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Leadership Often Cause of Poor Performance

By [Theresa Welbourne](#)

October 11, 2005: Bad leadership is cited most often as cause of poor performance, writes CIO Update columnist Theresa Wellbourne of ePulse.

In recent results from my Leadership Pulse Study, respondents in IT leadership positions indicated four, key areas that were keeping them from executing strategy.

The research done comes from a large sample of executives (over 4,000 to date) who have agreed to participate in short, Pulse Surveys conducted every two months. These results are from the survey that closed on May 31, 2005. Participants were asked to provide detailed information about the particular company habits they thought were getting the way of their firm's ability to execute its

This paper provides guidance for managers in understanding and delivering real business value from service oriented architecture. >

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2005 strategy.

Forty one percent of IT executives cited problems related to bad leadership and decisions for change; 38% said they lacked good processes or strategies; 10% had issues with selling the right products and services; and seven percent said financial issues pertaining to services and hiring needs were a problem.

In addition, when asked what the key factors were that influenced their overall confidence in their firm's future and growth potential, they responded with the following:

- 32% Leadership's ability to make changes happen
- 29% Response to technical changes with better products and services
- 10% Increase in new business and meeting sales forecasts
- 10% Understanding customer needs
- 7% Excessive turnover and hiring
- 6% Economic climate

Also, most of the IT respondents indicated that they were confident (50%) or very confident (39%) in their own personal leadership and management skills.

As you can see, the results show that leadership is of utmost importance in executing strategy and having a high level of confidence. In fact, one comment read, "we have had a recent change in executive management that has allowed us to clear the decks. It no longer feels like we are hampered by past habits. Phew."

Energy is "catchy," and if the senior leadership team is starting to become de-energized and lose confidence, those attitudes trickle down to the rest of the employee population. In fact, immediate attention to the leadership and management teams is warranted.

Steps for Change

To create higher energy and confidence levels in your organization, try these

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- [Orchestrating Outsourcing Success](#)
- [BPM: The Next 'Must Have' App](#)
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simple steps:

Start an open communication process. Specific discussions to diagnose energy, confidence and what's affecting all employees will help any organization thrive. Give people a venue to voice their opinions, concerns and suggestions without fear of retribution for negative comments.

Get current data. Collect data through communication efforts, online surveys or other processes. If you have a pulse on what is really going on within your organization, you'll be able to solve small issues before they become major problems. This can save you time, money and a lot of aggravation.

Take action. Once you have open dialogue and current data, actually use this information to make change happen. Take action and let all members of the organization know current issues and activities on a regular basis. Then, get feedback and use that data to fine tune your strategy execution.

Theresa Wellbourne, is the founder, president and CEO of [eePulse](#) and an adjunct professor of Executive Education at the University of Michigan Business School. If you wish to participate her ongoing leadership study, which is available to you at no cost, please register at: www.umbs.leadership.eepulse.com.

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