

ASIA LEADERSHIP RESEARCH 2021

REIMAGINING HIGH
PERFORMANCE



CRITICAL EYE

The peer to peer Board Community



This Research, carried out at our Asia Leadership Retreat at the end of November 2020, offers valuable insight into the outlook and priorities of executives in Asia. At a time when business sentiment is highly dependent on the status of the pandemic in a region, it also allows interesting parallels to be drawn with our wider membership.

While 90% of leaders in Asia are confident about growth in the region, this falls to 30% when

they consider the global picture. This optimism translates into their own businesses too, with 47% of those in Asia expecting revenues to increase or stay constant in 2021, versus 76% of our wider CEO membership expecting revenues to fall.

With 91% of business models being disrupted, organisations have adapted rapidly, and the move online has accelerated. Virtual working has become a way of life for many, with global

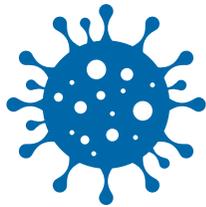
leaders finding themselves grounded and reliant on video calls to keep in touch with their people. In this environment, communication has become more important than ever, and businesses with a culture of collaboration have been at a distinct advantage.

Leaders across Asia certainly see opportunities in the year ahead and must keep investing in themselves and their people to make the most of them.

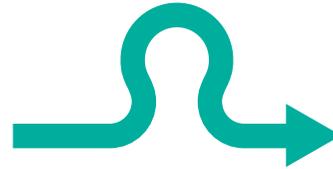


Michael Crompton
General Manager, Asia
Criticaleye

Findings from Criticaleye's Asia Research 2021



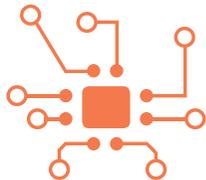
47% of leaders in Asia expect **no loss of revenue** due to COVID-19



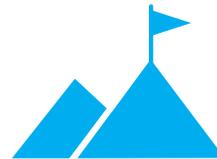
30% say their trading trajectory is **unchanged** by the pandemic



73% of leaders need to improve the **quality of strategic debate** in the SLT



Digitisation is the no.1 priority for 2021



Communication and **collaboration** are the biggest challenges for regional leaders



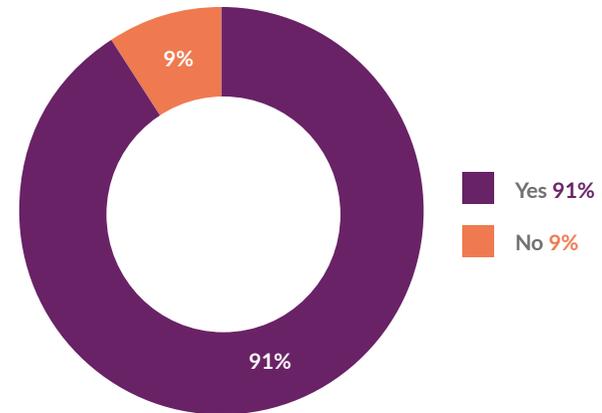
91% say business models are being disrupted

Strategy

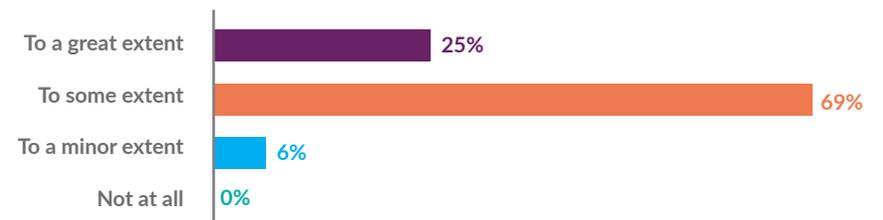
Criticaleye offers senior executives a unique opportunity to discuss and reflect upon strategy with peers and experts

Although 91% of businesses operating in Asia are being disrupted, 94% feel confident their senior team can rise to the challenge

Is your business model being disrupted?



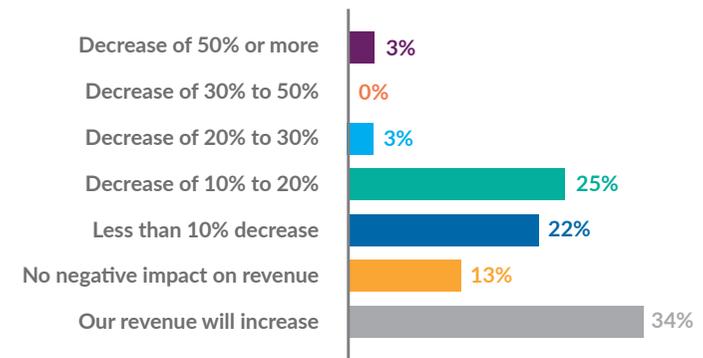
Does your senior leadership team have the ability to respond to business model disruption?



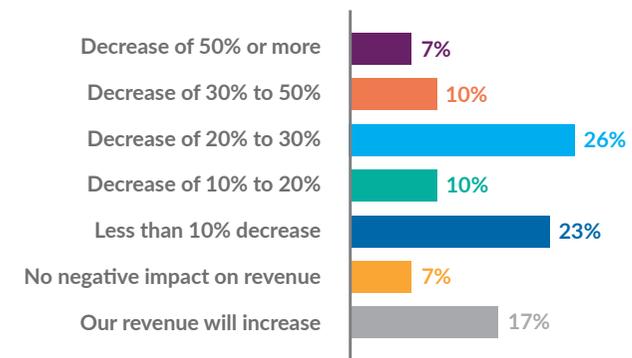
Leaders in Asia expect COVID-19 to have much less of an impact on revenues than their counterparts in other regions. 34% predict revenues will increase

What impact will the pandemic have on year-on-year revenues over the next 12 months?

Asia



Global*

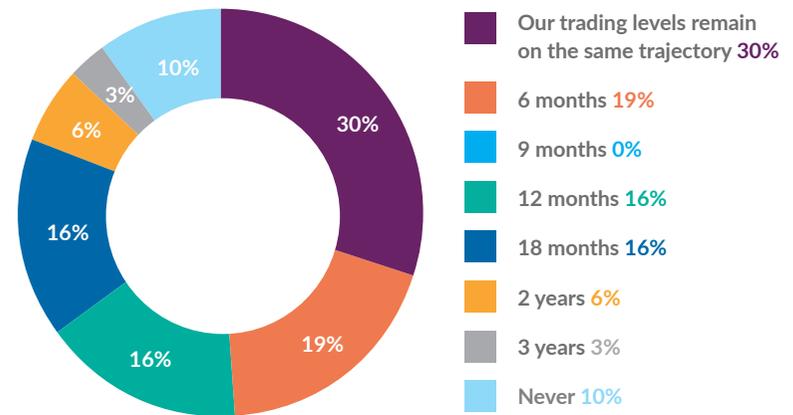


*Global comparatives in this report are taken from our [CEO Research 2021](#)

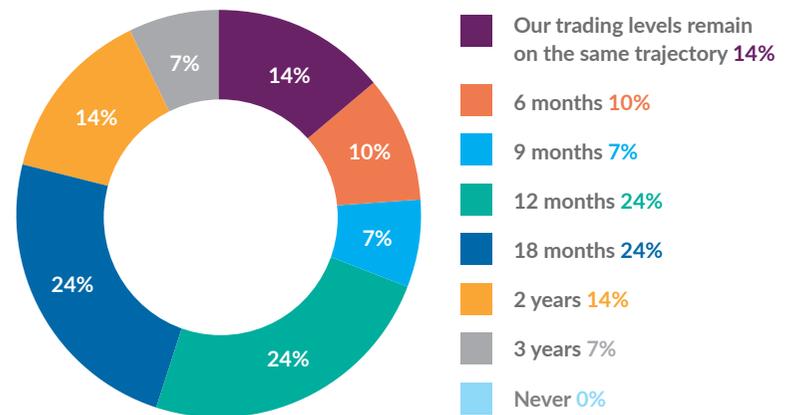
51% of organisations in Asia expect a return to pre-COVID trading in 6-18 months. 30% say their trading will not be impacted at all

When do you expect your organisation to return to pre-COVID 19 trading levels?

Asia



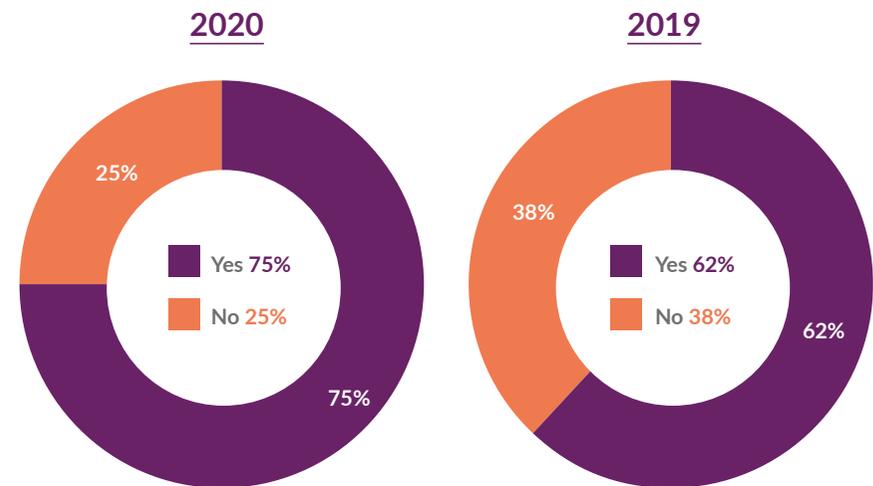
Global*



*Global comparatives in this report are taken from our [CEO Research 2021](#)

Three-quarters of organisations operating in Asia have a clear plan for growth in 2021, up from 62% in 2019

Does your organisation have a clear and effective regional strategy for growth?



What are the top three countries you are targeting for growth in the next 12 months?

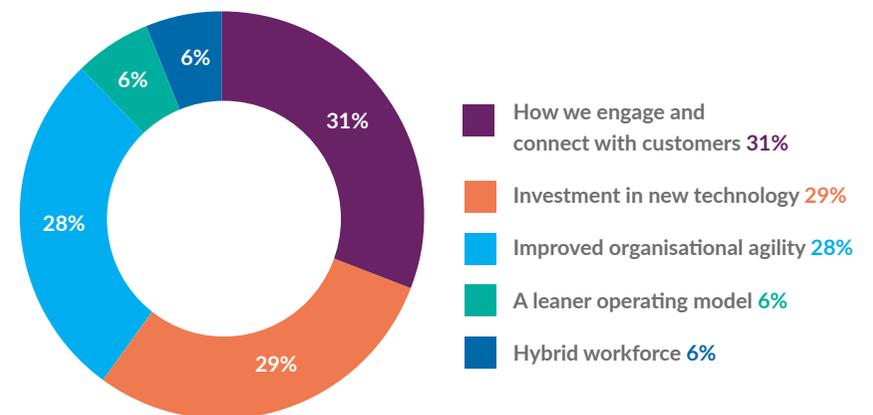


Communication and collaboration are the biggest challenges in a socially-distanced and digitally-connected environment

What are the three biggest challenges of leading a regional team?

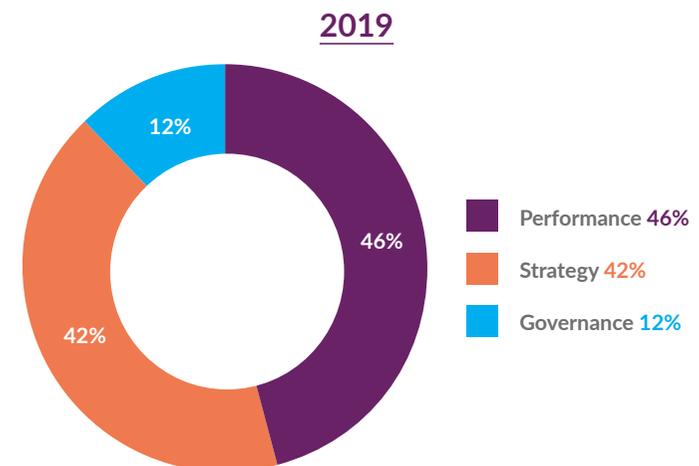
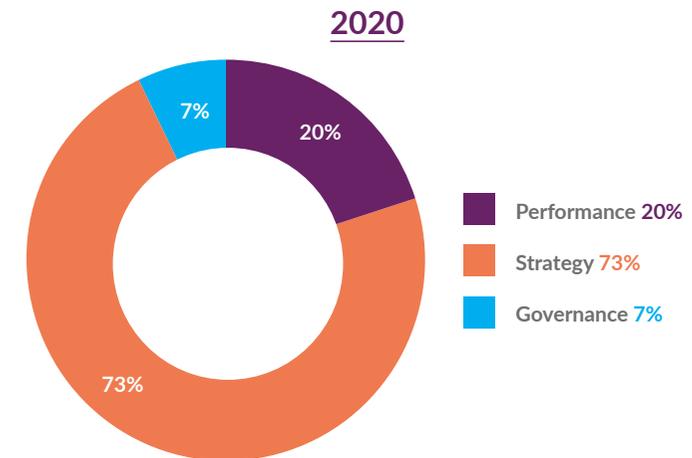


Where do you see the biggest changes occurring in your organisation?



Improving the quality of strategic debate in the senior leadership team is a major area of focus in 2021, up from 42% to 73%

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



Top five priorities for leaders in Asia

Priorities for 2021

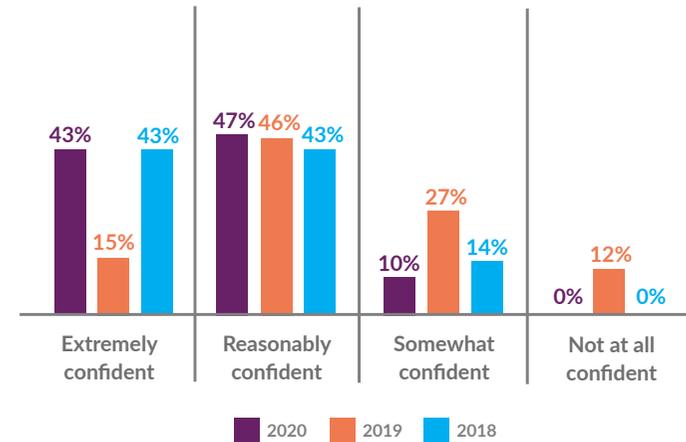
- 1. Digitisation
- 2. Strengthening leadership capability
- 3. Retaining key talent and developing skills
- 4. Innovation
- 5. Workforce transformation

Priorities for 2020

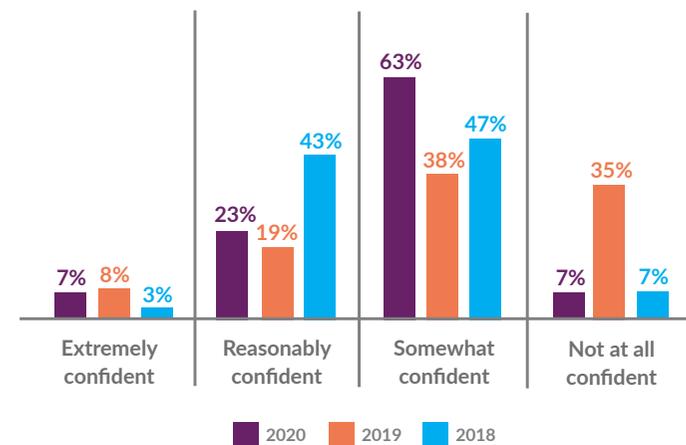
- 1. Retaining key talent and developing skills
- 2. Strengthening leadership capability
- 3. Organisational design
- 4. Innovation
- 5. Greater cross-team collaboration

Confidence in the Asian economic region has hit a three-year high

How confident are you that the rate of growth in the Asian Economic Region will increase over the next 12 months?



How confident are you that rate of growth in the Global Economy will increase over the next 12 months?

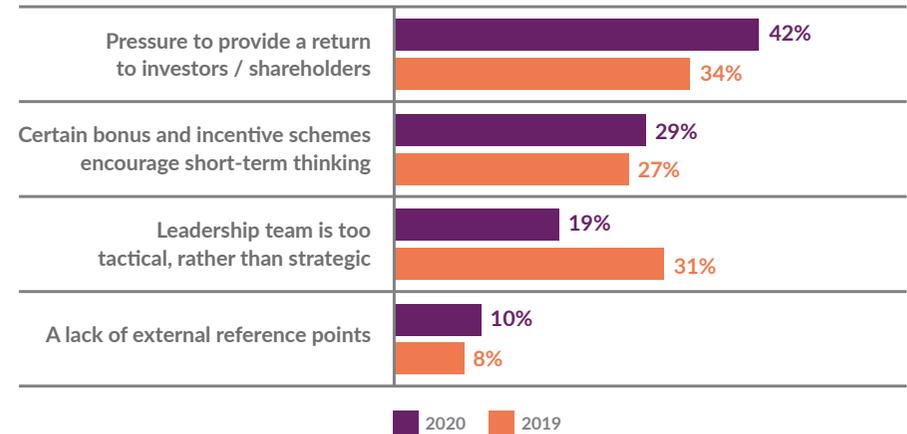


Leadership

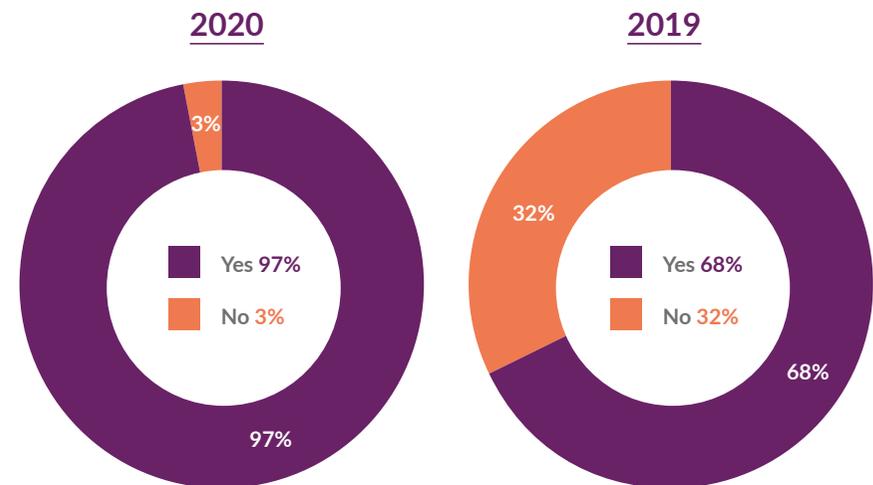
Criticleye enables and develops great leadership with the perfect mix of peer to peer discussion and high-impact case studies

With demands from shareholders and investors increasing, leaders in Asia are looking beyond operational pressures of the pandemic to longer-term opportunities

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



Does being too focused on the day-to-day have a detrimental impact on business performance?

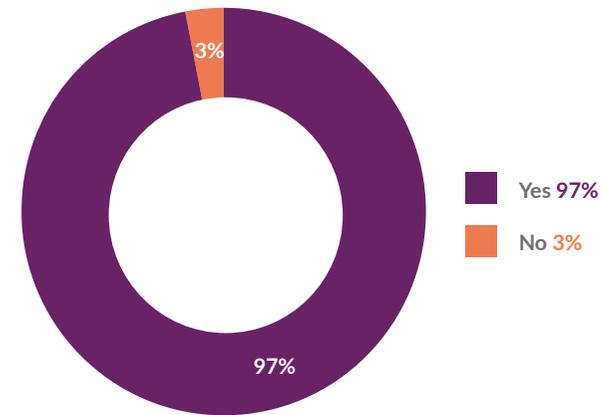


After a year of remote leading, building alignment in the top team is where senior leaders say they most need to improve

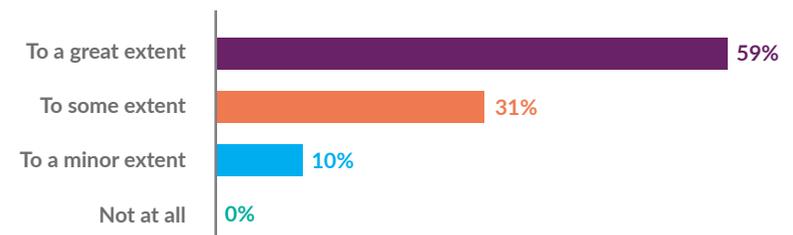


Leaders agree on the benefits of looking outside their businesses and sectors for the right reference points

Does external mentoring improve the performance of senior executives?

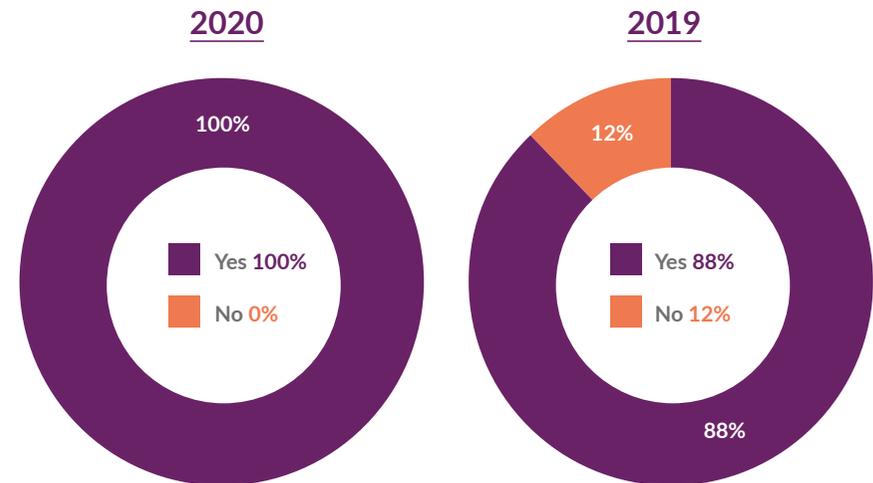


Is business performance enhanced if executives have access to reference points outside of their organisation / sector?



Although all senior executives believe budget should be allocated to leadership development, 63% say more is spent on headhunters and recruitment

Should more be spent on leadership development and support for senior executives, as opposed to headhunters?



In your experience, on which of the following do organisations spend more?

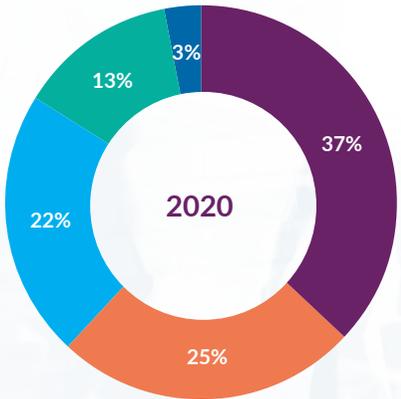


Stakeholders

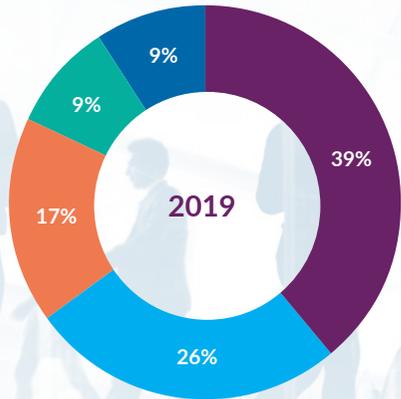
CriticalEye provides the right reference points to manage and navigate increasingly important stakeholder relationships

Customers remain the most influential external stakeholder. Internally, the challenge provided by Boards is on the rise

Who is your most challenging internal stakeholder?

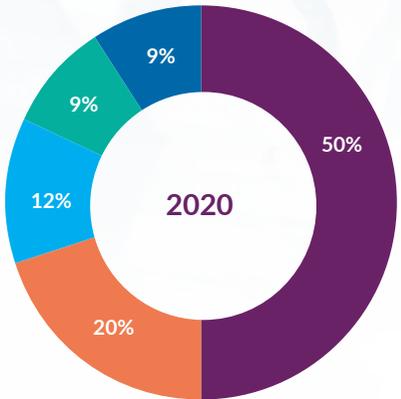


- Senior leadership team 37%
- Board 25%
- Workforce 22%
- CEO 13%
- Chair 3%

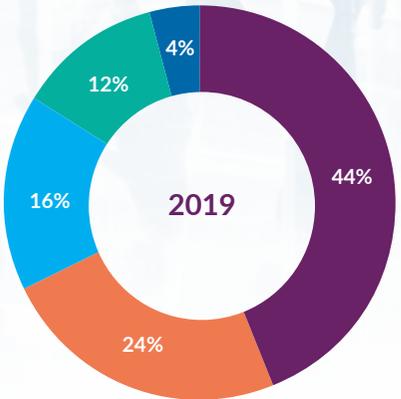


- Senior leadership team 39%
- Workforce 26%
- Board 17%
- CEO 9%
- Chair 9%

Who is your most challenging external stakeholder?



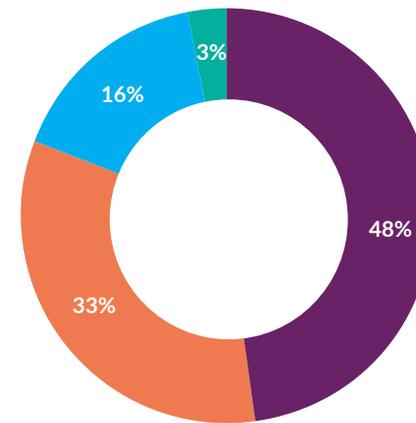
- Customers 50%
- Government 20%
- Regulator/s 12%
- Suppliers 9%
- Lobbyists 9%



- Customers 44%
- Government 24%
- Regulator/s 16%
- Suppliers 12%
- Lobbyists 4%

Without sufficient exposure and a culture of challenge, senior executives can struggle to influence their Boards

What's the biggest barrier to you being able to influence the Board?



- Limited Board exposure 48%
- No culture of challenge 33%
- Insufficient remit 16%
- Lack of skills 3%

CRITICALEYE PODCASTS

LEADERSHIP IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

EPISODE 1

In this first podcast within our Leadership in Uncertain Times series, Criticaleye's CEO Matthew Blagg and Director of Content Marc Barber discuss how leadership teams are responding to the events of 2020 and planning for the future (July 2020).

EPISODE 2

Over 38 minutes, this podcast covers the forward agenda for CEOs and senior executives, operating model change, the future of the office, understanding the customer experience, management team performance, and the challenge of balancing economic pressure with COVID-19's impact on health and wellbeing (September 2020).

EPISODE 3

"Experience is what you get when you don't get what you want, and there are a lot of leaders getting a lot of experience at the moment." Listen in as our CEO Matthew Blagg and Director of Content Marc Barber reflect upon discussions and insights from our CEO Retreat 2020 (October 2020).

EPISODE 4

Reflecting on our 2020 Virtual CFO Retreat, in this podcast, Criticaleye covers how finance leaders can remain resilient, the balance between cost-cutting and investment, data, talent, digitisation and much more. The role of the CFO has never been more crucial in a complex and fast-changing market. (November 2020).

EPISODE 5

This podcast follows our Virtual Asia Leadership Retreat 2020. Criticaleye CEO Matthew Blagg and Director of Content Marc Barber discuss questions for leaders around purpose and the people agenda. We explore what changes are likely within leadership teams in the year ahead, and how the pandemic has impacted consumer behaviour. (December 2020).

To listen in to any of Criticaleye's podcasts, please visit: www.podcasts.criticaleye.com

“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

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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