

AVERAGE FIRST-LEVEL LEADERS ARE FALLING **BEHIND**

New study shows how “great” first-level leaders are different from “average” first-level leaders and where there is room for improvement.

FranklinCovey conducted research that compared the beliefs and behaviors of average first-level leaders to great ones. Results of the research have identified a dramatic gulf between the two, with great leaders much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and collaboration. **ORGANIZATIONS NEED TO INVEST** in converting average leaders to great ones.



WANT TO BE **BETTER** THAN GOOD

“Good” may be good enough for some, but most of us want more. Something inside us makes us want to be better than good. We want to be part of a team whose members, even years later, will be remembered for what they accomplished.

The gulf between great and average leaders is growing, especially at the first

level of the organization chart where first-level leaders have dramatic impact on frontline employees.

When leaders are average, they deliver average results. Average results mean an average customer experience. However, customers don't want average experiences from businesses. They want excellence and they are willing to pay

more for it. A great customer experience turns customers into fans and brands into rock stars.

FranklinCovey has studied the question of why some leaders execute with excellence while others falter at perhaps unprecedented levels. Both top-performing leaders and their average-performing counterparts have pockets of known great performance where customers are delighted, employees engaged, and economics strong. But what gets in the way? Why are not all leaders equal?



Customer **LOYALTY** and **EXPERIENCE** is the new competitive advantage, and if your leaders can't **DELIVER**, you can't survive, let alone thrive.

WANT TO BE **BETTER** THAN GOOD

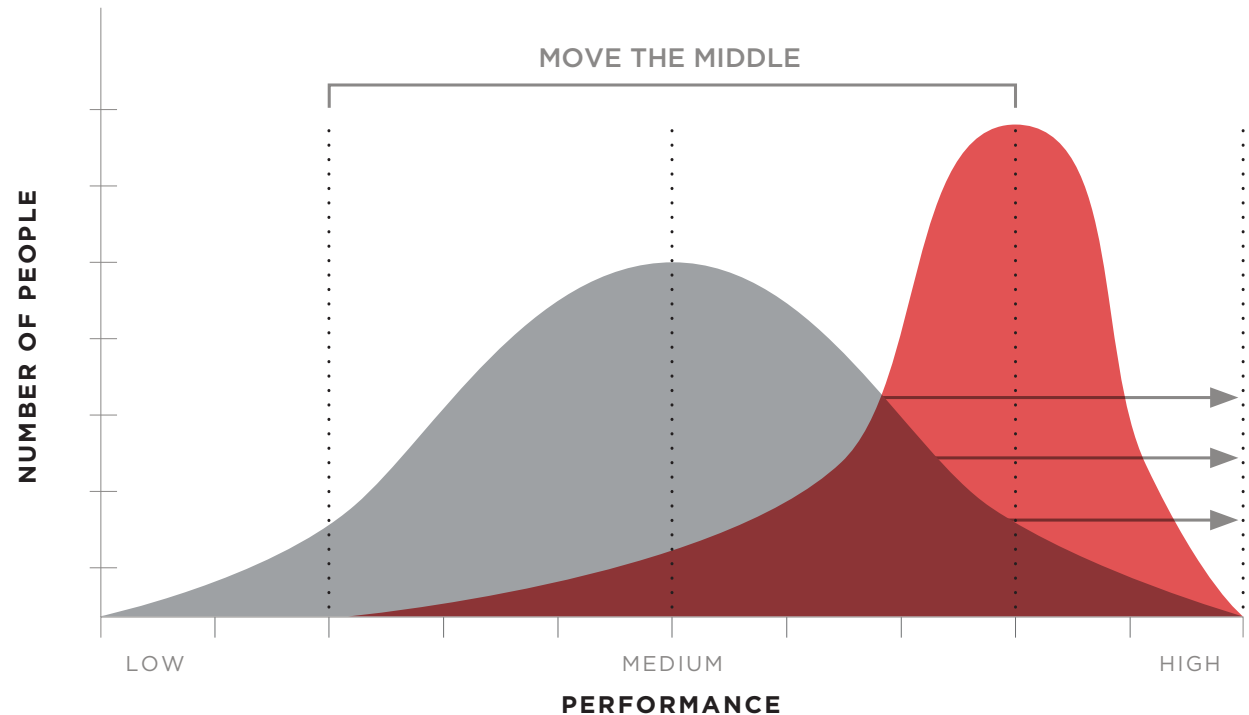
WE HAVE FOUND:

- The “strategic hand” dealt to great performers was not materially different from the hand dealt to average performers. Great performers simply did more with the hand they were dealt.
- There are pockets of great performers in every organization, and the great performers didn’t typically have more basic know-how than average performers. Great performers were simply much more successful at institutionalizing what they did know.

Imagine if you could make a small shift and move a percentage of your average performers to become great performers. What would that look like for your organization?

WHO ARE FIRST-LEVEL LEADERS?

For most in the workplace, that legacy begins with the opportunity to run a single team. We call leaders who have just one tier of employees reporting to them “first-level leaders,” because they are on the first step of leadership.



In every organization, there are pockets of great leaders — a “top 20 percent” of high performance. The challenge is to move the middle 60 percent of your average leaders toward the higher performance level of the top 20 percent.

First-level leaders have tremendous impact on your business. They execute key company strategies, keep frontline

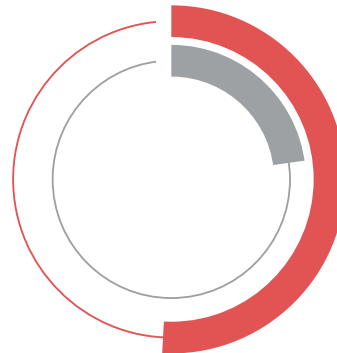
employees engaged, and often serve as escalation points for unhappy customers.

TEAM DYNAMICS

Team dynamics are the machinery of how teams operate. Efficient teams require trust, dedication, and candor. Great leaders know how to nurture these qualities, whereas average leaders struggle especially when it comes to coaching and development.

Great first-level leaders are less likely to withhold feedback and more than four times more likely to feel prepared to coach and develop their teams.

VERY CONFIDENT THEY HAVE THE TRUST OF THEIR TEAM



23%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

51%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

INTERACT DAILY WITH TEAM MEMBERS



39%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

45%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

WITHHOLD CRITICAL FEEDBACK BECAUSE IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE



55%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

40%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

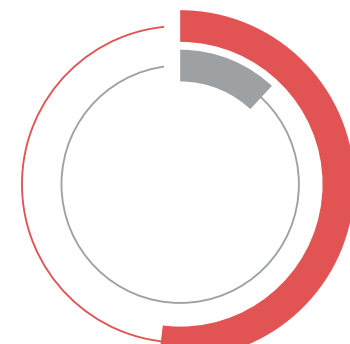
ARE VERY COMFORTABLE RECEIVING CRITICAL FEEDBACK



22%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

45%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

ARE VERY PREPARED TO COACH AND DEVELOP THEIR TEAM



12%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

52%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

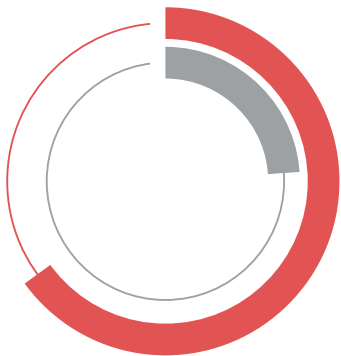
PERSONAL LEADERSHIP

When leaders struggle internally with doubts, abilities, and talents, those issues can leak out to affect the entire team in a vicious cycle. Acting with purpose, successfully prioritizing tasks, and remaining unflustered during overwhelming times are marks of a great first-level leader. Great first-level leaders are equipped with a personal “North Star” to guide them through turbulence and uncertainty.

Great first-level leaders track much higher than average leaders in their strategic thinking and ability to prioritize, but may be slightly more likely to feel overwhelmed.



VERY CONFIDENT THEY
THINK STRATEGICALLY



24%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

65%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

OFTEN FEEL OVERWHELMED



20%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

24%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

VERY CONFIDENT THEY KNOW
WHICH TASKS MATTER MOST



20%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

47%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

BUSINESS OUTCOMES

Ultimately, leaders are only as good as the results they deliver. Great first-level leaders are nearly three times more likely

than average leaders to be confident in their ability to achieve expected results, and they are twice as likely to say they

can manage a project successfully through to completion.

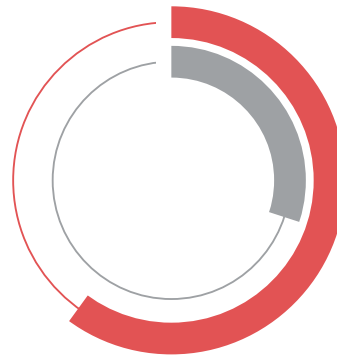
VERY CONFIDENT THEY WILL
ACHIEVE EXPECTED RESULTS



19%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

51%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

VERY CONFIDENT THEY CAN
MANAGE A PROJECT SUCCESSFULLY
THROUGH TO COMPLETION



30%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

60%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

VERY PREPARED TO HELP THEIR
TEAM THROUGH CHANGE



16%
OF **AVERAGE**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

41%
OF **GREAT**
FIRST-LEVEL
LEADERS

SIMILAR CHALLENGES, DIFFERENT RESULTS

While great first-level leaders track higher for confidence, competence, and delivering results, the core challenges they face are still the same as those facing average first-level leaders.

The main challenges for both types of first-level leaders are:

- Keeping employees accountable
- Keeping employees motivated
- Work/life balance
- Managing team communication
- Dealing with change and uncertainty



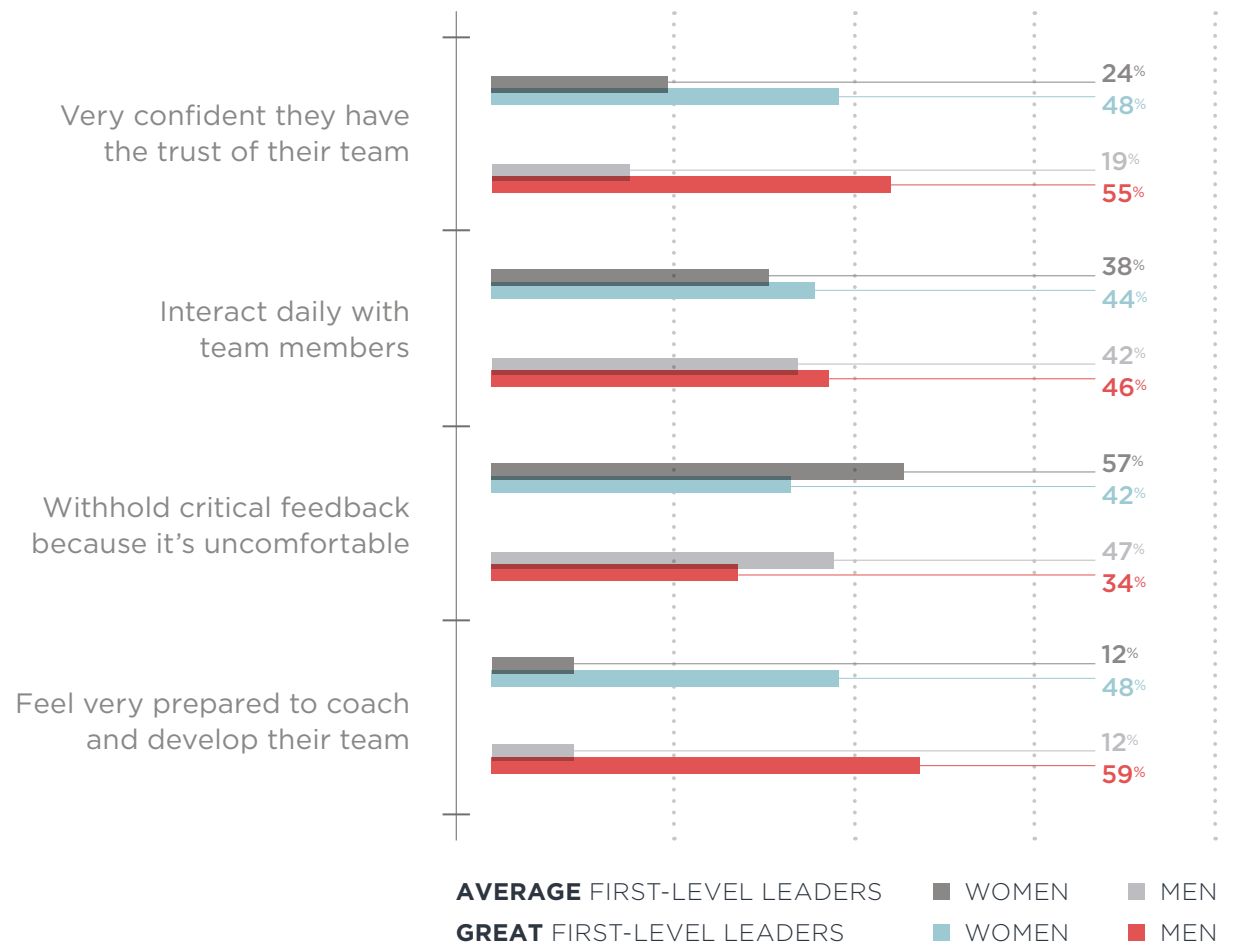
Leaders are only as good as the **RESULTS** they **DELIVER**.

THE GENDER ROLE

Great first-level leaders outperformed average first-level leaders regardless of gender.



TEAM DYNAMICS BY GENDER ROLE



THE FRANKLINCOVEY FIRST-LEVEL LEADER REPORT

The FranklinCovey First-Level Leader Report is a quantitative study that helps organizations know how to engage and improve their first-level leaders. An independent research firm surveyed a random sample of 400 first-level leaders in November 2018. Margin of error at the 95% confidence level is plus or minus 4.9%. The industry and ethnicity data breakouts are directional only.

For more information on this research and ways to improve first-level leaders in your organization, email us at info@franklincovey.com or visit franklincovey.com.