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BLENDED LEADING

WHITEPAPER

AI-Powered Nudging

Transforming Leadership Development into sustainable Performance Management



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Management Abstract

Organizations have **already invested intensively in leadership development**. Despite great participant experience and good intentions, the **learning often fades** after trainings and workshops – **before it changes behaviour and performance** in a sustainable way.

AI Nudging closes that gap with continuous and workflow-embedded context-aware reinforcement, that **constantly enables and motivates leaders for concrete action** – accelerating to improve corporate performance.

Blended Leading **integrates and leverages all corporate efforts an organization already has implemented** and paid for to develop people (like values, guidelines, opinion survey results, strategy, competency models etc.) and **enables personalization** to make nudges really specific and individualized (through personal feedback received, psychometric tools, type etc.).

It is **fully embedded as a Plug-In in Microsoft TEAMS®** – it has only to be enabled by the internal System-Administrator within hours, avoiding additional IT projects. Of course, in **compliance with GDPR and AI-Act**.

Accelerating Leadership Performance on all levels, to **constantly engage leaders to act** and boost Change Management was never needed more – and never was easier to achieve.

Blended Leading in a nutshell in the short 90-second video

https://l.ls-s.com/video

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Ingredients, Scientific background, Privacy & Security, GDPR, AI-Act

AI powered nudging

bridges the transfer gap between learning and impact

Constant Change is a permanent operating condition. Leaders are expected to guide people through shifting priorities, hybrid work, new technology, and continuous transformation – with the goal of improving performance and results. Yet most leadership development still relies on trainings, content libraries, and occasional coaching conversations that sit outside the work itself.

That is the gap this white paper addresses.

AI Nudging adds the missing reinforcement layer. It **goes beyond "sheer learning"**, and translates training, feedback, and organizational priorities into **specific and pragmatic actions for leaders**, delivered in context **in the flow of work**. Creating less drift after training, less overload for managers, resulting in more consistent and focused leadership behaviours across teams.

This White Paper is connecting scientific dots, helping you to:

- reframe leadership development from one-time events to **ongoing performance improvement**.
- demonstrate why in-workflow nudging **enables leaders to be more effective** much better than any e-learning platform.
- implement a scalable layer into daily practice, **converting already existing leadership data into action**.

Blended Leading **turns leadership development into daily action** by delivering smart, context-aware nudges where leaders already work – aligned to your organizational DNA, tailored to individual personalities, and measurable against real business outcomes.

It's not about learning additional content – it is about **leveraging what is already learned** – and **translate it into action**.



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01

The Knowing-Doing Gap

From sheer “learning” to improving leadership performance

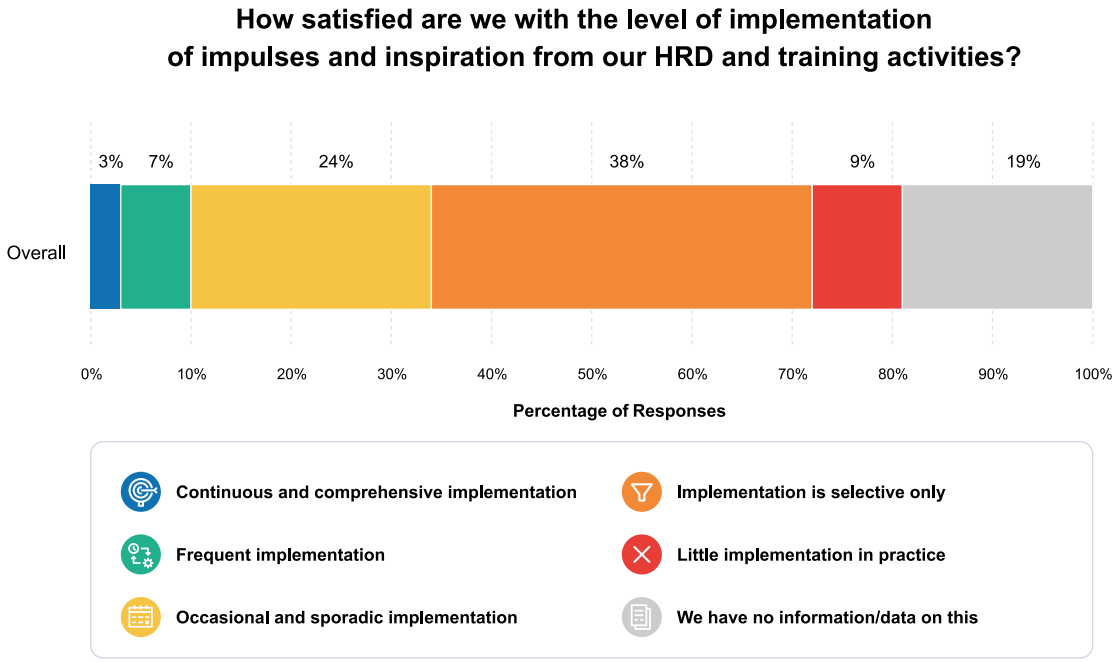
Does learning always lead to action?

Companies invest a lot into corporate learning – and especially into leadership development. Expectations to make a difference in behaviour and performance are high. Usually, participants come back to the workplace with good intentions, but the **daily whirlwind of operations absorbs and distracts the initial energy soon.** The money for development activities is spent already.

Especially CFOs are disappointed, when an investment just turns into wasted cashout. Often the old wisdom from advertising applies: "We are aware that 50% of our investment is wasted – we just don't know which 50%...". Often it is considered to be a "natural law", but a lack of transfer into practice has known barriers and reasons behind – and **countermeasures can and need to be taken.**

The reality is a really worrying different "70-20-10 rule"!

In 2026, we conducted several webinars about improving the transfer of learning in Leadership Development[1]. We specifically and anonymously asked HRD specialists how content they are with the application of the learnings in practice. From the about 250 organizations that participated, the result of their perceptions was **alarming**:



Basis: All surveyed organizations (n = 247)
Share in %

Only 10 % of the responding organisations were **happy with frequent and continuous transfer and application** of learning into practice.

70% ranged from **"sporadic – to little" implementation** rates.

But the **most alarming almost 20 %** of the answers was: We have **no clue or data about transfer and implementation**.

This means, that **about 90% of Investments** in HRD seem to be … at least **questionable**.

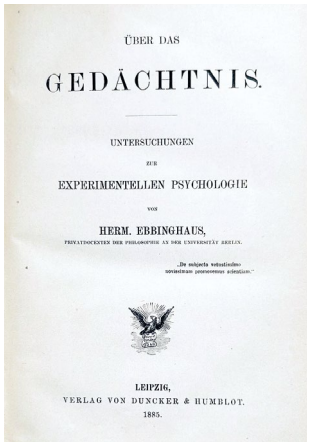
But what are the **reasons for this low transfer rate of about 10% only?**

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1.1. The “Forgetting-Curve”

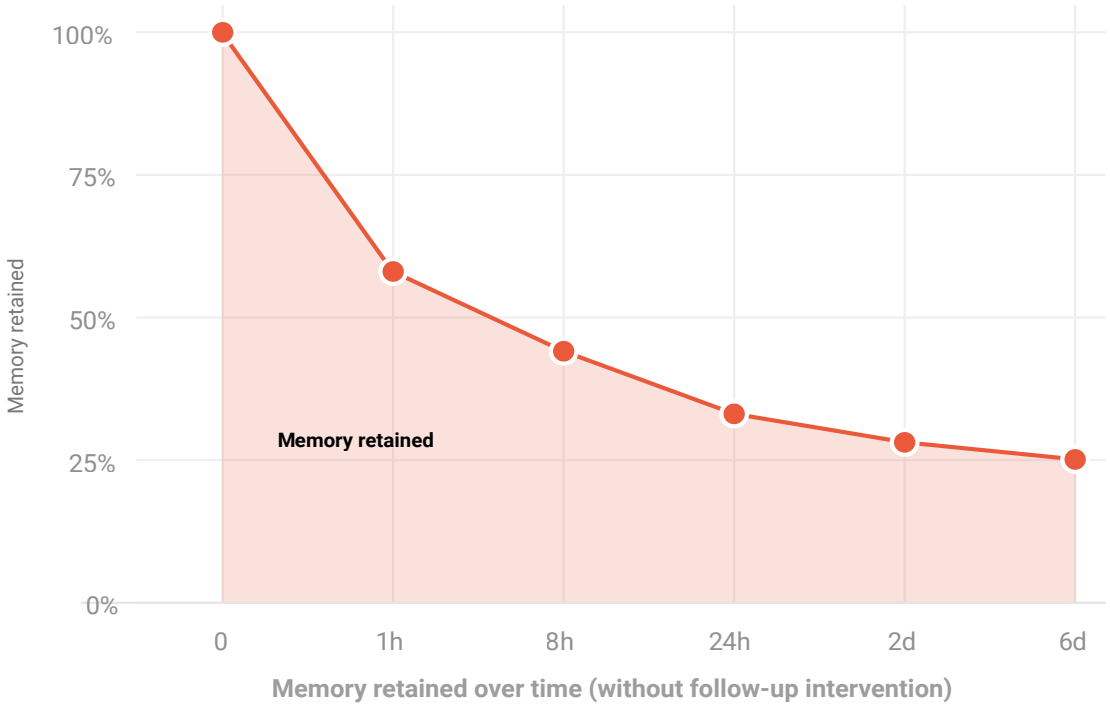
Since the German scientist Herman Ebbinghaus (1850-1909) discovered it in his research in 1885 already, we know that **people tend to forget things** – starting minutes after they heard and saw something, at least after a day almost 50% is forgotten again[2] – despite a lot of professional interventions good trainers have to “make it stick”. Leadership behaviour is difficult to apply – when you do not remember what you have learned...





Hermann Ebbinghaus was a German psychologist who pioneered in the development of experimental methods for the measurement of rote learning and memory[3].

The “Ebbinhaus Forgetting-Curve”



after 1 hour
58%
of what is learned is retained

after 8 hours
44%
of what is learned is retained

after 24 hours
33%
of what is learned is retained

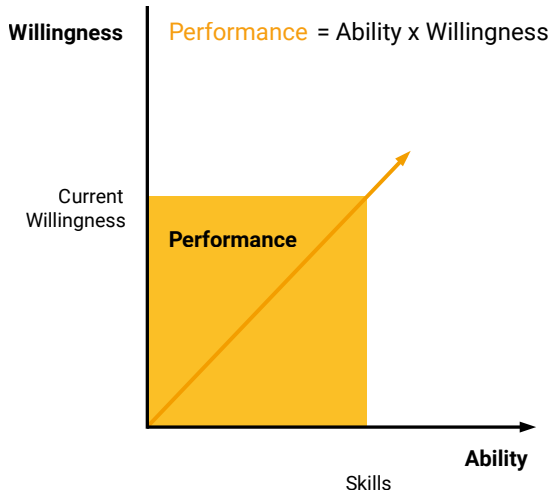
only
25%
of what was learned is retained

There is a reason for the saying: “Repetition is the mother of education”.

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1.2. Is there at least a "way-where there is a will"?

Latest since the 1970's researchers like the German Prof Lutz v. Rosenstiel[4] and later Prof. Heike Bruch[5] from Switzerland discovered the influence of a **strong will and focus** for successful action. A clear determination can be a **multiplier for decisive leadership** – left alone that sometimes the "environment" might hinder to execute ideas. Leaders that want to change something are often left alone. This is, where coaching and nudging can support to get the necessary second wind. But sometimes this solution is unavailable due to budget constraints. What disappears is not intent – it is lack of reinforcement.



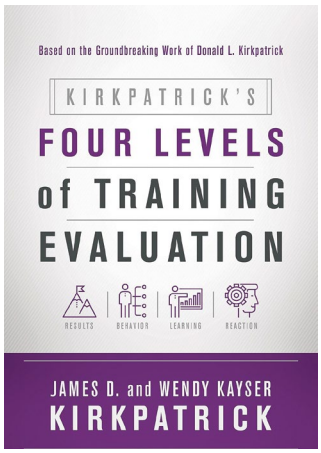
The Performance Model

describes the dependency of performance on ability and willingness/motivation.

High performance is achieved when both ability and willingness are strong motivators.

Good trainers create concrete action plans – but these are often sacrificed when daily business takes over. Even the day of a leader only has 24 hours...

1.3. Like > Learn > Apply > Result > ROI – a linear effect?



The Transfer and Application research of American experts from Donald Kirkpatrick[6] to Jack Phillips[7] in the 80's to 90's made a huge contribution to the profession of people developers, showing that:

1. Liking something does not automatically mean you **understood** it

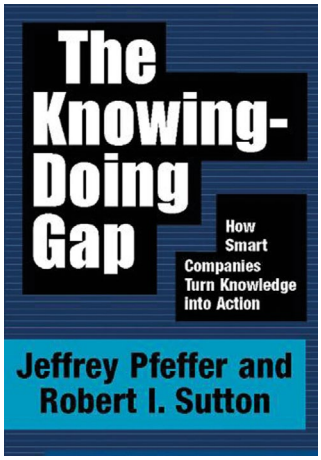
2. Understanding often does not mean you will **apply** it and **act** on it

3. Applying something does not yet mean you create **4.** the desired **effect** – and on top of these classic 4 Kirkpatrick-Levels of evaluation, Jack Phillips really added a lot of practical insight, how to demonstrate the **5.** Real Return on Investment (ROI): whether the results achieved were worth all those efforts. Is there really a **"Return on Learning"?**

A lot can and needs to be done to improve the results on each level – but is it sustainable over a longer period of time? How can this be achieved in a cost-effective way?

Blended Leading definitely goes beyond "evaluation". The old "farmers rule" applies: "Just weighing it doesn't make the pig any fatter".

1.4. The "Knowing-Doing Gap" research



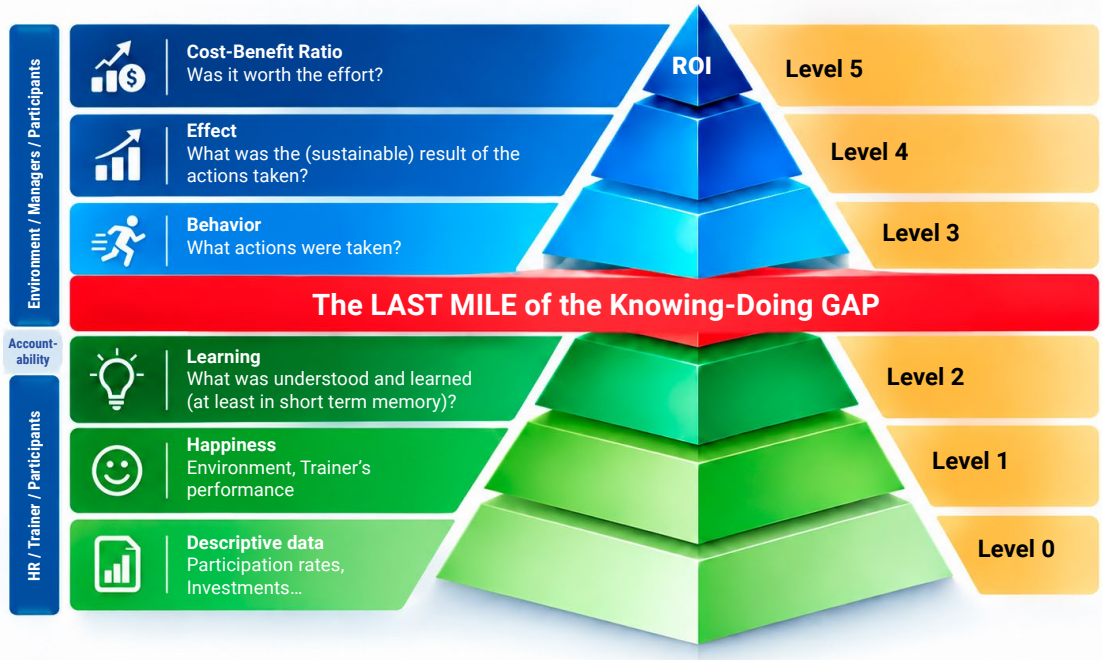
In 2000, Jeffery Pfeffer and Robert Sutton published a real comprehensive Book addressing "The Knowing – Doing GAP"[8] – It really made clear, that "**talking** about something is not automatically equal to **doing** something". May be, it only gives you better vocabulary to describe "how horrible a situation is – and that we are victims, not being or allowed to change something". But who needs to allow you to change your own behaviour?

Many people will tell you those **"someone should..." sentences**, like: "I was down in the cellar – the lights are still on – someone should switch them off...!". But what is really needed is someone that says: "I was down in the cellar – and switched the lights off". The **difference between "noticers" and "doers"** ;-)

Are we victims of this paradox: Because even just "talking" about the "knowing-doing gap" only helps to address a problem – but it does not make a difference to solve this challenge: **what really to do about it? "Don't give me problems – give me solutions."**

What is "the last mile" to cross from learning to ROI?

Learning is not an end in itself: The GAP between Level 2 and Levels 3–5



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1.5. Why Leadership Development Programs fail

In 2014, McKinsey published an insightful and since then timeless paper straight to the point, about "Why Leadership Development Programs fail"[9].

On top of those 4 insights above, they added **4 more specific reasons** why often development programs do not reach their objectives:

Overlooking and Missing the Business Context	**Tailor to the specific corporate environment!**
Decoupling Reflection from Real Work	**Integrate learning into the workflow!**
Mindsets and Personalities are Underestimated	**Customize and personalize to the individual personality!**
Not enough Focus on Results	**Initiate concrete action – constantly!**

Good HRD concepts take these factors into consideration and integrate the necessary elements in a **"multiple stream approach"** where all those four elements are addressed with targeted activities – but still all other factors mentioned above remain, and challenge corporate success after development activities:

- What about **forgetting**?
- What about having (or developing) a clear **focus and will**?
- What about to move from "Happiness" to real **results**?
- How to **bridge the "Knowing-Doing gap"?**

See more and concrete solutions – further down in this Whitepaper.

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1.6. Additional facts about leveraging AI

70%

of leaders report higher satisfaction with **AI-curated development resources** versus HR-assigned programs[10]

63%

of emerging leaders view AI coaching as **complementary to rather than replacement** for human mentorship[12]

The integration of AI in learning and development can lead to

15-30%

improvements in training efficiency and a

23%

reduction in turnover among high-potential talent[14]

54%

of professionals **actively share** AI-generated leadership insights with peers and mentors[11]

Organizations with AI-driven L&D programs report

28%

better leadership bench strength[13]

While many HR leaders offer AI training, only about

14%

of employees find their AI training highly effective, highlighting the **need for more targeted and integrated solutions** like AI nudging[15]

35%

of organizations use **artificial intelligence in the areas of leadership development, trainings and HR insights**[16]



The implication for leadership development is straightforward: organizations need **more than learning content**. They need an operating layer that **makes development continuous, personalized, and measurable**. That is exactly where Blended Leading now closes the gap, enabling cost effective individualized AI-supported micro-nudging across all levels of managers and locations/languages, providing consistency that traditional trainings often struggle to achieve.

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02

Transforming HRD Investments into Performance Improvement

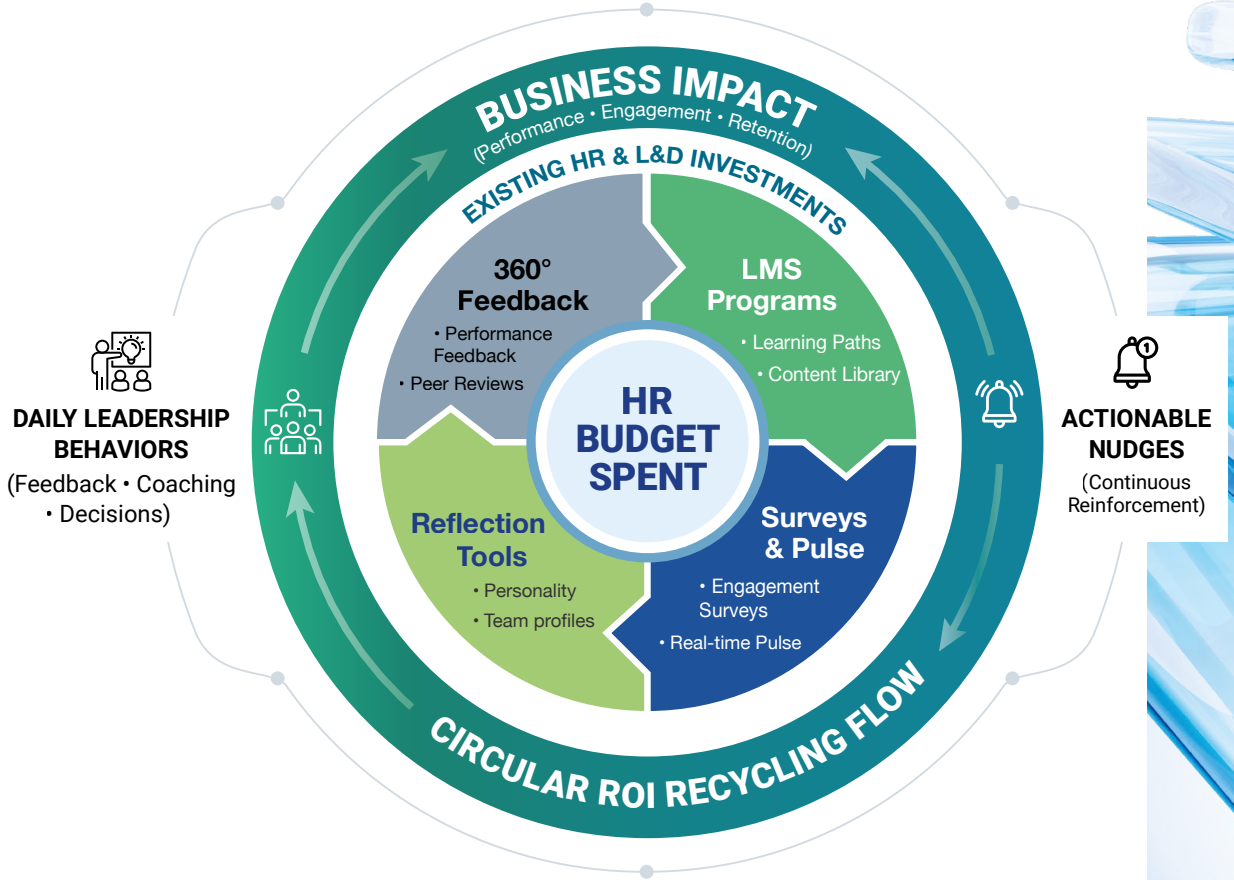
How to “recycle” and leverage all tools that are implemented – and paid – already

From HRD Investment to Performance

Companies invest a lot into **corporate learning** – and especially into leadership development. All those investments are **paid already**. They absolutely make sense, are necessary for professional development, and have a scientifically proven background.

2.1. Recycling all investments

In theory, everything makes fully sense and is orchestrated in a perfect way – but in practice, the **relevance for daily leadership and team behaviour are not visible**, often **questioned** by critical senior leaders as **"nice-to-have soft stuff"**, irrelevant for achieving business goals.



HR knows that "Business is People", and a constant investment in "what glues an organization together" is vital, but as long as this **link between soft and hard facts** is not demonstrated, it is challenging to convince top management to implement professional and necessary HR instruments.

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2.2. A Quick Self-Check

How "State of the Art" is the organization?

Tick the boxes: what the organization has implemented, intended, and how effective it feels.

○ Implemented ○ Under construction ☐ Not intended Effectiveness: – – – + ++

CORPORATE ALIGNMENT	Status ✓			Perceived Effectiveness			
Values	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Competency-Model	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Leadership Guidelines	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Learning **M**anagement **S**ystems	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Opinion Surveys	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES							
Trainings	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Peer-Groups	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Workshops	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Casestudies	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Scenarios/War Games	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Coaching	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Mentoring	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Hackathons	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
PERSONAL INDIVIDUALISATION							
Feedback	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
360° Feedback	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Performance-Management	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Appraisals	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++
Psychometrics/e.g. MBTI®	○	○	☐	--	–	+	++

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We need to be aware, that whatever is marked as implemented, **already has been paid for and is owned as a valuable asset** by the organization:

The **development of corporate alignment instruments** like corporate values, competency models, guidelines (not only talking about the salaries and fees spent to develop it, but as well for implementation activities!), but also

the various **development activities** like trainings and coaching's conducted (not only talking about fees for internal and external trainers & coaches, but also for travel and accommodation for events — keeping in mind the most expensive cost element: the time of the participants as "opportunity cost" – usually not even taken into consideration...), and last not least

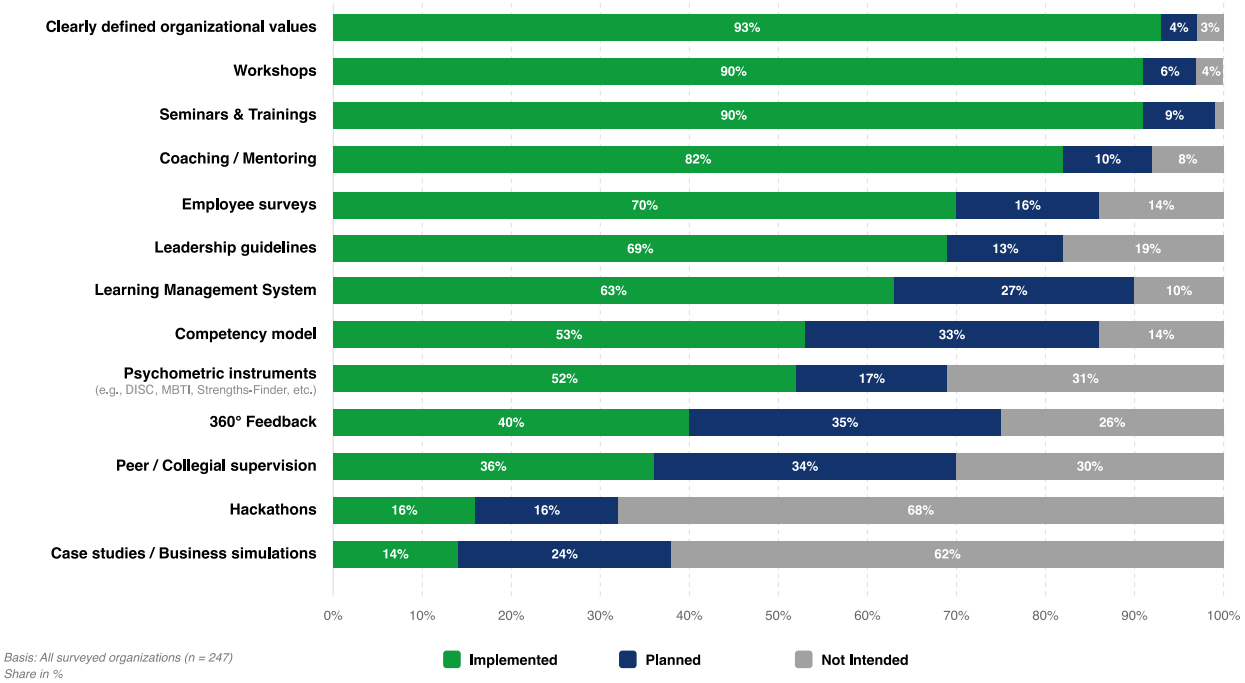
all the **individual feedback and type-reflections** provided to employees with each of the **personal result reports** (like from a 360° Feedback or a psychometric instrument) was charged and paid for already by the organization.

Whatever intended to implement in the future to further professionalize the development practice: a budget will be needed for it.

Benchmark your own results above with the survey[17] we did in 2026 with about 250 organizations:

Instruments already implemented in Organizations

Sorted by share 'Implemented' (descending)



Basis: All surveyed organizations (n = 247)
Share in %

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But all those necessary functional investments are often challenged as "costs" only, with a single (killer) question:

How do you assure the sustainable effect on business results in practice?

Many organizations lack a proof answer to convince a CFO:

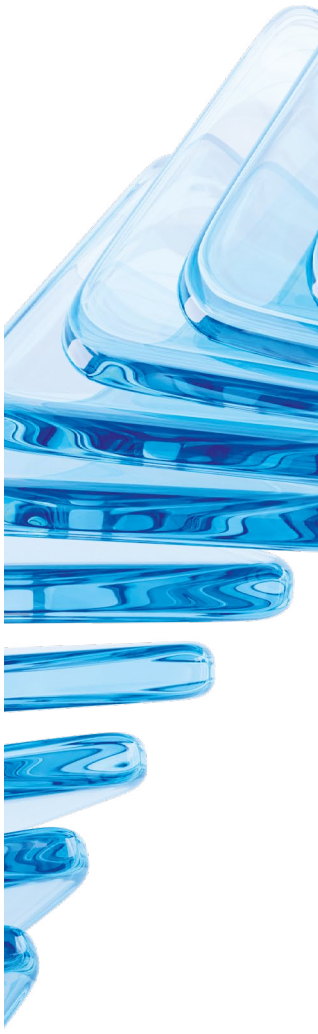
"If you are told to consider something just as a 'strategic investment', you know you are going to loose a lot of money...".

But what about, if there was a way to just **"recycle"** (or even "upcycle") **everything that has been paid for already** – at only a minimal effort?

Perfectly fits to the ESG sustainability principle • RECYCLE, REUSE, REDUCE

This is, what this White Paper is all about.





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03

AI-Supported Nudging

Constantly encouraging leaders to take action

Inspire to act

Organizations invest a lot into HRD – but after all, people remain human. Usually, all the development efforts are appreciated by the participants, but "the proof of the pudding is eating it": **what is really brought to action** in daily practice because of learning?

Learning definitely is not an end in itself.

In chapter 1.3 we discussed the levels of evaluation. Usually at least after level 2, all trainers and HRD often "chicken out": They only feel responsible to create a pleasant learning experience and have several methods that the content is understood – and through role plays even is exercised during a training.

But **starting with level 3** – when it is about **application** of learning in daily business – the **accountability is handed over back to the business again**:

> Whether something is applied in the leaders practice – to at least create a result (level 4) and achieve a return on learning (level 5) – is depending on many variables, that trainers, coaches and HRD experts say they cannot influence directly any further:
>
> "We can only lead people to the well; they must drink themselves."
>
> "We did our best – if it is not working, this is not our fault, but the participants and their leaders..."
>
> "We trained everything teachable – in some cases even evaluated the learning – but now we are out of the game when it comes to application: You can't blame the driving instructor after a passed driving test, when an accident happens in the complex traffic later on."
>
> Nice excuse for a **re-delegation of accountability**.

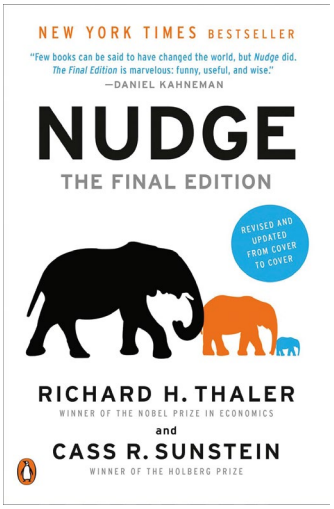
Participants usually leave well executed development activities with good intentions to apply and implement what they have learned. The insight is there; there are even good intentions – but now the "daily whirlwind of operations" eats up the best intentions... "I know I should – but no one reminds me to act – and **I need get concrete tips** what really to do. I learned a lot of **theory that was too generic**, it does not consider my individual strengths and challenges as a person." Now coaching could be a next step – but it cannot be done constantly and requires another big chunk of a budget – and additionally absorbs a lot of time.

On page 10, the challenge of bridging the last mile of the "Knowing-Doing Gap" is visible: How can Blended Leading® build this bridge?



3.1. Is there a way out of this dilemma?

Yes – someone even received the Nobel Prize for a rather easy solution.
AI now makes this principle available large scale – and sustainably.





In 2017, **Richard H. Thaler** won the **Nobel Prize** in Economic Sciences. Based on his research, he published about **"Nudging"**[18], because his findings showed that:

- A **behavioral anomaly** exists: We want to, but we don't!
- People **act neither rationally nor uninfluenced**
- Human decisions and actions **depend on the environment** they are in
- Often, **decisions** are made **quickly and unconsciously**
- Human behavior can be triggered through **changes in the decision-making environment**
- It is important, that the **full freedom of choice is maintained**: nothing will be forbidden, and nudging must be completely transparent. (Otherwise, it would become manipulation).

When you read the chapter before, you see how "this white paper connects the dots": Thaler offers a lean solution for the Knowing-Doing Gap Pfeffer addressed.

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3.2. But what is Nudging?



All of us are aware and experienced at least one example: When you do not buckle up in your car (which you want to do, you learned you should do it, dangerous if not doing it, even required by law!) your car will beeeep gently (or annoying) until you have done so.

This **Nudging just is a concrete decent reminder to really act**. Of course, you can ignore it – nudges are never mandatory or enforced.

This is also, why many people wear a smart watch to get health related reminders (like "get up and walk for two minutes") – which of course can be ignored as well.

But there is a reason, why people like to be reminded: often you are willing – but just need a little "nudge" with a concrete tip to move into action.

With leadership, this is the same principle[19]:

We learned something, we know we should do something, have good intentions – now only a brief regular reminder with a **concrete proposal for action** makes the difference.

Traditional leadership development tends to peak at the moment of delivery. Leaders attend a workshop, complete a digital module, or meet with a coach – but afterwards re-enter a high-pressure operating environment that pulls attention elsewhere.

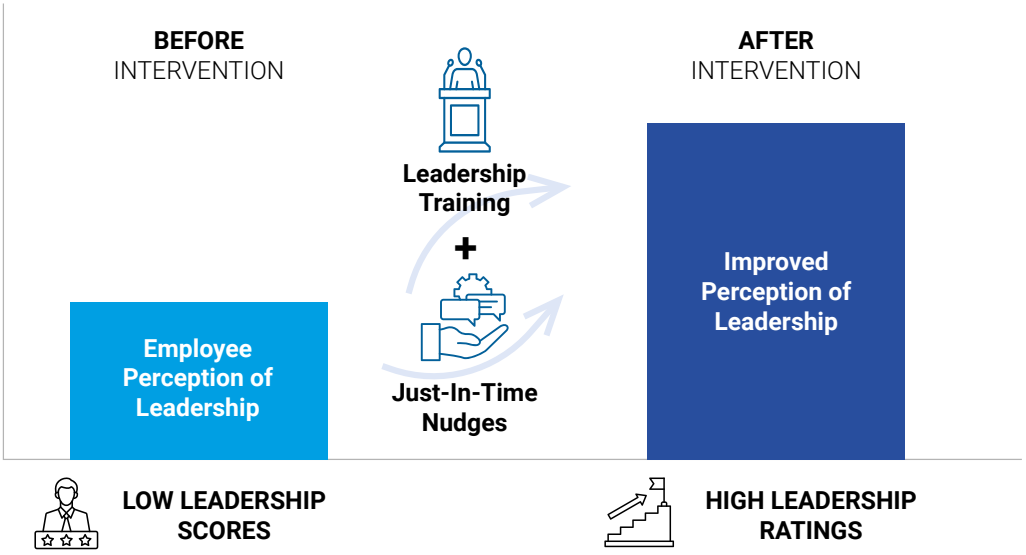


Without reinforcement, new habits rarely become default behaviours. That is why nudging is framed as a **reinforcement system, not merely another additional content channel**.



A 2024 field experiment involving 226 managers and 4,442 employees found that leadership training combined with just-in-time implementation nudges improved how employees perceived their managers' transformational leadership behaviors[20].

Impact of Leadership Training & Just-In-Time Nudges



Best-practice: AI nudging does not replace leadership programs, coaching, LMS or all feedback results. It translates them into concrete and constant action.

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04

Blended Leading

Transforming Leadership Development into a real business driver

What is the difference between Blended *Learning* and Blended Leading?

As mentioned in the chapters before, Leaders (and of course HRD-experts, trainers and coaches as well) suffer for decades from the paradox situation, that **successful learning does not equal results and business success**. It finally is about time to change this situation in all organizations. Blended Leading is the game changing **scientific tool that was developed with funding from the European Union**. Scientifically consulted and supported by psychologists from Institute of Social, Organizational and Educational Psychology in Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Since the 1970'ies, Blended ***Learning*** emerged and underwent several technological improvements – it now is a common element in many HRD concepts, mostly used in a form of a generic or specific **corporate Learning Management System**. It supports **self-managed learning** and makes content available at the need, speed and moment it is required from a "learner". Often integrated into classic instructor led courses (pre- or post-training), Blended Learning gives **opportunities to learn** content when **requested from a learner** (so it is passive).

Blended ***Leading***® is **different**! This absolutely new approach, developed by Leadership-Support and registered as a Trademark with the European patent Office (EU-IPO) since 2021.


EUIPO

Registered / Eingetragen 08/01/2021

No 018286491

EUROPEAN UNION INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

This Certificate of Registration is hereby issued for the European Union trade mark identified below. The corresponding entries have been recorded in the Register of European Union trade marks.

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BLENDED LEADING

The Executive Director / Der Exekutivdirektor

Christian Archambeau

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4.1. What is the INPUT for Blended Leading?

Blended Leading uses the new **possibilities of Artificial Intelligence** to provide leaders with constant **bespoke individual "nudges"** to inspire **targeted leadership activities**, customized to:

The very specific organizational framework leaders operate in, like:

- Corporate Values
- Specific Competency Models
- Leadership Guidelines etc.
- Employee Opinion Surveys
- Training Content
- Corporate Strategy

The individual Personality:

- Personal Feedback received (e.g. 360° Feedbacks etc.)
- Specific personality of a leader, based on Type (e.g. MBTI®, DISG® StrengthsFinder® etc.)

As discussed in the previous chapter of this White Paper: most of it has been **implemented in Organizations already –** and definitely has been paid for – meaning the organization owns it already. Based on those specific corporate frameworks and individual preferences, it proactively gives leaders individualized and targeted impulses to lead better – to be more effective and efficient as a leader. It would be a waste not to use these benefits.

Blended Leading® Engine Components:

Organization Specific Sensors
and uploaded documents the company already invested in

Blended Leading® Engine

AI ANALYSIS SUPPORTED
AI-generated Leadership Nudges to foster transfer into practice

Organization Specific

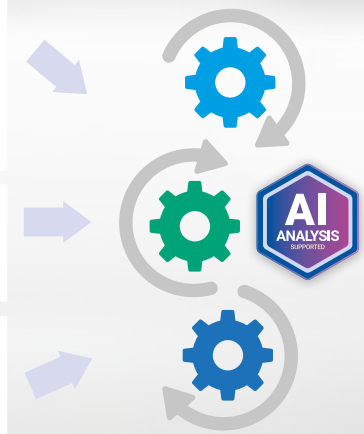
Environment
Specific Corporate and Personal Values / Employee Opinion Surveys, Training content, etc.

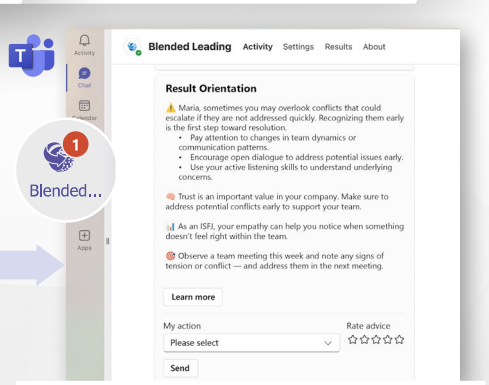
TALENT PORTFOLIO · VALUES INDICATOR · PROJECT INDICATOR · CHANGE INDICATOR
e.g.
and more

Individually Personalised

Behaviour
Corporate competency models / 360° feedbacks / skill profiles etc.

Personality
Profiles from psychometric instruments (like MBTI®, DISC®, Insights®) etc.





Individualized for each leader in the specific corporate environment: constant AI augmented leadership support with concrete and actionable inspirations.

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Blended *learning* and *leading* have **in common**, that **both augment and reinforce** the classic approaches of learning and leading – **not making them redundant**.

One of the clear differences between blended learning and **blended *leading*** is it's **proactivity**:

While in blended learning, the initiative always comes from the learner – blended leading nudges come permanently and proactively. Also, the **clear nudges to act** are one of the strengths of Blended Leading.

A survey about "The State of HR", conducted by Gallup and the German Society for Personnel Management (DGFP) in 2026[21], concluded, with **5 concrete recommendations** for the **Future HR practice** – which all are achieved, when Blended Leading is implemented within an organization:

1	Make performance management **more practical** and **suitable for day-to-day use**
2	**Focus** employee listening more **on implementation** rather than on data collection
3	Develop **leadership** specifically **as a lever for implementation**
4	Organize **AI enablement** more systematically
5	Actively **strengthen HR's standing**

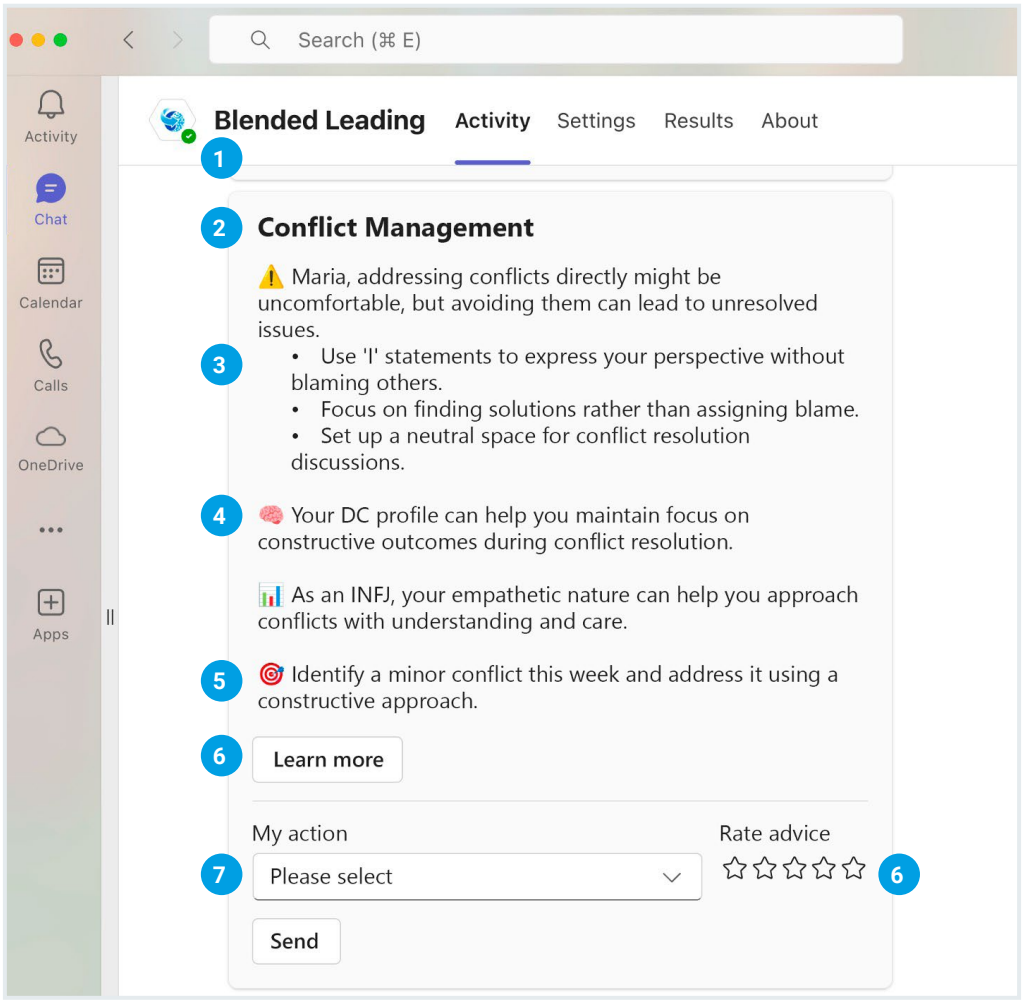


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4.2. What is the OUTPUT of Blended Leading?

Directly **embedded in the leaders MS-TEAMS® environment**, leaders permanently receive AI-generated nudges: Organization specific and individualized to the own personality and behavior.

This is what a nudge can look like:





Nudge components:

1. **Specific corporate context** is preset (e.g. values, leadership guidelines, surveys, competence model)
2. **Specific competency** from the corporate model
3. Three concrete **tips**
4. Specific **reference to individual personality**
5. Proposal for a **concrete action**
6. **Deep-Dive possible** (e.g. link to LMS, LI-Learning etc.)
7. **Evaluation** of the nudge as a learning loop for AI
8. **Action** focus: **What will I do** specifically?

For the time being, Blended Leading is already available within MS-TEAMS® – additional platforms like Slack® and Google chat® intended for future versions.

And there even is more analysis available within the Blended Leading App, embedded in MS-TEAMS®

For corporate HR, there is a anonymous overview available, that shows KPI'S across several evaluation levels.

Website www.blendedleading.com

Video https://l.ls-s.com/video

4.3. Inspiring to lead with clarity

Leaders remain the significant "humans in the loop"! Deloitte's 2025 research[22] notes that effectively developing direct reports can boost performance by as much as 27% and make people 1.5 times more likely to exceed their goals. In the same research, 67% of employees say their manager knows best what motivates them. Yet most managers feel under-supported when expectations are rising.

This is where **AI nudging is positioned**: definitely not as a replacement for manager's but as a **force multiplier for the manager's leadership role**. Instead of expecting managers to translate workshops, survey dashboards, and culture frameworks on their own, AI nudging provides talk tracks, reflection prompts, coaching suggestions, and reminders tailored to the specific team context.

When leaders are the bridge between strategy and employee experience, the platform that strengthens leaders has enterprise-wide impact.



Build on the specific organizational DNA – instead of generic content

Leadership development does not fail because organizations lack frameworks; it fails because **generic frameworks are often hard to translate into the realities of a specific culture**. Blended Leading addresses that by **using the organizational DNA**: the competency model, values, and leadership signals that define what good leadership looks like inside a specific organization.

Leaders are far more likely to act on nudges that reflect the language, expectations, and priorities of their own organization.

For HR and talent leaders, it also means the **development experience becomes aligned** with succession planning, change initiatives, and broader people strategy instead of living in a disconnected learning silo.

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Reinforce belonging, trust, and accountability during change

Leadership development is not only about learning and capability, but also about how leaders create clarity, trust, and momentum during disruption. AI nudging reinforces the micro-behaviours that shape those outcomes: checking in before uncertainty becomes disengagement, framing the why behind change, recognizing effort, and prompting leaders to listen before communicating. These are small moments, but at scale with Blended Leading they become a **leadership operating system.**

4.4. Common leadership development mistakes – and how to avoid them

Classic challenge in learning	The Blended Leading approach
Treating training as an event	Use AI nudging to **extend inspirations** received after a program, when habits form.
Delivering generic content	**Anchor guidance** in the company's competency model, values, and leadership language, so the advice is really relevant.
Separating learning from work	Deliver nudges directly **in MS Teams®**, where leaders are already making decisions and having conversations.
Overloading managers with data	**Convert** 360's, surveys, and HR signals **into** constant prioritized next **actions** rather than another dashboard.
Not measuring completion and impact	**Track** adoption, behaviour consistency, sentiment, and business **outcomes** – not just evaluating attendance or 'happiness'.



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05

How to get started

Lean implementation for maximum impact

Change that sticks does not happen in a vacuum

AI nudging works best when it is **designed around the people who shape leadership behaviour**: senior leaders, HR and talent teams, managers, and the leaders receiving support. Each group plays a different role in deciding what is measured, what is modelled, and how quickly learning translates into action.

Reflections for:

Senior leaders

- What leadership behaviours do we need more to support our strategy?
- Where does leadership consistency break down across teams or geographies?
- How will we define success in both people and business terms?
- Which transformation priorities require stronger manager support right now?
- Where are we asking leaders to change behaviour without reinforcing it in the daily flow of work?

Middle Managers

- Where do I need more clarity before I can support my team well?
- Which leadership moments are hardest for me to handle consistently?
- What signals tell me my team needs more support, recognition, or alignment?
- How can I turn feedback into a concrete next step in my behaviour?
- What would make leadership easier in the “moment of truth”?

HR and Talent leaders

- Which existing leadership programs need a reinforcement layer?
- What data sources should source personalized nudges: 360s, surveys, HRIS, competency models?
- How will we ensure trust, privacy, and responsible AI use?
- Which cohorts should be prioritized first: new managers, high potentials, or change leaders?
- How will we prove value quickly without overburdening HR or managers?

Reflections for all Leaders profiting from nudging:

- What behaviour am I trying to strengthen right now?
- Which situations cause me to revert my old habits?
- What type of nudge would help most: reflection, preparation, feedback, action proposals or follow-through?
- How will I know I am applying what I learned differently?
- What support do I need from my manager, HR, or the platform to keep improving?

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5.1. Five moments where AI Nudging makes a difference:

The strongest commercial case comes from the moments where leadership behaviour matters most and reinforcement can change outcomes fast.

1

New managers and role transitions

The **first 90 days in a new role** are when leadership habits are easiest to shape – and easiest to lose. Nudge supports feedback, delegation, and team communication early.

2

After workshops and leadership academies

Formal programs create content and intent. AI nudging converts that intent into weekly action by reinforcing what to apply, when, and with whom.

3

Hybrid and distributed leadership

When leaders cannot rely on hallway visibility because many **work from home-offices**, they need timely prompts for clarity, inclusion, recognition, and follow-through across locations.

4

High-potential and succession transitions

Organizations use AI nudging to **accelerate readiness** for broader scope, larger teams, and more complex stakeholder management.

5

Major change events or post-disruption recovery

After restructures, rapid growth, or **operational change**, managers need support to rebuild trust, explain the why, and stabilize performance.



Pro tip: Start with one or two moments that matter – then later extend the scope. Early focus makes ROI easier to demonstrate.

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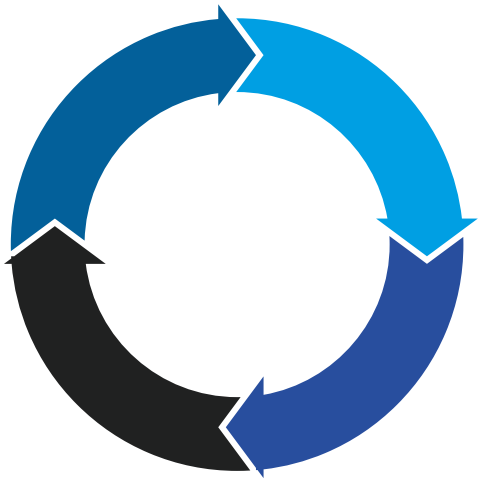
5.2. A practical pilot path

Blended Leading: **start with a focused cohort**, use real organizational context, support leaders without adding workload, and show impact in weeks rather than waiting for a long implementation cycle to prove value.

01

Scope

Choose a target cohort and one or two moments that matter.



02

Align

We support you to load values, competencies, and leadership signals.

03

Activate

Deliver smart nudges in the daily workflow.

04

Prove

Review behaviour, sentiment, and business indicators.



Conclusion

AI **nudging** represents a **paradigm shift for transfer and application of leadership development**, providing the continuous, tailored support that traditional training often lacks. Organizations that adopt AI nudging will see significant improvements in leadership behaviour, employee engagement, and overall business performance. As AI technologies continue to evolve, embracing these solutions will be critical for organizations aiming to build stronger leadership pipelines and HR can prove that it is leading edge in leveraging AI.

Recommendations

1. Implement Blended Leading as the key AI Solution of HRD: Prioritize investments in this AI nudging platform that are customized to the organization's specific context.

2. Ensure Integration into MS-TEAMS®: Seamless integration of AI tools with current communication channels maximize usability and engagement among leaders.

3. Cultivate a Data-Driven Culture: Organizations must commit to making decisions based on data analytics from nudging programs to continuously improve leadership development initiatives.

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5.3. Three easy steps for implementation of Blended Leading®

The path to sustainable transfer enablement:

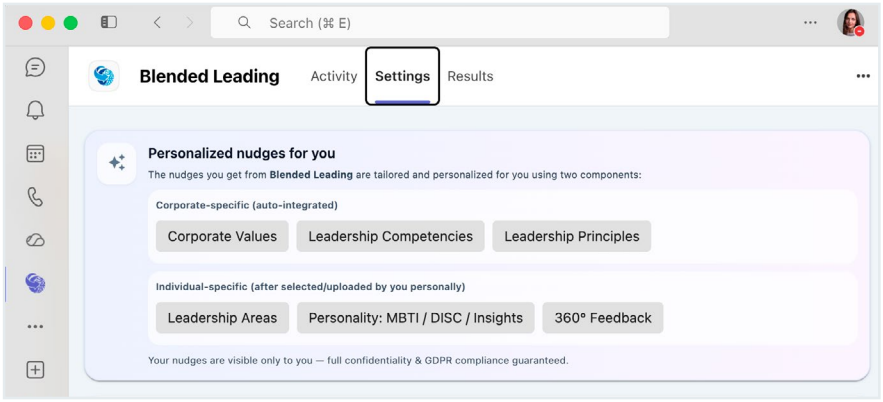
Step 1 Supporting you to configure your specific organizational environment in advance

Select values, guidelines, competence model, reports of tools used, etc., to be conneced to Blended Leading (see Chapter 2 of this paper).

Enable Personalization of nudges. The nudges you get from Blended Leading are tailored and personalized for each user using two components:

- **Corporate-specific** (auto-integrated): Corporate Values, Leadership Competencies, Leadership Principles
- **Individual-specific** (after selected/uploaded by you personally): Leadership Areas, Personality: MBTI / DISC / Insights, 360° Feedback

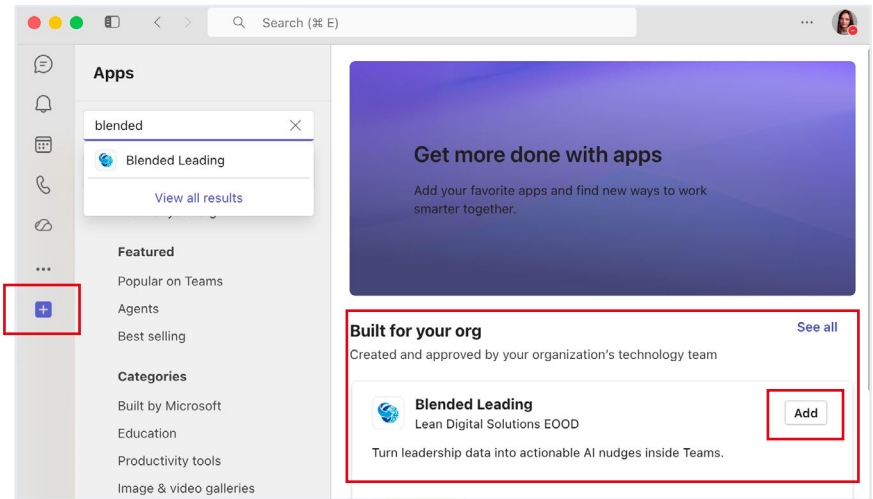
The nudges are visible only for each individual! – full **confidentiality & GDPR compliance** guaranteed.



Step 2 Technical activation of the app in MS-TEAMS® by your system administrator

(No additional software – no internal "IT project")

- Search for Blended Leading in **MS Teams App's** → Add → Turn leadership data into actionable AI nudges inside Teams. Built for your org.

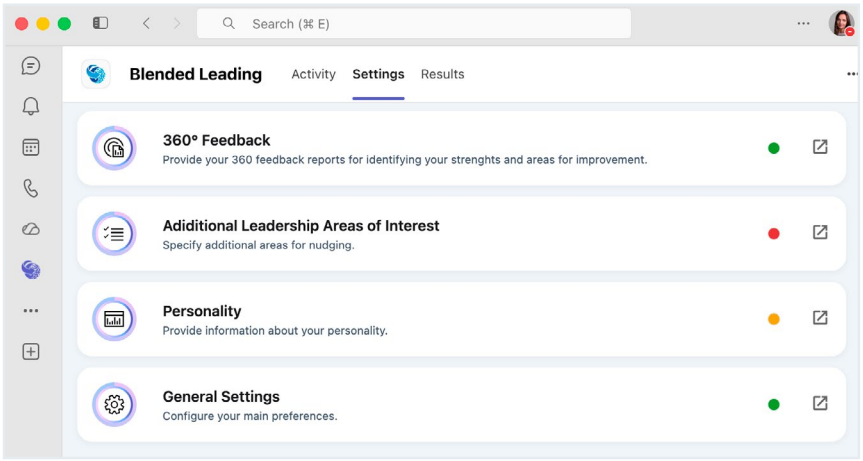


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Step 3 Participants individualize their nudges

Personal reports and settings:

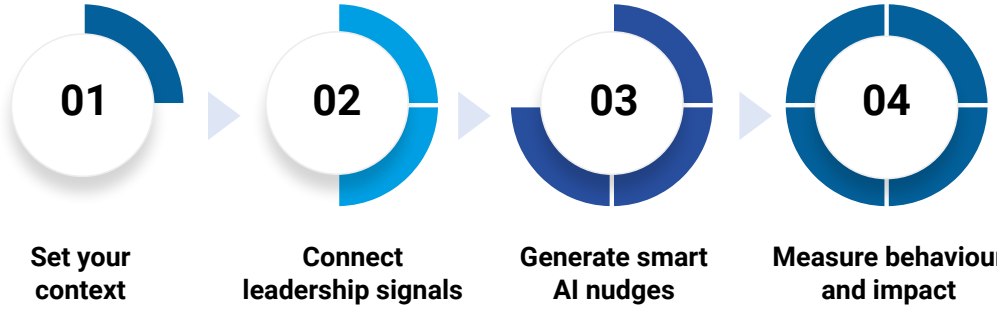
- **Upload feedback received**: Provide your 360° feedback reports, appraisals etc. for identifying your strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Additional Leadership Areas of Interest:** Specify additional focus areas for nudging.
- **Personality**: Provide information about your personality.
- **General Settings**: Configure your main preferences.



5.4. From leadership insight to leadership action

Implement Blended Leading as an activation layer, that sits between leadership data and leadership behaviour, converting signals into next-best actions that leaders can use immediately. This is how organizations close the gap between training, feedback, to measurable business outcomes.

The Blended Leading Activation Model



Inputs can include your competency model, values, HR data, survey signals, 360 feedback, and manager priorities.

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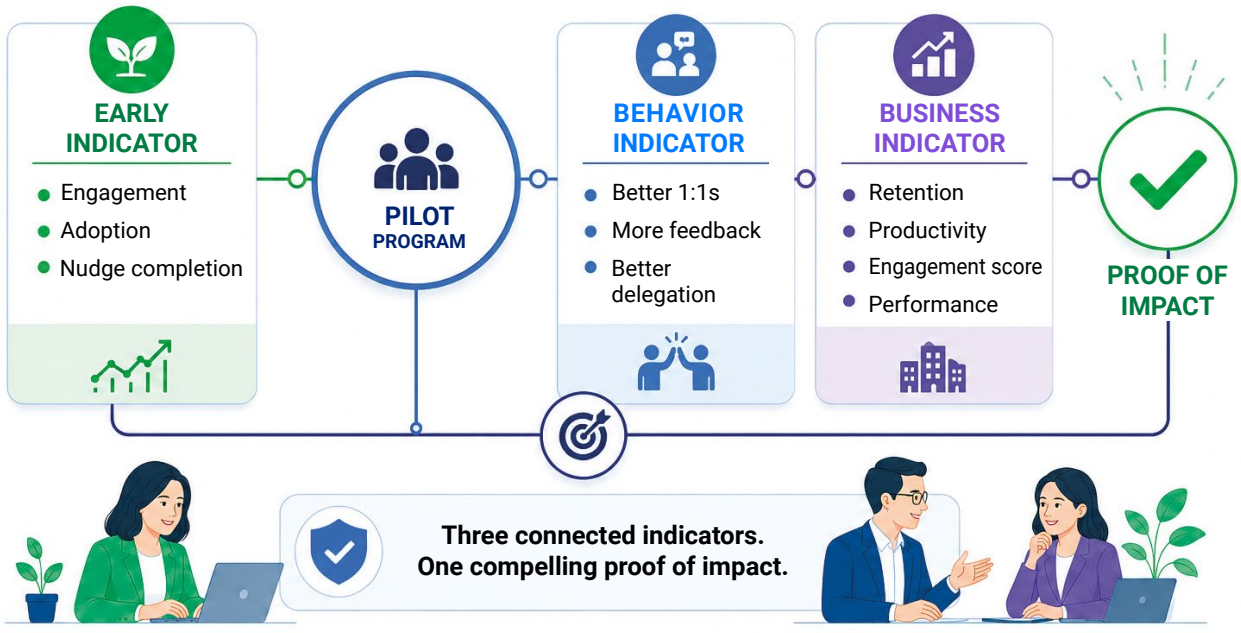
5.5. Metrics of nudging impact

AI nudging can be **assessed across several levels**: what people feel, what leaders do, and what the business experiences as a result.

Employee sentiment	Behavior & adoption	Business & operational outcomes
Confidence in leadership	Each nudge is rated by user	Faster adoption of new processes
Sense of support and belonging	Frequency of coaching actions	More consistent manager behavior
Clarity on priorities and expectations	Improvement in targeted behaviors	Productivity, retention, and change readiness

A practical rule: measure one early indicator, one behavior indicator, and one business indicator for every pilot. That creates a clearer proof story for CHROs, HR leaders, and sponsors.

A practical example:
measuring one early indicator, one behavior indicator, and one business indicator for a pilot.
Creating a clearer proof story for CHROs, HR leaders, and sponsors.



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06

Annex & FAQ's

- Ingredients
- Scientific Background
- Privacy & Security
- GDPR
- AI-Act

Driving Value Through Nudging

Blended Leading is strongest when positioned as a **business-focused leadership augmentation**, not just an L&D tool. Its value sits at the intersection of leadership development, organizational development, change execution, and manager effectiveness.

Leadership development:

Support every leader with **personalized nudging journeys** – not just the few for whom you can afford human coaching.

Change management:

Translate communication, feedback, and change priorities **into consistent manager behaviours** across the organization.

Hybrid & distributed leadership:

Reinforce clarity, inclusion, recognition, and follow-through **when leaders and teams are not co-located.**

Senior executive and HR visibility:

Track adoption, behaviour change, and **leadership consistency** with a clearer story about ROI.

Designing an effective AI strategy for leadership and people development **requires more than technology or a home made prompt**: it demands the right combination of behavioral science, organizational context, and real-time data. Blended Leading provides a comprehensive set of resources that help organizations move from fragmented insights to actionable, AI-powered leadership enablement.



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The ingredients of Blended Leading®

Scientific Leadership Competency Framework

The core of Blended Leading is a scientific **validated leadership meta-competency model**, built on decades of research and enriched with real-world organizational insights. This framework structures leadership into clusters, competencies, behaviours, and skills—allowing organizations to map leadership expectations directly to measurable actions.

This ensures that any AI initiative is grounded in what drives individual corporate leadership effectiveness, instead of generic assumptions or hallucinations.



Multi-Source Organizational Data Integration

Blended Leading connects and **consolidates data** from across the enterprise, including:

- Communication tools (Microsoft Teams®)
- Corporate context – Values, Competency framework, Leadership Principles
- Engagement and pulse surveys
- 360° feedback and psychometric tools

By **aggregating both structured and unstructured data**, the platform creates a **holistic view** of leadership behaviour and team dynamics.

This unified data layer is critical for all HR-AI strategy aiming to move beyond siloed analytics.

AI-Powered Text & Sentiment Analysis

A key resource within Blended Leading is its ability to interpret qualitative data at scale. Using advanced NLP and Emotional AI:

- Communication patterns are reflected for tone, sentiment, and intent
- Leadership behaviours are inferred from real interactions
- Insights are quantified into actionable scores

This enables organizations to **unlock tacit and unstructured data into useful confidential insights for individual leaders.**

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Personalized AI Nudges (Behavioral Guidance Engine)

Blended Leading translates insights into action through AI-generated nudges – short, personalized recommendations **delivered directly within daily workflows** (starting within Microsoft Teams®).

These nudges:

- Address specific leadership gaps
- Reinforce desired behaviours
- Provide continuous, in-context learning

Augmenting traditional training, this **creates real-time behaviour change**, not just knowledge transfer.

Embedded Workflow Integration

A defining resource for AI strategy success is integration. Blended Leading is embedded directly into **tools leaders already use**, eliminating friction and ensuring:

- High engagement
- Seamless integration into daily routines
- No need for additional platforms

This "**AI where work happens**" approach is essential for scaling AI impact across the organization.

Customizable AI Models Aligned to Your Organization

Blended Leading enables organizations to:

- **Adapt** competency models to their culture and strategy
- Define their **own leadership frameworks**
- Train AI agents on **internal data and context**
- **Connect to other existing HR Systems** (interfaces possible)

This ensures that AI outputs are context-aware, culturally aligned, and business-relevant, rather than generic.



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Continuous Measurement & Organizational Benchmarking

Blended Leading provides:

- **Individual leadership scorecards**
- Organizational **benchmarks**
- **Progress tracking** over time

AI continuously monitors performance and adjusts recommendations, enabling a closed-loop system of insight → action → improvement.

Detailed data are **confidential and visible for the individual user only** – all overview dashboards have **anonymized KPI's only**.



Enterprise-Grade Data Privacy & Security

Blended Leading is built with strict compliance standards:

- GDPR-compliant data handling
- Anonymized and encrypted data processing
- Client-owned data and AI models

This ensures that AI strategy can scale responsibly in sensitive HR environments.

Why This Matters for every organization's AI Strategy

Most AI initiatives fail not because of technology, but because they lack:

- Contextual data
- Behavioural relevance
- Adoption in daily workflows

Blended Leading addresses all three by **combining**:

- **Behavioural science** (what to improve)
- **AI analytics** (what's happening)
- Embedded nudges (concrete proposals to act)

The result is an AI strategy that doesn't just analyse or evaluate leadership – it actively improves it in real time.

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FAQs on Data Security, the AI Act and GDPR

Blended Leading contains **no high-risk elements** – no assessments – users decide for themselves how to implement nudges.

Encrypted in Transit & at Rest – every data exchange and stored dataset is protected with enterprise-grade encryption.

The AI platform **Microsoft Azure AI** – providing enhanced support for processing and storing data entirely within EU.

All data for the AI agents are **anonymised** in advance (with **no identifiable personal data**) and are encrypted.

The A/SI agents are trained specifically for each organisation to the organisation's needs – and are not used for any other purposes.

All organisational data remain 100% the **property of the customer.**

Full GDPR compliance.

All data by default are **stored and processed** exclusively on servers within USA or EU (default – with highest safety norms globally) – **or in a specific jurisdiction you want them to be stored**

The highest standards of compliance were a prerequisite for EU funding! Documentation and human oversight are guaranteed at all times.



Blended Leading is in compliance with EU AI Act as of July 2026.

EIC Seal of Excellence

ISO/IEC 27001

US/EU-hosted

GDPR-compliant

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Selected image sources used in this guidebook

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How satisfied are we with the level of implementation of impulses and inspiration from our HRD and training activities?
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Hermann Ebbinghaus

Über das Gedächtnis: Untersuchungen zur Experimentellen Psychologie

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Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Training Evaluation

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Knowing-Doing Gap

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ROI RECYCLING FLOW – AI created by LS-S Leadership Support GmbH 2026

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Instruments already implemented in Organizations – *Image generated by LS-S Leadership Support GmbH.*

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Nudge: The Final Edition

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A practical example – AI created by LS-S Leadership Support GmbH 2026

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About Blended Leading

Blended Leading helps organizations **close the loop between leadership insight and real-world action**. By combining contextual AI nudging, behaviour-change logic, and enterprise-ready deployment, Blended Leading gives HR and business leaders a scalable way to strengthen managers, **focus on real action**, accelerate adoption, and improve leadership consistency across teams.

Start a pilot

Start with a focused **Pilot** with one small cohort for a specific program.

https://l.ls-s.com/bl-demo-en

What's next after your pilot: instead of a pilot, leverage the full effect of AI-nudging immediately

Take the next step and bring the full experience to your organization. Contact us today for a personalized offer and individual pricing tailored to your needs.

https://blendedleading.com/pricing-plans/

How can I become a reseller?

We offer attractive plans for training organizations and freelancers to **augment their own services and profit from their customers success.** Also check out our Website **www.ls-s.com** for **additional tools** you can use to **generate KPI's for soft facts.**

Just drop us a line – and we will contact you

reseller@ls-s.com

About LS-S Leadership Support

LS-S Leadership Support GmbH is a product brand of Lean Digital Solutions. The company is part of a German consortium with over 30 years of international experience in innovative development of leaders, teams, and businesses.

We offer digital business solutions for HR management, team leadership, organizational development Change Management and corporate culture to generate KPI's for soft factors.



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So What?

You now are:

- ✓ familiar with the reasons for the Knowing-Doing Gap
- ✓ conscious what the organization has invested in HRD already
- ✓ know that there is a new solution how to inspire leaders to act
- ✓ aware that this can be leveraged with a pilot project

Taking action now?

(Mark your decision)

☐ **No – Nothing!**

Nice that personally I learned something new – but we just will **continue** to:

- ○ accept the Knowing-Doing Gap as immutable
- ○ complain about lack of transfer, action and impact
- ○ be perceived as AI laggards
- ○ have a hard time justifying our investments in HRD
- ○ make sure no one becomes aware of Blended Leading

☐ **Forward this Whitepaper internally**

Start a discussion about how we might improve the application and transfer of learning.

☐ **Invite key stakeholders to a short demo**

Get an impression of Blended Leading and **decide** afterwards whether to implement it.

☐ **Suggest a pilot**

Trigger a decision from a key executive to implement it as soon as possible (before the trial expires).

☐ **Leverage all HRD investments immediately**

Implement Blended Leading across the organization and ask Leadership Support for an implementation plan and a concrete proposal.



Funded by
the European Union
NextGenerationEU

BLENDED® LEADING

Transforming Leadership Development into Action

Request a demo

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