

# Talent Management Review

## Companies falling short on succession management

Surviving the economic downturn and thriving in a post-recession world will require strong and well-developed pools of talent. But most companies are still using succession management plans that are decades old, too rigid and too focused on top jobs, says a new report co-authored by the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®), a top-ranked global provider of executive education, and Bersin & Associates, a research and advisory firm focused on enterprise learning and talent management.

High-Impact Succession Management: Best Practices, Models and Case Studies in Organizational Talent Mobility is the first study to take a comprehensive view of succession management and explore how companies are approaching it at all levels of the organisation.

“The need for organisational leadership strategy tied to business objectives has become even more urgent in these turbulent times,” noted Rudi Plettinx, VP and managing director EMEA for the Center for Creative Leadership. “This study gives muscle to that message, and those organisations that ‘get it’ will emerge from the downturn ahead of their competitors.”

More than half of survey respondents said their companies implement succession management processes at only the most senior executive levels. Only 12 per cent of respondents said their companies’ succession management programmes are integrated with talent management programmes, such as performance management and employee development. Fewer than 40 per cent of respondents said their companies include mid-level managers and skilled professionals in succession planning initiatives.

“Now is the time for companies to take a very close look at their talent and review the effectiveness and impact of their human capital systems,” said CCL senior faculty member Roland Smith, co-author of the report. “Stakeholders are starting to ask companies hard questions about their succession practices – and whether leaders are prepared to get through the current crisis and capitalise on future opportunities.”