

RESEARCH REPORT
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While AI Is Advancing, Leadership Systems Are Not: Q1 2026 Leadership Quick Poll



Brad Jayne, PhD

PRINCIPAL



Peter Thies

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Organizations are investing in AI while struggling to define and execute on leadership strategy, according to Pearl Meyer’s most recent quick poll. The data shows that technology is not the issue—it is leadership. Gaps in alignment, decision-making, and talent development are already constraining performance, and AI is making those weaknesses more visible and more consequential.

This quick poll assesses leadership effectiveness across senior teams, strategy execution, organizational design, and readiness for AI. The objective was to understand whether leadership systems are keeping pace with rising complexity, and where they are falling short. The findings point to a consistent pattern:

Leadership systems are not evolving fast enough to support either strategy or AI.

Senior teams are not consistently operating as enterprise leaders, critical talent development is lagging long-term needs, and cross-functional coordination and decision clarity continue to constrain execution. These gaps are reflected in three consistent themes: talent development of leaders and teams is lagging, strategic decisions are often made without effective internal collaboration, and AI preparedness is limited. Perception gaps between boards and management further compound these challenges.

At the same time, most organizations are early in their AI journey, focused on productivity and efficiency rather than growth, and are only moderately prepared to manage broader

implications.

AI is amplifying—not solving—these leadership and execution challenges.

Stronger alignment across leadership, governance, and operating model design is needed for AI investment to translate into sustained performance.

Read the [Executive Summary](#).

About the Authors

Brad brings a decade of experience in executive assessment, leadership development, coaching, and team effectiveness, partnering with senior leaders to build high-impact teams and talent strategies.

Peter brings 30+ years supporting CEOs and leadership teams through organizational change, including CEO succession, executive development, and integration challenges.

About Pearl Meyer

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