Asia Pacific
Leadership Effectiveness Dashboard:
Critical Competencies, Strengths, and Gaps

Center for
Creative
Leadership®

Introduction

Over the last five years, the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) has increased its focus and attention on the unique challenges faced by Asia Pacific (APAC) organizations. Our work has identified a critical need within the region: to accelerate the development of leaders with the necessary skills, knowledge, abilities and experiences to be successful now and in the future. This research summary provides information on the most critical competencies for leaders within the APAC region. Moreover, it is intended to provide you with a reference point in evaluating your current leader development efforts and practices. We hope that this "dashboard" will provide you and your organization a baseline understanding of the critical leader competencies, and overall leadership capabilities, needed to survive now and thrive in the future.

Executive Summary

Asia Pacific is set to be the primary driver of global economic growth in the coming years. The challenges brought about by the "speed" of change and the "scale" of growth opportunities in the APAC region will require talent with the ability to learn quickly and act decisively. The challenges of today and tomorrow will be navigated most successfully by those organizations, teams, and individuals that possess effective leadership.

In this research summary, we present a leadership effectiveness dashboard for the APAC region. Similar to financial dashboard reports, this leadership effectiveness dashboard presents a summary of the critical leadership competencies, strengths, and gaps on leaders living and working in the APAC region.

In addition to an overall look at leaders in the APAC region, this research summary presents leadership effectiveness dashboard results of six Asian countries – Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Mainland China, India and Japan – and looks at how these individual countries compare to leaders in APAC as well as a sample of leaders across the globe.

The data presented in this dashboard is based on five years (2007-2011) of data collected on leaders in APAC using CCL's Benchmarks 360 degree leadership competency instrument. Using the data collected through the Benchmarks instrument, we are able to see what "bosses" in APAC view as the most criti-cal leadership competencies for organizational success and how they rated 1,818 leaders on their level of leadership effectiveness on those competencies.

To summarize, the dashboard results provide insights into four key questions:

1 What's Important?

What are the critical competencies necessary for leaders to be effective in APAC?

The most critical leadership competencies for organizational success fall into two categories: Meeting Job Requirements and Leading People.

Key competencies required to "get the job done" include the ability to think strategically, solve problems, act decisively, persevere, take charge, and learn from others.

Success in APAC requires more than leaders who are individually capable of meeting job requirements. Success also depends on leaders' ability to delegate responsibility, identify and develop talent, as well as navigate and motivate others through change.

2 Where are we "on track?"

Which competencies do APAC leaders do well on?

Leaders in APAC are rated most effective in their ability to "meet job requirements." Bosses in APAC find that their leaders are effective at "getting the job done," finding that they are effective problem solvers, decisive in capitalizing on opportunities, have high learning agility, and have the energy to do what it takes to get the job done.

3 Where are our "key gaps?"

Which critical competencies are APAC leaders less effective in?

Leaders in APAC are rated less effective by their bosses in their ability to "lead people." Compared to other necessary leadership competencies, the ability to identify, develop, motivate, and delegate to others is an area where APAC leaders need to build capabilities.

In addition to leading employees, leaders in APAC are also rated as less effective in their ability to lead and manage change.

4 How do we compare?

How do leaders in APAC countries compare to each other, and how do they compare with leaders around the globe?

On average, leaders in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Mainland China, India, and Japan are rated as having a very similar level of effectiveness compared to APAC leaders overall.

Leaders in these six countries, and leaders in APAC overall, tend to be rated, on average, as less effective than a similar sample of leaders across the globe.

What's Important?

The results presented in this leadership effectiveness dashboard are best used as a point of comparison for what you, your team, or your organization see as the most critical competencies needed for success in the APAC region and the strengths and gaps you are seeing in your own leadership talent pool.

| 0% | 20% | 40% | 60% | 80% | 100% |

Resourcefulness: thinking strategically, making good decisions, solving problems — 82%

Decisiveness: taking quick and approximate actions — 79%

Doing Whatever It Takes: having perseverance, taking charge, learning from others — 70%

Competencies Critical to Meeting Job Challenges

Leading Employees: delegating, broadening employee opportunities, hiring talented people — 93%

Change Management: facilitating organizational change, overcoming resistance to change — 74%

Competencies Critical to Leading People

Bosses of 1,818 leaders in the APAC region were asked to indicate the 8 most critical competencies for organizational success out of a list of 16 leadership competencies (see Appendix 1 for the list of competencies). We report on the five most frequently identified competencies:

- **Resourcefulness:** thinking strategically, making good decisions, solving problems (Rated as 'most important' by 82% of Bosses)
- **Decisiveness:** taking quick and approximate actions (Rated as 'most important' by 79% of Bosses)
- **Doing Whatever It Takes:** having perseverance, taking charge, learning from others (Rated as 'most important' by 70% of Bosses)

  Each of these three competencies are considered critical for "getting the job done," which we refer to as Meeting Job Challenges.
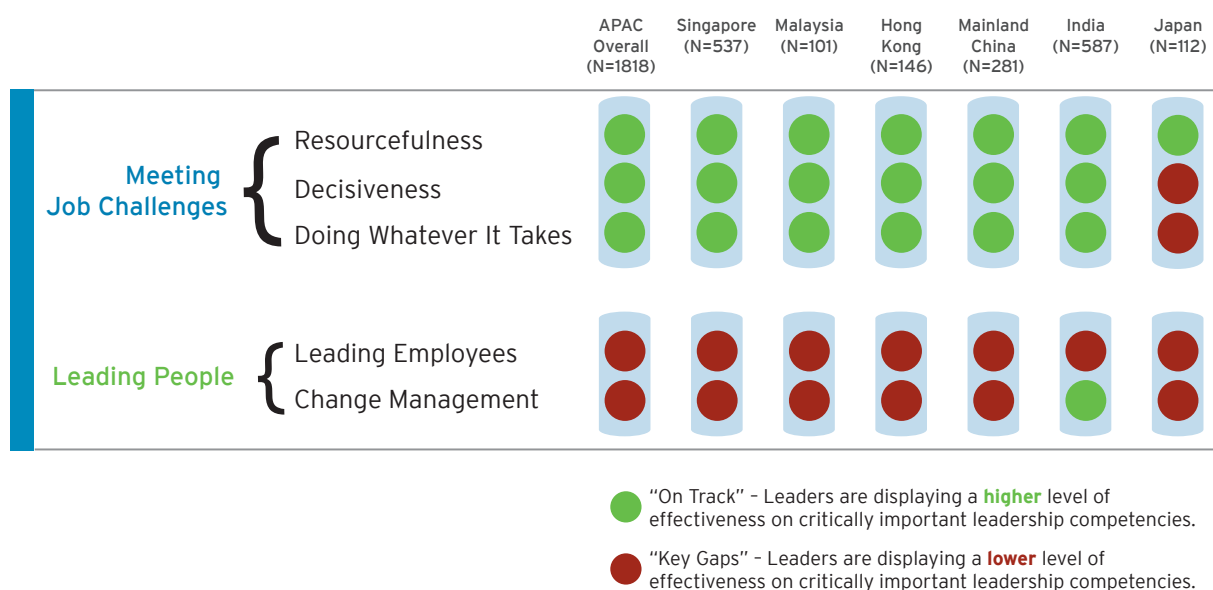
- **Leading Employees:** delegating, broadening employee opportunities, hiring talented people (Rated as 'most important' by 93% of Bosses)
- **Change Management:** facilitating organizational change, overcoming resistance to change (Rated as 'most important' by 74% of Bosses)

  Each of these two competencies is considered critical in managing and leading others, what we refer to as Leading People.

Where are we "On Track?" Where are the "Key Gaps?"

The dashboard results below indicate where leaders in the APAC region display a higher level, and lower level, of effectiveness on the 5 most critical leadership competencies.

Overall, leaders in APAC receive the highest ratings of effectiveness on the three competencies related to Meeting Job Challenges. They receive the lowest ratings of effectiveness on competencies related to Leading People. This trend is similar across leaders in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Mainland China. Leaders in India and Japan show slightly different trends.

		APAC Overall (N=1818)	Singapore (N=537)	Malaysia (N=101)	Hong Kong (N=146)	Mainland China (N=281)	India (N=587)	Japan (N=112)
Meeting Job Challenges	Resourcefulness	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
	Decisiveness	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴
	Doing Whatever It Takes	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴
Leading People	Leading Employees	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
	Change Management	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟢	🔴

🟢 "On Track" – Leaders are displaying a **higher** level of effectiveness on critically important leadership competencies.

🔴 "Key Gaps" – Leaders are displaying a **lower** level of effectiveness on critically important leadership competencies.

Leaders in India receive higher ratings of effectiveness on 'change management' as compared to ratings on the other competencies. For leaders in Japan, their bosses rate them lower in effectiveness on the areas of 'Decisiveness' and 'Doing Whatever It Takes' as compared to ratings on the other competencies.

Note About Analysis: The labels "On Track" and "Key Gaps" are based on ranking each of the 16 Benchmarks® competencies on their 'Importance' for success and the average rating of "Effectiveness." Competencies that are ranked as both "Important" and highest in "Effectiveness" relative to other competencies are considered On Track. Competencies that are ranked as both "Important" and lower in "Effectiveness" relative to other competencies are considered Key Gaps.

? Questions for Reflection

Which of these competencies do you see as most critical for success in your organization? Rank the importance of each competency from **1 to 5** where **1 = "The Most Critical"**

How effective are your leaders (in your team, group, division) on each of these critical competencies? Rank the effectiveness of your leaders on each competency from **1 to 5** where **1 = "The Most Effective"**

Your Importance Ranking	Your Effectiveness Rating	Leadership Competencies
		Leading Employees: delegating, broadening employee opportunities, hiring talented people
		Resourcefulness: thinking strategically, making good decisions, solving problems
		Decisiveness: taking quick and approximate actions
		Change Management: facilitating organizational change, overcoming resistance to change
		Doing Whatever It Takes: having perseverance, taking charge, learning from others

Based on your rankings, where should your leaders focus their development efforts? Are your leaders more effective at "meeting job challenges" than "leading people?"

Where are you "On Track?" Where are the "Key Gaps?"

Are there any competencies you see as even more critical than these five?

How do we compare across APAC?

When comparing leaders in six different countries (Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Mainland China, India, Japan), the dashboard results below indicate that leaders in each of the six countries are very similar in their ratings of leader effectiveness. In each country, ratings of leader effectiveness are slightly above or slightly below the overall average ratings of APAC leaders on critical competencies.

		Singapore (N=537)	Malaysia (N=101)	Hong Kong (N=146)	Mainland China (N=281)	India (N=587)	Japan (N=112)
Meeting Job Challenges	Resourcefulness	↗	↘	↗	↗	↘	↘
	Decisiveness	↗	↘	↗	↗	↘	↘
	Doing Whatever It Takes	↗	↘	↗	↗	↘	↘
Leading People	Leading Employees	↗	↘	↗	↗	↘	↘
	Change Management	↗	↘	↘	↗	↗	↘

Leaders in this country are rated:

↑ in the **high range** relative to other leaders in APAC

↗ in the **mid range** and slightly above average relative to other leaders in APAC

↘ in the **mid range** and slightly below average relative to other leaders in APAC

↓ in the **low range** relative to other leaders in APAC

Leaders in each of the six countries do not score significantly higher or lower relative to the overall sample of APAC leaders.

> Note About Analysis: The labels "high range," "mid range," and "low range" are based on how close each country's average rating is to the Global Sample averages on each of the 5 competencies. Country ratings in the "mid range" are within plus or minus half a standard deviation of the Global Sample average ratings. "High range" scores would be above half a standard deviation of the Global Sample average ratings, and "low range" scores would be below half a standard deviation.

? Question for Reflection

Do you see differences in the effectiveness of leaders in the regions you are responsible for overseeing?

How do we compare across the Globe?

When we compare the effectiveness ratings of APAC leaders for critical competencies to a sample of leaders across the globe the dashboard results indicate that leaders in APAC are rated slightly lower (and in a few cases much lower) than leaders across the globe.

		APAC Overall (N=1818)	Singapore (N=537)	Malaysia (N=101)	Hong Kong (N=146)	Mainland China (N=281)	India (N=587)	Japan (N=112)
Meeting Job Challenges	Resourcefulness	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘
	Decisiveness	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘
	Doing Whatever It Takes	↘	↘	↓ (low)	↘	↘	↘	↓ (low)
Leading People	Leading Employees	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘
	Change Management	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘

Leaders in this region/country are rated:

↑ in the high range relative to other leaders across the globe

↗ in the mid range and slightly above average relative to other leaders across the globe

↘ in the mid range and slightly below average relative to other leaders across the globe

↓ in the low range relative to other leaders across the globe

? Question for Reflection

Do you see leaders in APAC as less effective on these competencies than leaders in other regions of the world?

Suggestions for Leaders in APAC

The result of this leadership effectiveness dashboard provides some high level insights into the most important competencies for success in APAC organizations and the strengths and development needs of APAC leaders. Organizations can build on the strengths of APAC leaders, and address vulnerabilities, by helping leaders accelerate leadership development utilizing the ways in which they learn best.

Here are three ideas for applying these dashboard findings:

1. **Provide On-The-Job Developmental Opportunities**
   Leaders learn most from developmental assignments and learning 'on the job.' Accelerate development on 'leading people' competencies by :
   - putting leaders into positions where they have to identify and develop a team of talented individuals to 'meet job challenges'
   - identifying roles in your organization that require leaders to delegate and work through others
   - emphasizing the importance of 'leading people' in the organization through performance conversations and promotion policies

2. **Have Senior Leaders Supporting Development**
   Bosses and managers of others play an important role in accelerating leader development. Their ability to guide, coach, and mentor others represent skills we refer to as **'development agility.'** As you provide leaders developmental assignments to build their effectiveness on 'leading people' make sure those leaders have access to coaching and support from senior leaders.

3. **Provide Leaders Coaching and Mentoring Training**
   Skills and abilities that represent 'development agility' may be developed through skills training and practice. Help bosses and managers of others become more effective developers of people through coaching and mentoring training. Using techniques like coaching role plays can be an effective way to build development agility in your leaders that focus on closing key gaps in leader effectiveness.

Appendix 1: The 16 Leadership Competencies on Benchmarks®

Competency	Description
Resourcefulness	Thinking strategically, making good decisions, solving problems
Doing Whatever It Takes	Having perseverance, taking charge, learning from others
Being a Quick Study	Mastering new knowledge quickly
Decisiveness	Taking quick and approximate actions
Leading Employees	Delegating, broadening employee opportunities, hiring talented people
Confronting Problem Employees	Acting decisively and fairly when dealing with problem employees
Participative Management	Involving others, building consensus, influencing others in decision making
Change Management	Facilitating organizational change, overcoming resistance to change
Building Relationships	Building and maintaining working relationships, understanding others, obtaining cooperation in non-authority relationships
Compassion and Sensitivity	Showing genuine interest in others, showing sensitivity to employers' needs
Straightforwardness & Composure	Being steadfast, relying on facts, not blaming others for mistakes, recovering well from troubled situations
Balance Between Personal Life & Work	Balancing work and personal life
Self-Awareness	Being aware of own strengths and weaknesses, being willing to improve
Putting People At Ease	Displaying warmth and a sense of humor
Differences Matter	Demonstrating respect for differences, valuing cultural differences
Career Management	Developing, maintaining, using professional relationships to manage career

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About the Center for Creative Leadership

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®) is a top-ranked, global provider of executive education that accelerates strategy and business results by unlocking leadership potential of individuals and organizations. Founded in 1970 as a nonprofit educational institution focused exclusively on leadership education and research, CCL helps clients worldwide cultivate creative leadership – the capacity to achieve more than imagined by thinking and acting beyond boundaries – through an array of programs, products and other services. Ranked among the world's Top 10 providers of executive education by *Bloomberg BusinessWeek* and the *Financial Times*, CCL is headquartered in Greensboro, NC, with offices in Colorado Springs, CO; San Diego, CA; Brussels; Moscow; Singapore; Pune, India and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Its work is supported by more than 500 faculty members and staff.

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Background

How was the research conducted?

The data for this research was drawn from responses to CCL's® Benchmarks® assessment, a 360-degree feedback survey. Respondents (both self-report and observers) rated the target person on the extent to which they displayed 115 behaviors. These behavioral descriptor items translate into 16 scales reflecting leadership competencies. Respondents also indicated the relative importance of these competencies for success by identifying the eight which they believe to be the most important.

This research focuses on providing an understanding of the leadership competencies that are important in the APAC region. As this study is centered on countries in APAC, we looked at the responses of 1,818 leaders working in the APAC region between 2007 and 2011. Each of these leaders was rated by an immediate boss or superior. The tables below show the demographic profile of the leaders being rated on in this study.

Table 1: Gender

	APAC	Singapore	Malaysia	Hong Kong	Mainland China	India	Japan
Female	24%	38%	24%	42%	23%	9%	13%
Male	76%	62%	76%	58%	77%	91%	87%

Table 2: Age

	APAC	Singapore	Malaysia	Hong Kong	Mainland China	India	Japan
Average	41.6	41.5	41.8	41.6	41.1	41.3	44.3
20 - 30	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	0%
31 - 35	14%	16%	14%	10%	19%	14%	4%
36 - 40	30%	29%	30%	33%	31%	32%	22%
41 - 45	28%	25%	30%	23%	26%	30%	35%
46 - 50	15%	14%	14%	22%	13%	13%	30%
51 - 55	7%	8%	7%	7%	7%	6%	6%
56 - 60	2%	3%	4%	1%	1%	1%	2%
61+	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Not Identified	1%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%

Table 3: Level in Organization

	APAC	Singapore	Malaysia	Hong Kong	Mainland China	India	Japan
Upper Middle	58%	54%	63%	55%	68%	59%	57%
Executive	35%	39%	31%	41%	27%	33%	37%
Top	7%	7%	6%	4%	5%	8%	6%

Table 4: Native Countries

	APAC	Singapore	Malaysia	Hong Kong	Mainland China	India	Japan
Local	87%	61%	82%	47%	69%	99%	76%
Other Asian Countries	n/a	20%	5%	19%	16%	0%	0%
Other Non-Asian countries	13%	19%	13%	34%	15%	1%	24%

Local refers to leaders who were born in and currently working in the same region or country.
Other Asian Countries refers to leaders who were born in the APAC region and are currently not working in their native country.
Other Non-Asian Countries refers to leaders who were not born in the APAC region and are currently working in the APAC region.