

# THE STATE OF YOUNG LEADERSHIP REPORT

2025



Experiences of young leaders, perspectives of experienced executives – and what organizations can learn for the future of leadership.

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# Introduction



# Leadership is changing. Rapidly.

Economic uncertainties, technological disruptions such as artificial intelligence, and demographic change are putting organizations under pressure. As the baby boomer generation gradually retires, young leaders are moving up. At the same time, different expectations, values, and ways of working collide: Generations Y and Z, who demand participation, flexibility, and purpose, meet seasoned leaders who emphasize responsibility, stability, and perseverance.

This is where the State of Young Leadership Report 2025 comes in.

We wanted to understand: How do young leaders experience their first years? What support do they need? And how do seasoned leaders perceive these challenges?

Our surveys reveal a clear picture: Young leaders want to make an impact, drive change, and develop their teams on an equal footing. At the same time, they experience time pressure, conflicts, and the challenge of not always feeling fully prepared. Seasoned leaders confirm this and additionally emphasize the importance of resilience and long-term thinking. The survey also shows that many young leaders currently work without structured guidance and organize their development independently.

For organizations, HR, and leadership development, three key messages emerge:



**Leadership can be learned - but not by chance:**

Structured development programs, mentoring, and coaching are essential.



**Building generational bridges:**

Seasoned leaders can provide valuable support—if exchange and learning can flow both ways.

**Act now!**



Young leaders are a crucial success factor for the future viability of organizations due to demographic change.

With this report, we aim to provide clarity and foster dialogue—between young and experienced leaders, HR and management, expectation and reality.

The leadership of tomorrow is not created alone, but through shared responsibility.

Bergland Advisory supports organizations on matters of leadership, innovation, and organizational development.

With the State of Young Leadership Report 2025, we aim to contribute to the systematic development of leadership - and to provide young leaders with the support they deserve.

Creating clarity. Shaping change.

Michael Harb  
Bergland Advisory





# About the survey

# About the survey

As part of the State of Young Leadership Report 2025, we conducted a comprehensive survey to capture the perspectives of young leaders and the assessments of experienced leaders in the DACH region. The goal was to gain a nuanced understanding of the current challenges, support needs, and development potential of emerging leaders.

## Target groups

The survey targeted two key groups:

**Young Leaders:** Leaders with up to three years of experience who are currently responsible for teams or projects. This group represents the next generation of leaders and their immediate needs and experiences.

**Seasoned Leaders:** Leaders with more than three years of experience who mentor, coach, or involve young leaders in decision-making processes. Their perspectives provide valuable insights into how emerging leaders are perceived and supported.

## Execution

The survey was conducted in the summer and autumn of 2025 in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. It combined quantitative elements, allowing for statistically robust insights into challenges, development opportunities, and required skills, with qualitative questions that provided a view of respondents' subjective experiences, motivations, and perceptions. Participation was anonymous to encourage honest and unbiased responses.

# Targets

The main objectives of the survey were:

- To capture the experiences and challenges of young leaders in their first years of leadership responsibility.
- To identify the support and development opportunities needed from the perspective of young leaders.
- To assess, from the perspective of experienced leaders, the strengths, weaknesses, and development potential of the younger generation.
- To derive concrete recommendations for organizations to effectively support young leaders and strengthen collaboration across generations.

## Question types

The survey included a mix of closed and open-ended questions, covering:

**Demographic Questions:** Age, gender, country, industry, company size, current position, duration of leadership responsibility, number of direct reports.

**Motivation and Expectations:** What motivated participants to take on a leadership role? What expectations do they have regarding their own development and the support provided by the organization?

**Everyday Challenges:** What specific challenges do they encounter in their daily leadership tasks? How do they deal with uncertainty, time pressure, and conflicts?

**Required Support:** Which forms of support (e.g., mentoring, coaching, feedback) are perceived as helpful?

**Perceived Competencies:** How do young leaders assess their own leadership skills? Which abilities are considered particularly important?

**Assessments by Experienced Leaders:** How do seasoned leaders perceive the development and needs of the younger generation? What support do they provide?



# Key Insights - At a glance

# Key Insights – At a glance

The analysis of the surveys among young and experienced leaders paints a clear picture: Leadership is changing—and with it, the demands on organizations. Young leaders want to make an impact, take responsibility, and lead teams on an equal footing. At the same time, many feel insufficiently prepared for this role and seek more systematic support.

In contrast, experienced leaders view the next generation as ambitious, eager to learn, and adaptable—but emphasize that resilience, conflict management, and long-term thinking need to be more strongly developed.

The overall analysis yields five key insights that organizations should use as a foundation for their leadership strategy in 2026 and beyond:

## Young leaders want to make an impact - but need guidance.

More than half of the young leaders surveyed reported that they “grew into” their role without formal training or mentoring. Many take on responsibility out of conviction and a desire to make an impact—but without targeted preparation. Organizations must take note: Leadership skills are not developed by chance; they require deliberate development pathways.

## Lack of programs hinders potential.

Only a small portion of young leaders currently take advantage of structured development or coaching programs. The most common reason: suitable formats do not exist. Organizations that invest in this—through peer learning, mentoring, or modular leadership programs—not only enhance leadership skills but also strengthen engagement and motivation among their emerging leaders.

## Resilience and mental strength become key success factors.

Both young leaders and experienced leaders recognize the increasing pressure to make decisions under uncertainty, resolve conflicts, and navigate change. Resilience, emotional balance, and self-leadership are among the most frequently cited future-ready skills. Organizations should view these abilities not as “soft skills” but as core competencies.

## Communication, feedback, and conflict resolution remain crucial.

A common denominator emerges in nearly all responses: Successful leadership is built on clarity, empathy, and a culture of feedback. Young leaders in particular seek training and exchange on communication, conflict management, and team dynamics—and see the greatest leverage here to build trust and effectiveness.

## Cross-generational learning is key to future readiness.

Experienced leaders see great potential in mentoring and co-leadership to pass on knowledge while also benefiting from new ways of thinking. Young leaders desire exactly this kind of dialogue – open, respectful, and on equal footing. Where generations learn from each other, a sustainable leadership culture emerges.

Der State of Young Leadership Report 2025 zeigt: Führung befindet sich im Wandel – von hierarchischer Steuerung hin zu lernorientierter, resilenter und gemeinschaftlicher Verantwortung. Junge Führungskräfte sind bereit, diesen Wandel zu gestalten. Jetzt liegt es an Organisationen, die passenden Rahmenbedingungen zu schaffen.



## Results – Young Leaders

Our survey of young leaders presents a clear picture: Many emerging leaders currently work without structured guidance and largely manage their personal and professional development on their own. At the same time, clear needs and challenges can be identified that are relevant for their individual support and the strategic design of development programs.

### Access to Support Services

A significant proportion of young leaders currently do not use formal support programs such as coaching, mentoring, or leadership development initiatives. This suggests that many rely on informal networks or self-directed learning strategies to further develop their skills.

### Priority Goals and Development Areas

Respondents highlighted the following areas as priority development fields:

- Communication and giving feedback
- Conflict management
- Strategy and business development
- 

In addition, digital tools, personal development, and flexible working models are seen as important for succeeding in a dynamic work environment.

### Career and Future Prospects

A notable proportion of young leaders plan to pursue self-employment or start their own business in the medium term. This underscores their desire for entrepreneurial autonomy and shows that traditional career paths are no longer the only point of reference.

# Challenges and Gaps

Beyond the lack of formal programs, young leaders identify gaps in resilience, mental strength, and strategic thinking. Many feel insufficiently supported when it comes to making complex decisions or pursuing long-term goals.

## Focus Areas for HR & Management

Young leaders identify several areas where HR and management should provide targeted support to sustainably foster their development:

### **Structured Development Programs**

Many seek formal programs that systematically build competencies—particularly in communication, conflict management, and strategy.

### **Resilience & Mental Strength**

In a dynamic work environment, the ability to handle pressure, uncertainty, and rapid change is crucial. Training and coaching in this area are considered essential.

### **Digital Tools & AI Skills**

The integration of modern technologies into daily work is a high priority. Young leaders expect HR and management to provide practical knowledge and skills.

### **Flexibility & Individual Career Paths**

Young leaders desire flexible working models that allow space for personal development and entrepreneurial ambitions (e.g., self-employment or starting a business).

### **Role Models & Mentoring**

Role models from the experienced leadership level are seen as critical for guidance, feedback, and long-term development.

**Takeaway: HR and management should design development programs to be modular, practical, and personalized, foster resilience, strengthen technological skills, and at the same time create space for initiative, flexible career paths, and cross-generational learning.**

Focus topic for HR & Management	Share of survey (%)
<b>Formal, modular development programs</b>	75%
<b>Resilienz- and Mental-Strength-Trainings</b>	67%
<b>Senior-Leader as Role Models / Mentoring</b>	58%
<b>Individual development plans</b>	50%
<b>Flexible work models as training method</b>	42%

The results show that HR and management should address the specific needs of young leaders.

Particularly in demand are formal, modular development programs that systematically build competencies, as well as resilience and mental-strength training to prepare emerging leaders for pressure and complex challenges. Senior leaders also play a central role as role models, passing on experience and best practices. Individualized development plans enable tailored support, while flexible working models serve as an important retention tool and strengthen the initiative of young leaders.

Overall, the findings highlight that a combination of structured programs, personal guidance, and flexible frameworks significantly enhances the effectiveness of HR initiatives.

The results highlight that, despite their high level of initiative, young leaders require support. Development programs should not only impart expertise but also strengthen resilience, digital skills, and strategic thinking. At the same time, flexible structures and modular offerings provide an opportunity to support individual career goals and entrepreneurial ambitions.



Results -  
Experienced  
Leaders

## Results – Experienc d Leaders

Experienced leaders see great potential in the new generation—but also areas for development. They call for resilience, self-leadership, and holistic thinking, increasingly view themselves as role models, and value mutual learning as a new form of leadership culture. Sustainable and future-ready leadership only emerges where both generations engage in dialogue.

### Perception of the Young Generation

Experienced leaders describe young leaders as committed, eager to learn, and open to change. Their openness, team orientation, and innovative spirit are particularly valued. At the same time, many observe a certain impatience and lack of routine—especially when dealing with uncertainty or conflicts. The desire to make an immediate impact meets the reality of long-term leadership responsibility.

### Resilience and Mental Strength as Key Competencies

The results clearly show that resilience, self-leadership, and emotional stability top the list of competencies that experienced leaders consider crucial for the next generation. In an increasingly complex environment with rapid change, leadership requires inner calm, clarity, and the ability to provide guidance even in challenging situations. This “inner stance” is described as a central foundation of effective leadership.

## Holistic Thinking and a Systemic Perspective

Many experienced leaders emphasize that leadership today means more than operational management. What is required are strategic thinking, networking skills, and an understanding of the connections between people, the organization, and the market.

This “bigger picture”—recognizing the interplay between decisions, culture, and outcomes—is considered a competency that grows with experience and should be deliberately passed on to young leaders.

## Role Models Instead of Bosses

The role of experienced leaders is changing significantly: They see themselves less as traditional decision-makers and increasingly as guides and role models.

Mentoring, coaching, and honest feedback are understood as central tasks to support the next generation. For many, “leadership by example” means demonstrating values, making principles visible, and creating space for new ideas. This builds trust and fosters a culture of collaboration.

### Key Insights in categories:

Category	Finding / Frequency	Comment / Insight
<b>Top Skills / Leadership Competencies</b>	Resilience, mental strength, strategic & holistic thinking	Senior leaders see these competencies as central to sustainable leadership
<b>Role Model / Mentoring</b>	Actively involved, often informal	Senior leaders take on a clear role-model function for emerging leaders
<b>Everyday Challenges</b>	Responsibility for complex projects, long-term strategy	Highlights the need for continuous exchange and knowledge transfer
<b>Focus on Team &amp; Organization</b>	Holistic thinking, long-term impact	Senior leaders emphasize sustainable development over short-term results
<b>Support for Young Leaders</b>	Coaching, feedback, mentoring partially available	Potential for more systematic support of emerging leaders

## Future trends and innovation focus:

Category	Finding / Frequency	Comment / Insight
<b>Innovation Focus</b>	Focus on digital transformation, AI, and new business models	Senior leaders see strategic innovation capability as crucial for competitiveness
<b>Strategic Thinking</b>	Long-term planning, risk assessment, market monitoring	Planning skills and alignment with organizational goals are central
<b>Organizational Development</b>	Promotion of culture, collaboration, and knowledge sharing	Senior leaders support cross-generational development and team performance
<b>Resilience &amp; Change Management</b>	Important for adapting to market and environmental changes	Endurance and flexible adaptation to change are considered essential
<b>Transfer of Best Practices</b>	Sharing lessons learned and experiences with young leaders	Systematic knowledge transfer still has room for improvement, especially in larger organizations

## Bidirectional Learning

An important signal from the responses: Mentoring is not a one-way street. Many senior leaders report that they themselves learn from the younger generation – on topics such as digitalization, agile working, or new forms of collaboration.

This mutual willingness to learn is seen as a model for the future: Where experience and fresh perspectives complement each other, a modern, resilient leadership culture emerges.

The results show that experienced leaders play an important bridging role: They identify the potential and development areas of the younger generation, provide targeted support, and create conditions for learning by doing. For organizations, this means that mentoring-based development programs, structured feedback processes, and the integration of young leaders into strategic tasks are essential to successfully develop the next generation of leaders.



# A Comparison of Perspectives

# A Comparison of Perspectives

The comparison of young leaders and experienced leaders reveals both shared values and goals, as well as clear perception gaps. Young leaders prioritize short-term impact, flexibility, and technological skills, while experienced leaders focus on long-term strategy, resilience, and mentoring. These differences and overlaps provide valuable starting points for HR programs and leadership development.

## Aligned perspectives

Despite differing priorities, there are clear areas of overlap. Both groups recognize the central importance of mentoring and cross-generational exchange, as this supports continuous development and guidance. In addition, young and experienced leaders share the goal of expanding leadership competencies, particularly in communication, conflict resolution, and team management. Finally, both groups strive to make an impact in their work—albeit on different time horizons. While young leaders emphasize short-term, visible results, experienced leaders focus more on long-term, strategic considerations.

## Perception gaps

The analysis also reveals clear perception gaps. Young leaders seek support in strategic thinking and long-term planning—areas where senior leaders can contribute their expertise. At the same time, young leaders often feel insufficiently prepared for pressure and complex challenges, indicating a need for resilience and mental-strength programs. Conversely, experienced leaders observe gaps among emerging leaders in the use of digital tools, AI applications, and flexible working models. This highlights that both groups prioritize different areas, which need to be addressed intentionally.

# Gap-Analysis

The gap analysis shows that young leaders place high value on short-term impact, flexibility, and technological skills, while experienced leaders prioritize resilience, long-term planning, and mentoring. Overlaps are found primarily in leadership competencies, impact, and cross-generational exchange. The differences in time horizon, skills focus, and resilience clearly indicate where development programs should intervene to close gaps while simultaneously reinforcing shared values.

## Fokus fields

Two focus areas emerge in particular. First, cross-generational mentoring should be strengthened to provide young leaders with targeted support in resilience, strategic thinking, and knowledge transfer. Second, digital skills and flexible structures are crucial for emerging leaders to fully leverage their adaptability and impact. Programs that combine both aspects offer the opportunity to effectively close the gaps between young and experienced leaders.

Dimension	Young Leaders	Experienced Leaders	Overlap / Gap
<b>Impact / Effectiveness</b>	High, short-term	Medium, long-term	Gap: Focus on time horizon
<b>Flexibility</b>	Very high	Medium	Gap: Young leaders seek more autonomy
<b>Digital Tools / AI</b>	Strong demand	Medium	Gap: Technological focus
<b>Resilience &amp; Mental Strength</b>	Partially emphasized	High	Gap: Requires further development
<b>Long-term / Strategy</b>	Medium	High	Gap: Planning perspective
<b>Role Models / Mentoring</b>	Partially involved	High	Overlap: Mentoring exists, but used differently

By comparing the perspectives of young and experienced leaders, development initiatives can be designed with precision, ensuring that young leaders not only step confidently into their roles but also make a lasting contribution to the company's innovation capacity and long-term competitiveness. The analysis makes it clear that both overlaps and gaps serve as crucial points of orientation.

Shared values provide a solid foundation for dialogue, collaboration, and mutual understanding, while perception gaps highlight areas that require targeted attention. These gaps can be effectively addressed through modular, cross-generational, and practice-oriented development programs that combine mentoring, coaching, and hands-on learning.

By implementing such measures, HR and management can ensure that young leaders fully realize their potential in resilience, digital proficiency, strategic thinking, and team leadership, while experienced leaders are able to deliberately pass on their knowledge, lessons learned, and best practices. Ultimately, this integrated approach fosters a sustainable, cross-generational leadership culture—one that balances short-term results with long-term vision, strengthens collaboration across experience levels, and equips organizations to thrive in a dynamic, rapidly evolving business environment.



# Leadership- skills & future trends

# Leadership-skills & future trends

The demands on leaders are changing rapidly. In addition to traditional leadership competencies, resilience and mental strength, as well as proficiency with digital tools and AI applications, are becoming increasingly important. Our survey shows that young leaders are particularly eager to develop these skills, while experienced leaders emphasize the importance of resilience and holistic thinking. The following five areas summarize the key competencies that will be critical for the leaders of the future.

## Critical for Young Leaders The most important competencies can be grouped into five key areas:

### **RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH**

Leaders today face complex and dynamic challenges. Resilience and mental strength enable them to cope with pressure, manage rapid change, and make clear decisions even under stress. Young leaders emphasize that targeted training and coaching in this area are essential for handling stressful situations confidently and maintaining long-term performance.



## DIGITAL TOOLS & KI - COMPETENCIES

The ability to effectively use digital technologies and AI is increasingly becoming a differentiating factor. Young leaders call for practical training that helps them leverage data analysis, automation, and AI applications in their daily work. At the same time, they expect organizations to provide support in selecting the right tools and building digital workflows.



## STRATEGIC THINKING & INNOVATION

In addition to delivering short-term impact, the ability to develop long-term strategies and implement innovative approaches is in demand. This includes analyzing trends, market changes, and customer needs, as well as executing new ideas that create lasting impact. Senior leaders particularly see the need to systematically support young leaders in developing these capabilities.



## COMMUNICATION - & CONFLICTMANAGEMENT

Effective communication, active listening, and constructive conflict management remain core leadership skills. They form the foundation for teamwork, project leadership, and the promotion of an open organizational culture. Young leaders seek practical training and feedback structures that facilitate exchange in these areas.

## **Agility & Flexibility**

The ability to adapt quickly to new demands, act flexibly, and incorporate diverse perspectives is becoming increasingly important. Agile working methods, adaptive planning, and a flexible mindset enable successful leadership in dynamic environments. This is particularly true for teams working in interdisciplinary and project-based settings.

# **Variations across industries and organizational sizes**

## **Industries:**

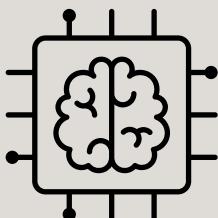
The prioritization of competencies varies significantly across industries. In technology- and data-driven sectors such as IT, software, and fintech, digital tools and AI take center stage. In consulting, mechanical engineering, or industrial sectors, strategic thinking, resilience, and long-term planning are more in demand. Industries with high customer interaction, such as retail or services, place additional emphasis on communication and conflict-management skills.

## **Organizational sizes:**

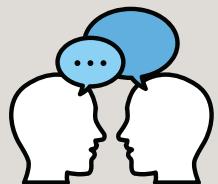
In large, international companies, digital competence, strategic thinking, and mentoring are rated as significantly more important, as complex structures and diverse teams must be coordinated. In smaller or mid-sized companies, flexibility, rapid decision-making, and immediate impact take on greater importance. Young leaders in start-ups place particular emphasis on digital skills, agility, and autonomy.

# Recommendations for HR & Organizational development

From these insights, four key action areas for HR can be derived:



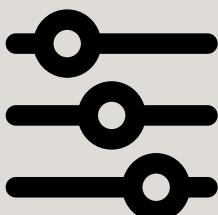
Digital Skills Development: Training on tools, data analysis, and AI must be tailored to the specific requirements of each industry.



Targeted Resilience and Mental-Strength Programs: Training and coaching offerings should be mandatory and practice-oriented.



Individual Development Plans: Flexible, modular programs enable young leaders to set their priorities according to their role, industry, and company size.



Agile Learning and Mentoring Structures: Cross-generational mentoring and agile learning formats enable knowledge transfer and foster adaptability.

Future-ready leadership competencies combine resilience, digital skills, strategic thinking, strong communication, and agility. The emphasis on these skills differs across industries and company sizes, making it important for HR to address these variations.

Young leaders can be sustainably developed only through modular, practical programs that consider both individual needs and organizational requirements. By integrating mentoring, hands-on learning, and opportunities for cross-generational exchange, organizations can prepare young leaders to navigate complex challenges and contribute effectively to both immediate results and long-term success.



# 8 Implications for HR and Organizations

## Implications for HR and Organizations: Recommendations

The survey results highlight that young leaders and experienced leaders have different needs and priorities. To sustainably support leadership development, HR and organizations must implement targeted measures that both unlock individual potential and advance organizational goals. Modular programs, resilience-building initiatives, mentoring by senior leaders, and flexible working models play a central role in this approach.

### MANDATORY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

HR should design development programs that are mandatory yet modular. This allows leaders to focus on the competencies most relevant to them, while the organization ensures that core leadership skills are systematically imparted. Modularity also enables adaptation to individual needs, career stages, and organizational areas.

### RESILIENCE AND MENTAL STRENGTH TRAININGS

Given increasing complexity and rapid change, targeted resilience and mental-strength training should be offered. Such programs help young leaders manage pressure, make decisions under stress, and maintain long-term performance. Resilience training should be practice-oriented and ideally complemented by coaching.

# Transaktionsanalyse

h-Zustände:  
Die TA geht davon aus, dass Menschen in verschiedenen Zuständen  
veragieren können: Eltern-Ich und Kindheits-Ich.

Transaktionen:  
jede Interaktion zwischen zwei Personen wird als Transaktion bezeichnet.

Skriptanalyse:  
Die TA betrachtet, wie frühe Erfahrungen und Entscheidungen  
unbewusst (unbewusst) unser späteres Verhalten beeinflussen.

Lebenspositionen:  
Die TA analysiert auch, wie Menschen  
Wert und Akzeptanz sehen (z.B. "Ich bin cool, du bist nicht cool").

## SENIOR-LEADER AS ROLE MODELS

Experienced leaders should be actively engaged as role models and mentors.

Through regular exchange, feedback, and knowledge transfer, young leaders can benefit from the proven strategies of senior leaders. This role-model function not only supports skill development but also strengthens organizational commitment.

## INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Ein standardisiertes Programm allein reicht nicht aus. HR sollte individualisierte Entwicklungspläne implementieren, die auf den spezifischen Stärken, Interessen und Karriereambitionen jedes Young Leaders basieren. Solche Pläne ermöglichen eine gezielte Förderung, erhöhen die Motivation und sichern die langfristige Bindung an die Organisation.

## FLEXIBLE WORKING MODELS AS A RETENTION TOOL

Flexible working models, such as remote work, flextime, or project-based assignments, play a key role in retaining young leaders and fostering their initiative. These flexible structures not only support a healthy work-life balance but also enable adaptive, creative ways of working, allowing young leaders to respond effectively to the demands of dynamic projects and evolving organizational needs.

# Summary and Recommendations

The findings clearly demonstrate that HR and organizational measures must address the distinct needs of young leaders and experienced leaders to ensure sustainable leadership development and long-term retention.

It is essential that emerging leaders are supported both systematically and individually, while also being guided and inspired by experienced role models. From these insights, several key recommendations for HR and organizational strategy can be derived:

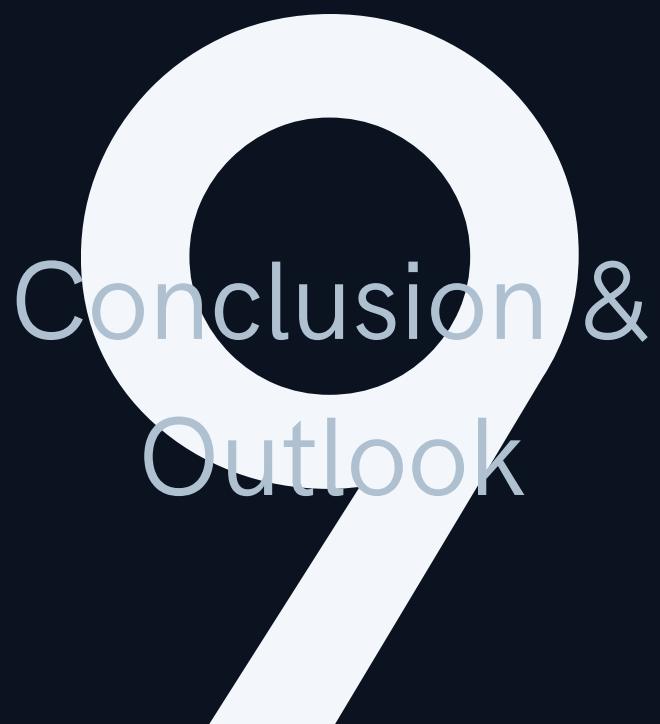
HR should provide mandatory, modular development programs that not only guarantee the systematic transfer of core leadership competencies but also respond to the individual strengths, interests, and developmental needs of young leaders. These programs should integrate practical learning, feedback, and opportunities for real-world application.

Resilience and mental-strength training are equally critical. Targeted coaching and workshops help young leaders manage pressure, navigate complex challenges, make sound decisions under stress, and maintain long-term performance.

Experienced leaders should be actively engaged as role models, sharing their experiences, best practices, and strategic knowledge. This cross-generational exchange fosters learning, builds trust, and strengthens a culture of collaboration.

Individualized development plans further enable tailored support based on each young leader's career goals, competency gaps, and personal aspirations. Meanwhile, flexible working models—such as remote work, flextime, or project-based assignments—enhance motivation, promote initiative, and support a healthy work-life balance.

Taken together, these measures provide a comprehensive framework that systematically develops young leaders, maximizes their potential, and ensures the sustainable growth of a cross-generational leadership culture capable of meeting the challenges of today and tomorrow.



# Conclusion & Outlook



**BERGLAND ADVISORY**

Klarheit schaffen, Wandel gestalten.

The State of Young Leadership Report clearly demonstrates that young leaders are actively shaping the future of organizations. They bring motivation, digital skills, and innovative capacity to their teams, yet they also face challenges such as time pressure, uncertainty, and the need to develop strategic thinking. The perspectives of experienced leaders show that these challenges are normal, but targeted support, mentoring, and structured development programs are essential to sustainably unlock their full potential.

## Main Insights

Leadership can be learned—but not by chance: young leaders require continuous support, hands-on learning, and reflective feedback. Bridging generations is crucial: active exchange between young and experienced leaders strengthens collaboration, innovation, and organizational stability.

Now is the time to act: demographic change, economic uncertainty, and technological disruption make the development of emerging leaders a strategic success factor.

## Impact for the next year

For planning in 2026, concrete recommendations emerge: companies should expand development programs, mentoring structures, and feedback formats to support young leaders from an early stage. Involvement in strategic projects and the cultivation of digital and change-management skills will become increasingly critical. HR and leadership departments must ensure a balance between operational demands and long-term talent development.

## Longterm perspective

The leadership of tomorrow will be hybrid, digital, and intergenerational. Organizations that systematically support young leaders while leveraging the experience of senior leaders will not only ensure team performance but also strengthen innovation and competitiveness across the DACH region. The role of leaders is shifting from pure task management to shaping, guiding, and fostering learning—a development that organizations must actively support.

## My final thoughts

Leadership is not a static concept but a continuous process shaped by all involved. Young leaders, experienced leaders, HR departments, and the organization as a whole share responsibility for the success of teams and the company.

With the State of Young Leadership Report, Bergland Advisory aims to provide clarity, offer practical guidance, and foster dialogue between generations—for a sustainable, future-ready leadership culture.

Creating clarity. Shaping change.



# About Bergland Advisory

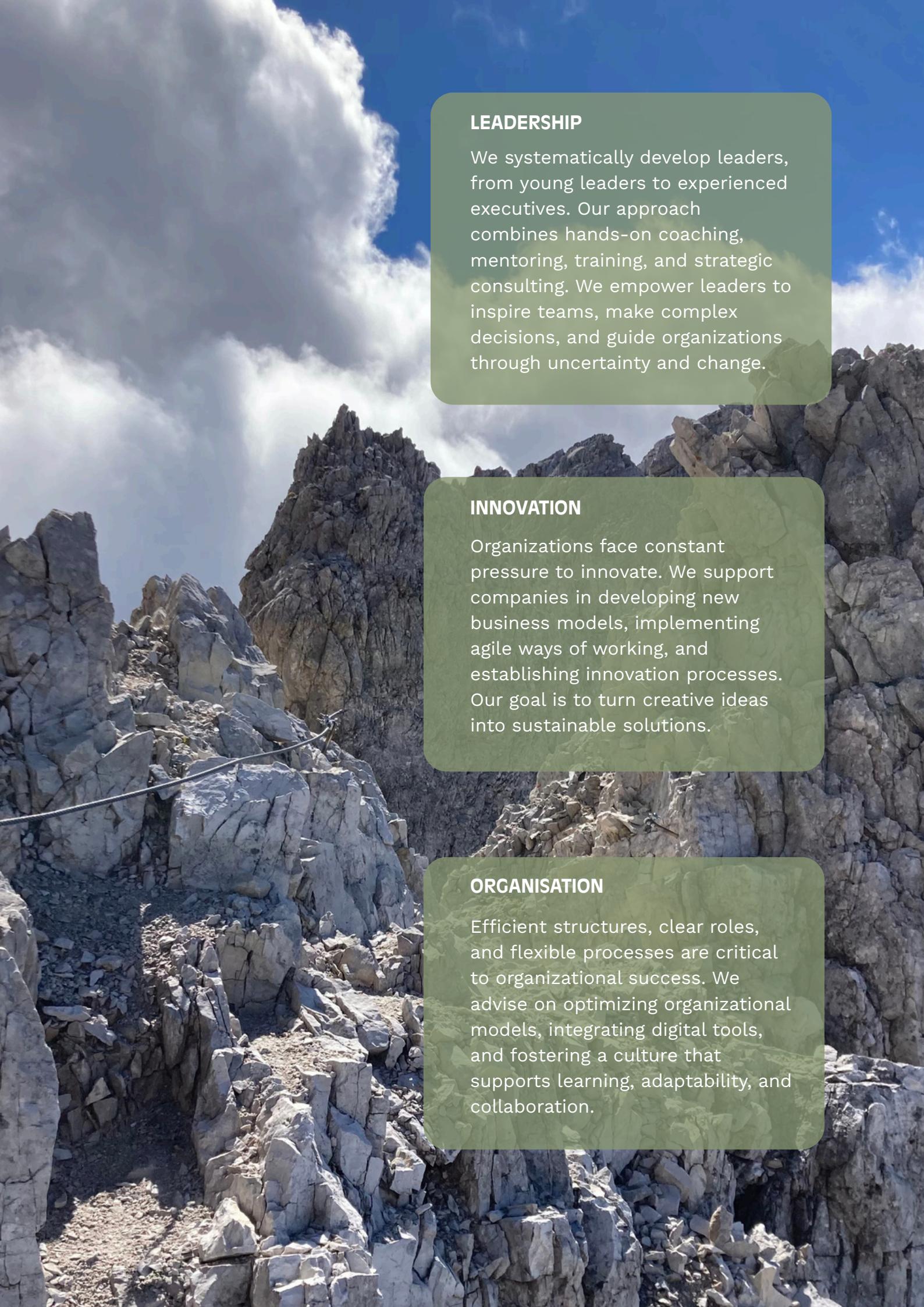
Bergland Advisory is a management consultancy based at the Schöckl in Styria. Founded by Michael Harb, Bergland Advisory supports organizations in times of dynamic change, technological disruption, and increasing complexity. Our mission is to provide clear leadership, drive innovation, and design structures that are future-ready.

The name “Bergland Advisory” was chosen deliberately: it symbolizes guidance, foresight, and steadfastness. Just as ascending mountainous terrain requires clarity, courage, strategy, and the ability to shift perspective, leadership in organizations demands the same qualities to recognize new opportunities. Our name reflects the philosophy of not merely accompanying change but actively shaping it—step by step, with clear structure, and with an eye on the bigger picture.



## Our Philosophy

At Bergland Advisory, we believe that leadership, change, and innovation are not matters of chance. They emerge through clear direction, targeted talent development, and the ability to actively shape teams and organizations. We combine practical experience with strategic foresight and deliver concrete, actionable solutions that help organizations achieve their goals sustainably.



## LEADERSHIP

We systematically develop leaders, from young leaders to experienced executives. Our approach combines hands-on coaching, mentoring, training, and strategic consulting. We empower leaders to inspire teams, make complex decisions, and guide organizations through uncertainty and change.

## INNOVATION

Organizations face constant pressure to innovate. We support companies in developing new business models, implementing agile ways of working, and establishing innovation processes. Our goal is to turn creative ideas into sustainable solutions.

## ORGANISATION

Efficient structures, clear roles, and flexible processes are critical to organizational success. We advise on optimizing organizational models, integrating digital tools, and fostering a culture that supports learning, adaptability, and collaboration.

# Disclaimer

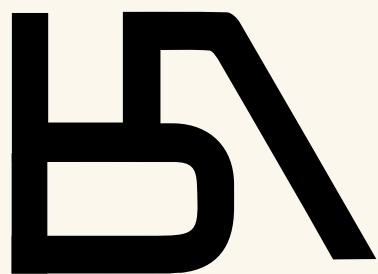
With the State of Young Leadership Report, we aim to make our philosophy tangible!

We provide clarity on the challenges and potential of young leaders and offer companies practical guidance on how to effectively develop emerging talent, build bridges between generations, and secure long-term competitiveness.

Klarheit  
schaffen.  
Wandel  
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