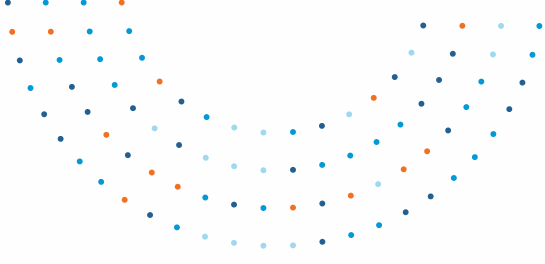


diir|consulting

A NEW STANDARD FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT





The quality of an organization's leadership affects every **outcome**, from employee engagement to customer satisfaction, sales, and shareholder value. As the world changes more — and more rapidly — organizations need a way to equip their leaders with the skills to navigate that change.

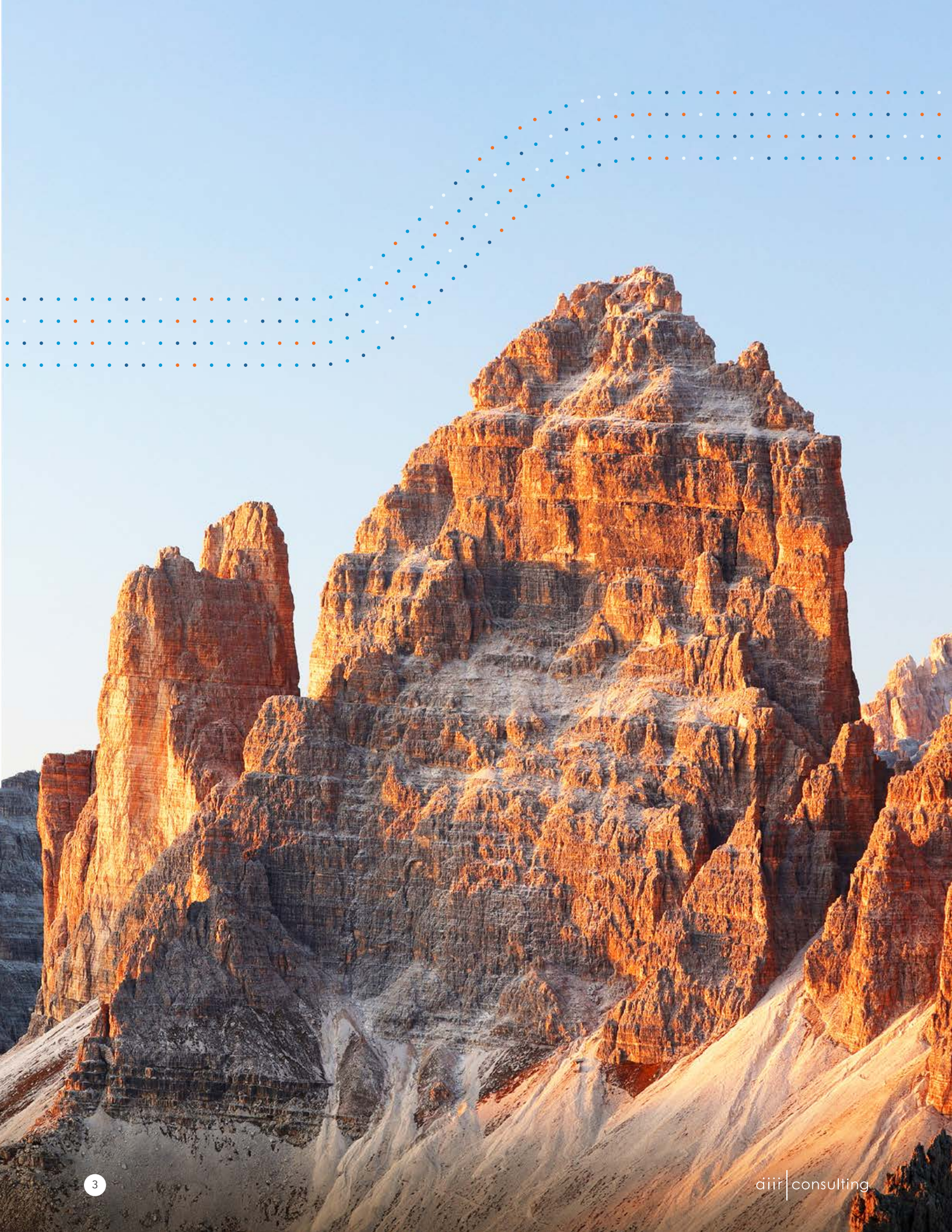
In response, the leadership development industry is booming. Experts predict the market for leadership development will triple from \$61 billion to nearly **\$180 billion** in 2032.

But, while there has been tremendous growth in the number of leadership development solutions on the market, most of these solutions fail to deliver the results leaders and their organizations can feel

good about. How bad is the problem? A survey by Josh Bersin showed just **25%** of companies think their leadership development is delivering value to the company.

Building on years of research and more than a decade of delivering leadership development programs to Fortune 500 companies and other organizations around the world, we know that most leadership development solutions fail for three reasons: **(1)** the narrow range of skills that most providers can support, **(2)** content that doesn't challenge leaders, and **(3)** lack of learning retention.





1

RANGE OF SKILLS

The first reason most leadership development programs fail is that there is a significant gap between the skills that leaders need and the skills that leadership development providers are equipped to support. We hold three important beliefs, confirmed by research, about leadership:

- Leadership consists of cognitive, social, and emotional skills that can be learned.
- These leadership skills can be organized into three categories, or domains, that equip leaders to lead themselves, lead others, and lead the organization.
- Successful leaders must excel at the skills required by their specific roles, but also must have a minimum level of proficiency in all leadership skills. In other words, a successful leader must be a jack of all trades and a master of some.

This last point is especially important. We know that leaders with a narrow range of skills are not equipped to succeed in the complex and constantly changing corporate environment.

For example, an executive with top-notch problem-solving and decision-making skills will still fail without the ability to communicate those decisions to frontline managers.

Successful leadership development providers, it follows, must be equipped to understand the skills leaders need, and customize their offerings to provide in-depth development where needed.

2

LACK OF CHALLENGING CONTENT

Time and time again, we have heard leaders voice the same complaints about their leadership development programs: “the curriculum is too soft” or “the experience was too fluffy.”

In part, these complaints stem from the lack of alignment between the skills that leaders and their organizations need and the skills that many leadership development programs are designed to build. Only **24%** of leaders in an industry survey said the skills at the center of their leadership development programs are relevant to the challenges they face.

Then, there is the fact that most leadership development programs just don’t push participants hard enough.

The leaders who participate in these programs have most likely already achieved a degree of success in their careers. Why mess with what got them there in the first place? The counterintuitive answer is that for a program to succeed, leaders need to be pushed to re-evaluate where they are relative to where they need to be. This requires a high level of provocation in both the design and delivery of the program that requires skill and experience to create.

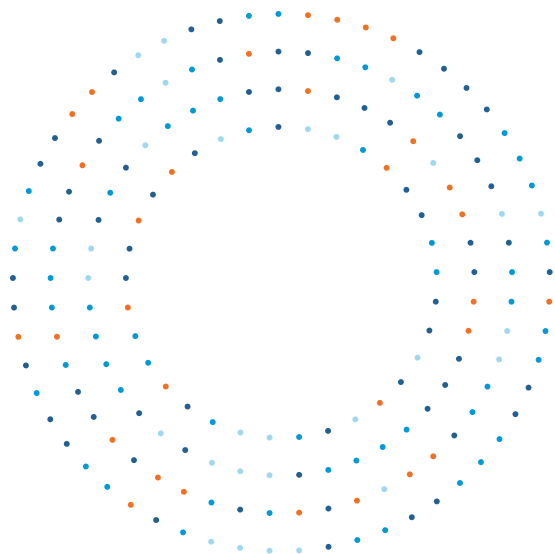
3

LACK OF LEARNING RETENTION

Beyond the need for new and evolved skills, there is still the outstanding problem of the lack of effective learning retention within leadership development programs. Various studies estimate that between 45% and 85% of training delivered is not applied on the job. While these statistics are shocking, they aren't necessarily surprising. Why? Because change is hard. Creating sustained behavior change requires leaders to confront and unlearn habits and behaviors, and then replace those habits and behaviors with new, evolved skills. This process of self-reflection and behavior modification can be deeply uncomfortable. Without self-awareness, support, and reinforcement that helps leaders integrate new behaviors, leaders are likely to backslide.

But, we know that most leadership development programs aren't built this way. First, most fail to account for differences in the backgrounds, skills, beliefs, and aptitudes that leaders bring into the program. Second, many of the programs that have emerged in the market are centered around self-paced digital learning. Although these solutions are easy to scale, and remove the challenges of coordinating classroom learning in a remote or hybrid environment, they deprive leaders of the most powerful way they learn – together. Finally, many of the programs offered are focused on building skills in a hypothetical setting without helping leaders incorporate new behaviors into their daily lives.

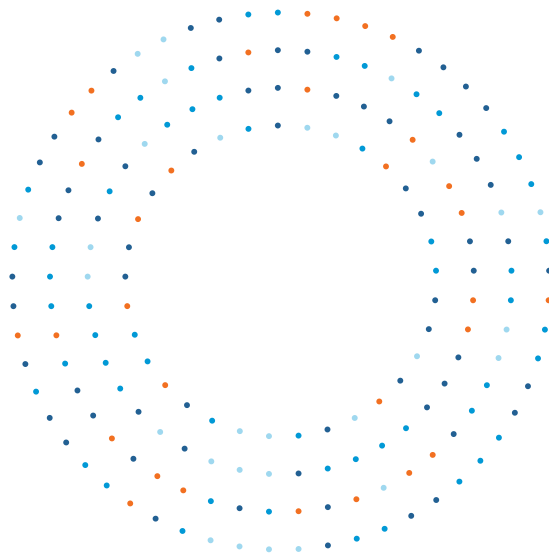
So, it's little surprise that a recent [study](#) showed the talent development professionals in charge of these programs often struggle to show "significant, enduring changes in participants' individual capacities or collective outcomes."





A PROVEN APPROACH TO DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Organizations need leadership development programs that can meet leaders where they are, challenge leaders to develop the skills and behaviors they need, and make them stick. At AIIR, we combine our comprehensive leadership framework and proven approach to behavior change to deliver development experiences that meet these requirements and equip leaders and their organizations to succeed in times of change and complexity.



Start with Understanding the Skills Leaders Need, the Skills They Have, and the Gap Between Them

A successful leadership development program must start with a concrete understanding of the skills leaders have, and an understanding of the skills they need.

We establish this understanding through the AIIR® Leadership Framework. The AIIR Leadership Framework is a comprehensive taxonomy of 45 cognitive, social, and emotional skills that all leaders need to succeed (figure 1). We developed the AIIR Leadership Framework based on extensive research and deep analysis of real-world development data from our database of thousands of coaching and leadership development engagements with the Fortune 500.

The AIIR Leadership Framework has two derivative assessments. The first helps companies understand the particular skills leaders need to succeed in a specific role, and, more generally, in their organization. The second assessment measures how expert leaders are in each of the 45 skills in the framework. The result is a comprehensive understanding of the gap between the skills leaders have and the skills they need.

Figure 1



Leading Self



Leading Others



Leading the Organization



Build Skills, Make them Stick, and Bridge the Leadership Skills Gap with a Four-Phase Approach to Behavior Change

Armed with this understanding of the gap between the skills leaders have and the skills leaders and their organizations need, we can leverage the AIIR® Method to build sustainable skills and behaviors. Our company's name is an acronym for the four stages of this method (Assessment, Insight, Implementation, Reinforcement), which is a proven approach to behavior change that is at the core of everything we do. What does the AIIR Method look like in the context of a leadership development journey?

Assessment

An **accurate understanding** of strengths and weaknesses is essential for closing the gap between the skills leaders have, and the skills they need. AIIR begins every development journey with an Assessment phase designed to build leaders' awareness of their strengths and areas for improvement. **Research** shows that more self-aware leaders are not only better at **identifying the skills** they need to develop, they are more capable **of learning and developing those skills**.

Insight

Change is hard. For leaders to be fully **engaged and committed** to the experience, they have to understand how assessment results relate to their job performance. The Insight phase helps leaders

put their assessment results in context and create the 'aha' moments **that build belief** in the path to meaningful change.

Implementation

Insight without action may feel good, but it's not enough. In this phase, leaders go through a series of learning experiences designed to push them out of their comfort zone and help them build and integrate new skills into their day-to-day lives. We know this is best achieved through:

1 Blended Modalities

We combine in-person, virtual, and self-paced curriculum to maximize learning while minimizing disruption.

2 Tailored Curriculum

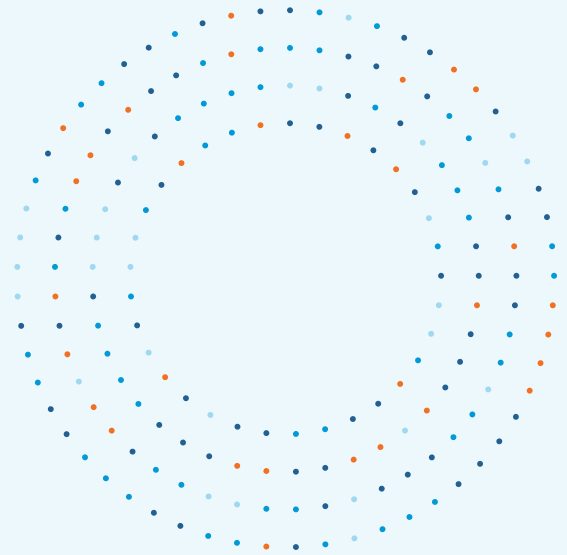
While off-the-shelf solutions can be effective, they can't account for the specific context in which development is taking place, and are therefore less likely to be relevant to the challenges leaders face on a daily basis. Our iterative, consultative approach involves immersing ourselves in an organization's culture to understand not only what behavior shifts they are aiming to achieve, but the backgrounds, beliefs, and behaviors that leaders are bringing into the program.

3 Multi-Dimensional Learning

Our immersive mindset and skill-building experiences are designed to engage and challenge leaders to confront and replace old mindsets and behaviors with new ones. Experiences often combine skill builds with 1:1 or group coaching to deepen learning.

Reinforcement

Resistance to change is a law of nature. Throughout the journey, leaders will unconsciously (or consciously) seek ways to revert back to their previous behaviors. The Reinforcement phase incorporates the latest science on nudging, motivation, and learning transfer to ensure the mindsets, skills, and behaviors leaders build throughout their development journey stick. The Reinforcement phase also happens intentionally throughout the development journey – during, between, and after all formalized learning experiences – to keep the desired behavior change top of mind and support participants in bringing their new skills back to the job.



A PROVEN APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE LEADERSHIP SKILLS THAT MATTER

We are living in a time of incredible change and complexity. In this moment, organizations across industries and around the world are finding that there is a gulf between the skills their leaders have, and the skills they need to succeed.

Unfortunately, most of the leadership development solutions on the market are ill equipped to bridge these crucial skills gaps. Organizations need leadership development solutions that address the core challenges of skills relevance, content rigor, and learning retention.

AIIR Consulting's approach solves these problems. AIIR's ability to identify both the full range of skills required for successful leadership and the skills required for success in a specific role, to deliver tailored, provocative learning experiences to build those skills, and to ensure sustained behavior change makes it the ideal partner to prepare leaders to not only navigate the challenges they face tomorrow but to shape a better future.

To learn more about AIIR Consulting's approach to developing better leaders, teams, and organizations, visit aiirconsulting.com.



ABOUT AIIR CONSULTING

AIIR Consulting increases the performance of leaders and their organizations. Fusing our proprietary leadership framework, proven approach to behavior change, and real-world business expertise, we help our clients build better leaders, better teams, better organizations, and a better future. To learn more about AIIR Consulting and its sister company, AIIR Analytics, visit aiirconsulting.com.

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