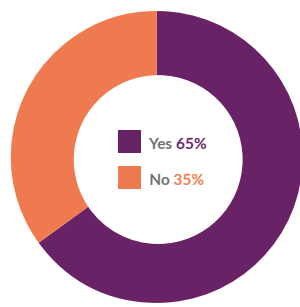


## POLLS TAKEN AT THE HRD RETREAT 2023

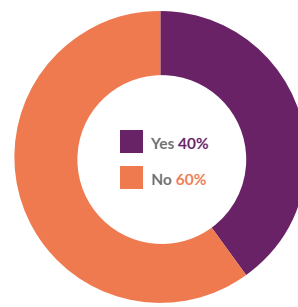
Do you think your organisation's culture is in the 'right' place against a difficult economic backdrop?



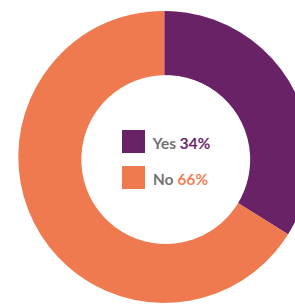
Are Boards' having the right conversations with HR about the people agenda?



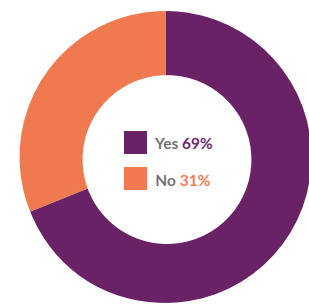
Do leaders in your organisation spend enough time looking outward?



Does your organisation have the right mix of talent and technology to outperform in 2023?



Is the agility and pace demonstrated over the past couple years sustainable in 2023 and beyond?



# HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR FORUM

A NEW DIMENSION FOR LEADERSHIP

THURSDAY  
21<sup>ST</sup> SEP 2023



# WHAT OUR LEADERS SAY



## HR Directors: creating high performing leadership teams

In this video we asked senior executives and non-executives from across our global Community about the key role of the HRD in building outstanding senior teams.

Thanks to Rosa Lee, EVP - Corporate HR, Asia Pacific, Bosch China; Ann Eliahu, SVP, Human Resources, Kuehne+Nagel (Asia Pacific); Chin Seng Lee, Board Mentor, Criticaleye; Duncan Painter, CEO, Ascential UK; Alan Bannatyne, CFO, Robert Walters; and Joy Peh, Senior HR Manager, Global SK-II HR Business Partner & Talent Management Leader, Proctor & Gamble.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



## High Impact Leadership Podcast: Episode 3

In this episode of our High Impact Leadership series Criticaleye's CEO, Matthew Blagg speaks to Mary Jo Jacobi, Non-executive Director of Savannah Resources plc and the NED for Engagement of the Weir Group plc (plus a Criticaleye Board Mentor).

Thanks to our speakers for exploring what it means to be a high performing executive in today's challenging environment.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THE PODCAST](#)



## HR Directors: retaining talent as a top priority

In this video we asked senior executives and non-executives from across our global Community about why retaining talent is a top priority for leaders.

Thanks to Robert Parker, Vice President, Finance & CFO APAC, IBM; Kerrigan Procter, President, Asia Pacific, Legal & General; Lance Little, Managing Director, Asia Pacific, Roche Diagnostics; Julia Tyson, Non-executive Director, Ufi VocTech Trust; Mui Hoon Poh, Board Mentor, Criticaleye; Stephen Harrison, CEO, Forterra plc; and Reece Donovan, CEO, Iomart plc.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



## Criticaleye Asia Podcast - Leading High Impact Transformation: Episode 8

In this episode of Criticaleye's Asia Podcast series, our Senior Associate, APAC, Hannah Daniels speaks to Neha Pareek, HRD Global Supply Chain Operations, Dyson Operations Pte. Ltd.

Thanks to Neha for discussing the leadership, strategy and stakeholder challenges senior executives are facing across a global framework.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THE PODCAST](#)



## Leaders looking outside the business to the future

In this video we asked leaders about looking outside their organisations, mitigating risks and preparing for the future.

Thanks to Mel Karam, CEO, Bristol Water; Stephen Pain, former VP Strategy, Stewardship, Unilever (plus a Criticaleye Board Mentor); and Sally Uren, CEO, Forum for the Future.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

DO YOU WANT TO JOIN OUR GROWING COMMUNITY OF HRDS, CFOS, CEOS, NEDS AND OTHER LEADERS? CONTACT [INFO@CRITICALEYE.COM](mailto:INFO@CRITICALEYE.COM) FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOW WE SUPPORT AND DEVELOP SENIOR EXECUTIVES AND THEIR TEAMS ACROSS A WIDE RANGE OF SECTORS AND ORGANISATIONS.



“At Criticaleye, we believe that great leadership creates positive outcomes and enables powerful legacies. Whatever the strategic direction of your business, it’s essential to have an effective, cohesive leadership team in which there is complete trust and alignment.”



**Charlie Wagstaff**  
Managing Director, Criticaleye

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# We Inspire Leaders to Succeed



Our bespoke solution supports leaders with personal, strategic and team development.

Our unique strength lies in our ability to bring together a wide range of leadership and industry experience.

We invite leaders into a trusted environment, where executives and their teams get access to the insight they need to enhance their performance.

We enable senior executives to address key questions around leadership, strategy and stakeholder management.



Achieve  
**Better**  
Performance



## Inspiring Leaders to Succeed

### Our Values

**Respect:** an appreciation for diverse and varied views and experiences is crucial to high-performance leadership

**Collaboration:** working together to share knowledge and expertise is a defining characteristic of effective executive teams

**Challenge:** strategies and ideas need to be constructively challenged to reach the best outcome

**Trust:** leaders need to trust their colleagues and peers in order to work effectively and drive results

**Integrity:** we inspire leaders to succeed by providing a closed and confidential environment where Members can share openly

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