



The Urgency of Leadership Development

By Kathrin Engelmeyer, MU Germany

In the consumer goods, FMCG, and retail sectors, the path forward is filled with immense opportunities and substantial challenges.

MU's latest Executive Barometer reveals a landscape marked by optimism, with executives identifying potential in product innovation, portfolio diversification, and technological advancement. Despite this optimism, rising costs, geopolitical uncertainties, and a highly competitive market underscore the need for capable, strategic leadership.

For organisations to turn these challenges into growth opportunities, leadership skills in vision, strategic thinking, and agility are essential. Well-prepared leaders should not only manage today's obstacles but also drive sustained, long-term success.

Market Challenges: From Price Increases to Talent Retention

The consumer goods and retail sectors are currently facing economic pressures like inflation, rising costs, and geopolitical uncertainties that threaten stability. Additionally, a shortage of skilled workers and heightened competition require leaders who can inspire, adapt, and lead through change. Exceptional leadership is the key to overcoming these multifaceted challenges.

The Competency Gap: A Risk for Future Success

Robust leadership competencies are essential. Skills like communication, vision, and agility enable leaders not only to guide their organisations effectively but also to proactively address potential challenges and seize opportunities.

However, recent insights reveal persistent gaps, particularly in vision and strategic thinking, leaving many leaders moderately prepared for the demands of tomorrow.

At MU, we work with tailored development solutions to ensure leaders are equipped to maximise their teams' potential and steer organisations forward.

With our scientific methodology, we empower leaders with the skills needed to create strategic impact, and turning vision into actionable plans. Our high-quality development focuses on bridging these critical gaps to foster organisational resilience and agility in an evolving market.

Strategic Initiatives to Strengthen Leadership Capabilities

To remain competitive, companies are investing in key areas that build robust leadership. The MU Executive Barometer highlights several priority initiatives:

- **Innovation and Product Development:** Organisations are focusing on innovation strategies to stay relevant. With MU's support, leaders gain the creative and strategic foresight needed to align with market demands.
- **Digital Transformation and Upskilling:** Rapid digitalisation is prompting many companies to enhance digital competencies among leaders, enabling them to respond with agility to technological advancements.
- **Talent Development:** Tailored training programs build resilience, strategic thinking, and people skills, creating a pipeline of future-ready leaders prepared for market shifts.

MU's bespoke leadership solutions integrate these initiatives, combining scientific rigor with practical insights. This ensures organisations develop leaders equipped to meet both current and future demands.

Future Perspective: Why Closing the Competency Gap Is Essential

In a competitive world, adaptability and strategic foresight are fundamental to maintaining an edge.

Investing in focused leadership development helps companies retain top talent and foster a culture of agility and alignment. We encourage organisations to take decisive steps in leadership development, ensuring their leaders are prepared for today's challenges and are visionary stewards of future growth.

The MU Consumer & Retail Practice

This article is based on the findings of the MU Executive Barometer 2024 conducted by the MU Consumer & Retail Practice together with the independent research institute IPSOS. If you are interested in the survey or for questions regarding the MU Consumer & Retail Practice's work, please reach out to the core team:



Florian Schmitz
MU Germany
florian.schmitz@mercuriurval.com



Brigitta Berger
MU Austria
brigitta.berger@mercuriurval.com



Matt Hill
MU Singapore
matt.hill@mercuriurval.com



Giuseppe Cozzo
MU Italy
giuseppe.cozzo@mercuriurval.com



Daniel Begg
MU UK
daniel.begg@mercuriurval.com



Anja Behrens
MU Germany
anja.behrens@mercuriurval.com



Pekka Tarkka
MU Japan
pekka.tarkka@mercuriurval.com