

How Are Legitimate Leaders Faring In This Crisis?

'Leading In A Crisis' Diagnostic Results

September 2020

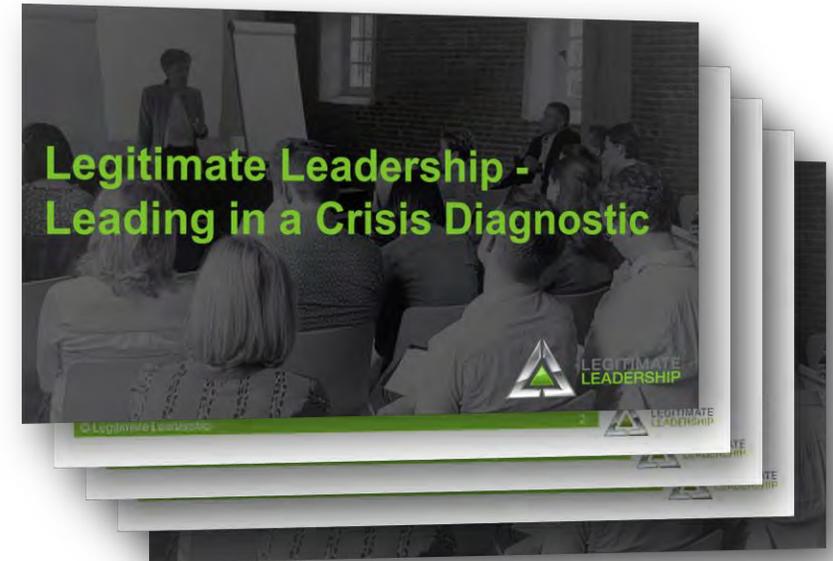


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Introduction – Leading In A Crisis Diagnostic

This report details the overall results from a diagnostic exercise conducted by Legitimate Leadership across its client base internationally between May and July 2020.

The intention of this report is to provide insights from a Legitimate Leadership perspective into what is working, what is not working, and what opportunities exist for leaders as they continue to work to gain the support and trust of their people during the global coronavirus pandemic.



Disclaimer: Data contained in the document was collected explicitly for the purposes of diagnosing leadership challenges and opportunities. Randomised sampling methods were not used, and the findings therefore do not claim to be statistically significant.

Who Did We Speak To?

282 interviews were conducted in **16 organisations** across **7 industries**

- Managers (56%)
- Non-managers (44%)
- 30 to 45 minute structured interviews
- Working from home
- Working on site

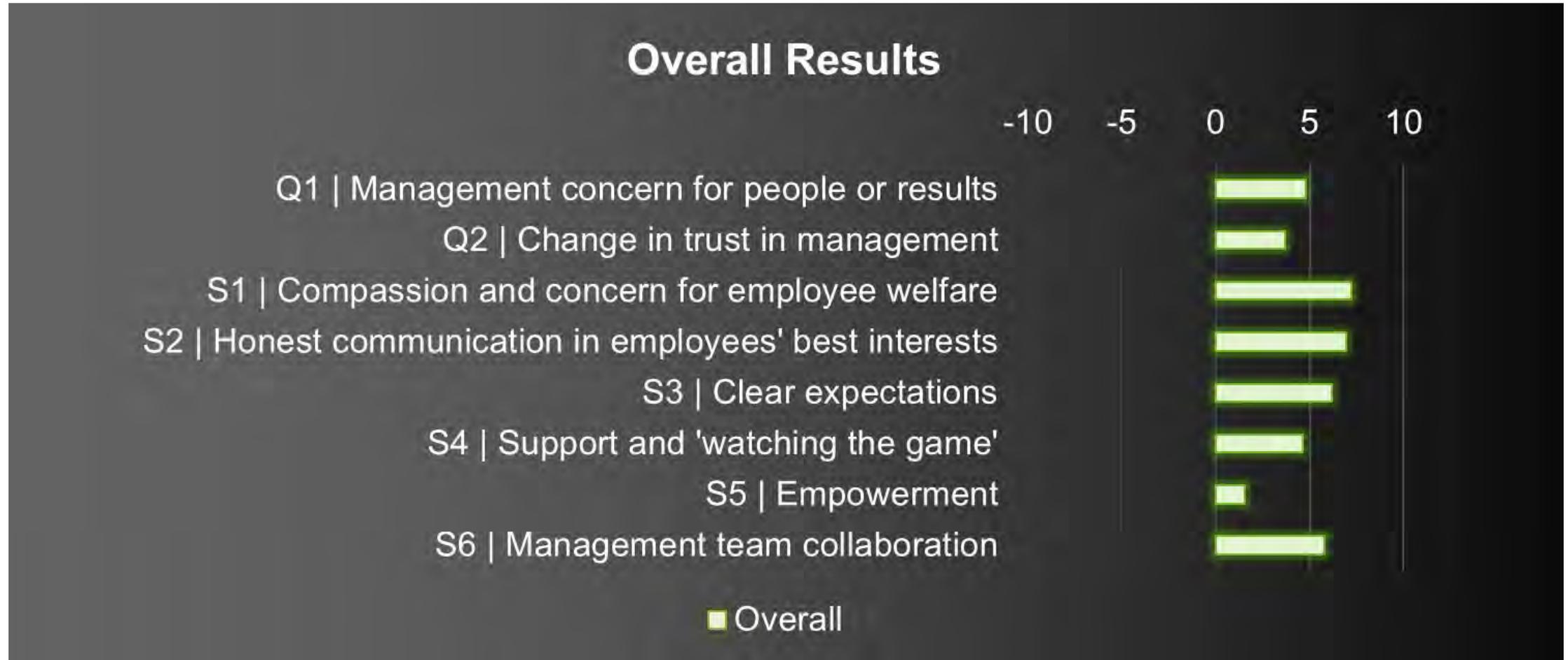
- SMMEs
- Large businesses
- Corporates
- Privately owned
- Publicly listed
- Unionised
- Non-unionised

- Mining and manufacturing
- Financial services
- Information Technology
- Health
- Tourism
- Biotechnology
- Non-profit

What Did We Ask?



How Are Legitimate Leaders Seen To Be Faring In This Crisis?



Leaders were perceived to have performed admirably during the crisis. It is a tribute to them that they remained true to the Legitimate Leadership principles and practices at this time.

Insight 1:

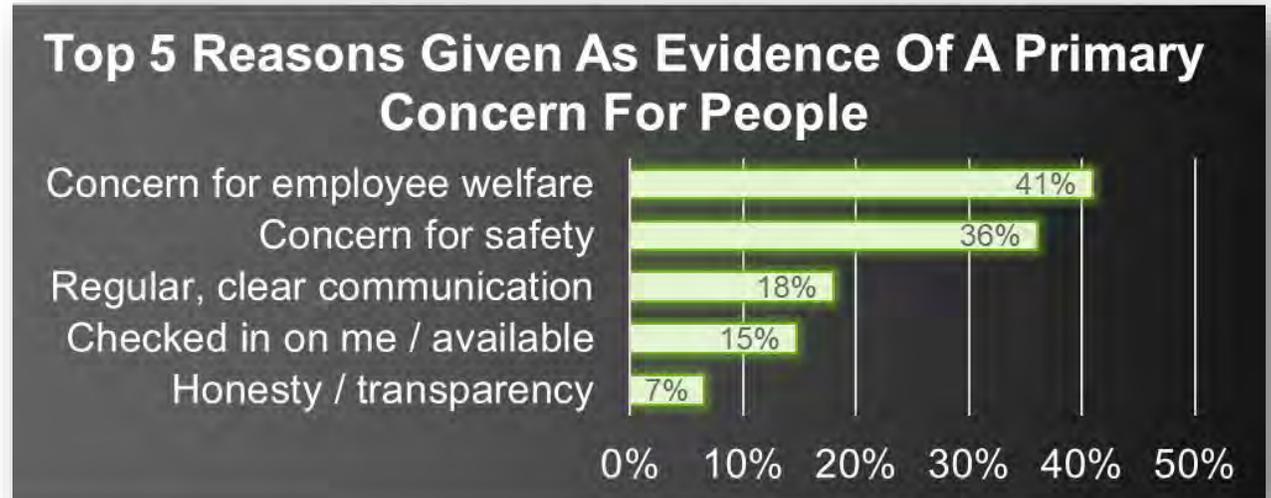
People draw conclusions about what you care about by looking at where you spend your time, what you give your attention to, and whose agenda you prioritise.

Management's Focus Of Concern

What Legitimate Leadership believes:

- Care is about **much more than**, and sometimes not even, looking after **people's physical and material needs**.
- Care is about **genuine concern** for the individual as a **human being** not as a human resource.

What the diagnostic results showed:



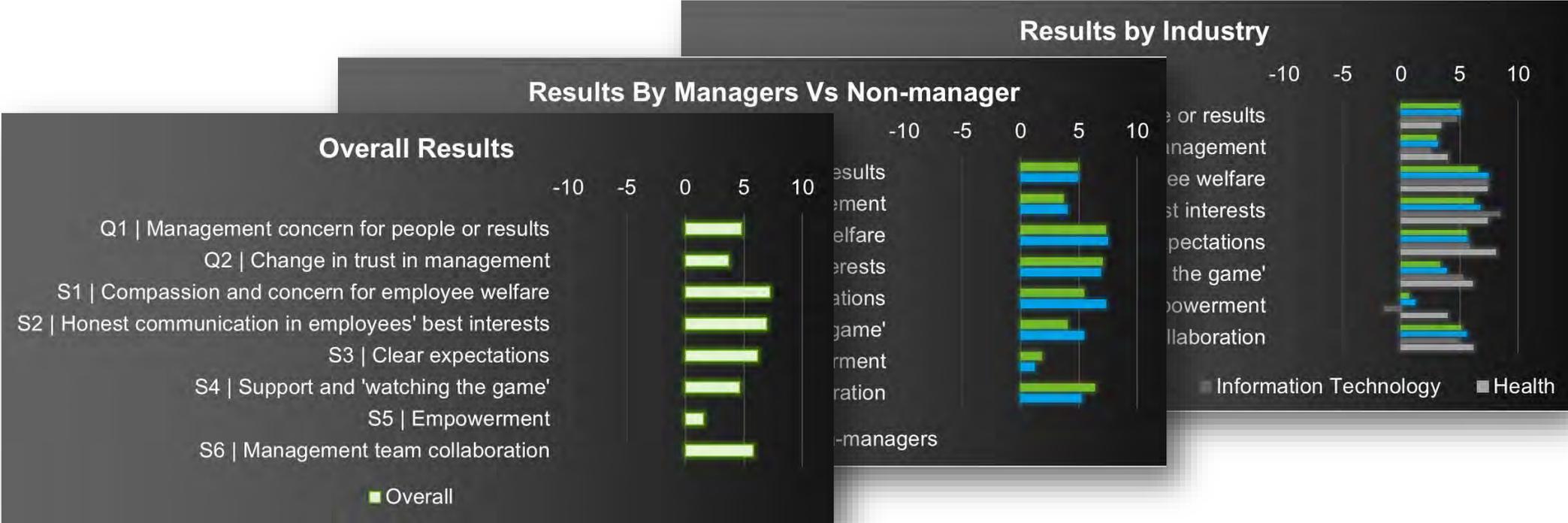
When leaders were seen to make people their primary concern this was because they put people's health and safety first, no matter the impact on results. Moreover they demonstrated personal concern for the individual, stayed in contact to find out how they were doing under the circumstances and kept them informed to the best of their ability. This was more important than job or income security.

Insight 2:

Trust is not a function of circumstance, situation or position in the hierarchy – it is a function of intent.

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Change In Trust In Management

What Legitimate Leadership believes:

There are four ways to earn trust and gain power:

1. Build **personal relationships** by getting to know the person and having due concern for personal circumstances.
2. Spending **time** on and giving **attention** to what is important to the person.
3. Putting the **other person's interests first**; being values not needs driven.
4. Trust them, handover decision making authority, **give up control**.

What the diagnostic results showed:

Top 5 Reasons Given For Significant Increase In Trust



When trust in management increased it was because management showed genuine concern for their people's welfare, put their peoples' interests before their own, gave time to what was important to their people such as keeping them informed and entrusted them with new responsibilities.

Insight 3:

Leaders have been significantly more successful in demonstrating care and compassion than they have been in using the crisis to empower and bring out the best in their people.

Performance Against The Criteria For Legitimate Leadership

What Legitimate Leadership believes:

There are two criterion for legitimate power – **CARE** and **GROWTH**.

What the diagnostic results showed:

Alignment With The Criteria For Legitimate Leadership - CARE

S1 Compassion and concern for employee welfare	7.3
S2 Honest communication in employees' best interests	7.0



Leaders have delivered on the **CARE** criterion, putting people's health and safety first, being available, keeping them informed and providing support.

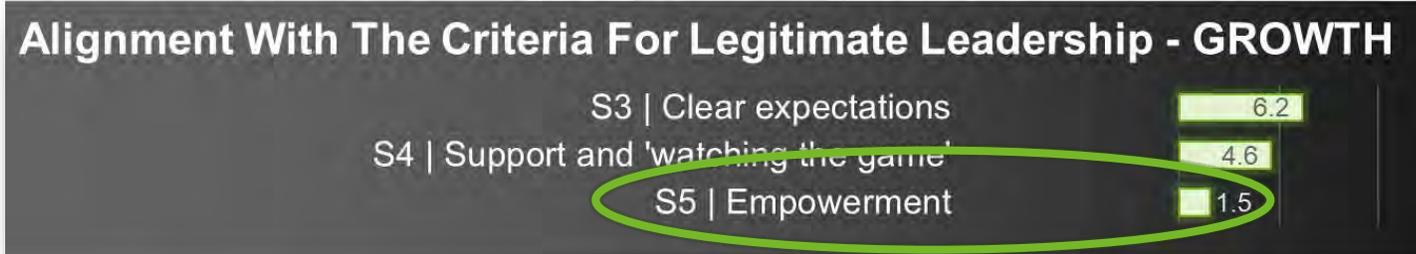
Alignment With The Criteria For Legitimate Leadership - GROWTH

S3 Clear expectations	6.2
S4 Support and 'watching the game'	4.6
S5 Empowerment	1.5



They have not delivered on the **GROWTH** criterion to the same extent and have not capitalised on the opportunity which any crisis provides to empower people and enable them to be the best they can be.

Performance Against The Criteria : Growth / Empowerment



What Legitimate Leadership believes:

- People trust those who care about them. But they also trust those who trust them.
- Leaders assume their people are looking for direction and feel honour-bound to swoop in and save the day.
- The price they pay for taking back control is too high.
- Managers should deliberately choose empowerment over control. If they don't their default position will be to revert to control.

What the diagnostic results showed:

Empowerment which did arise was by default rather design, enabled primarily by remote working.

What is required:

1. Push decision making authority as far as possible down the line.
2. Empower managers to empower their people to do, not do themselves.
3. Seek new responsibilities which will accelerate growth.
4. Resist resurrecting the old controls and excessive, detailed reporting.

Insight 4:

In this crisis people have valued hard-working leaders with a personal touch over visionaries and strategists.

What Made The Standout Leaders Exceptional?

Five core themes emerged in response to the question: “Were there any stand-out leaders, and what made them exceptional”

1. **Connecting / checking in** on a personal level and **demonstrating genuine concern.**
2. **Being available** to and giving their people support.
3. **Communicating openly**, honestly and transparently, disclosing information and really listening.
4. **Being in the trenches** with their people.
5. **Working hard**, going above and beyond and **taking on additional responsibilities.**

Insight 5:

Superhero leadership works. So does spreading the load.

(The second is our strong preference)

Who Were The Standout Leaders?

- In some organisations there were one or two superheroes at the top of the organisation who were seen to have excelled in the crisis.
- In other organisations those interviewed pointed to numerous individuals, at every level, who had shown exceptional leadership during the crisis.
- We believe that the many rather than the rare few is preferable and consistent with the Legitimate Leadership model.

For sustainable organisational excellence there need to be legitimate leaders at every level in the line of command. Excellent leaders cultivate excellent leaders below them.

Insight 6:

What people are looking for from leaders at this time is clear: communication, compassion, empowerment, flexibility, visibility and appreciation.

What Are The Expectations Of Leaders Going Forward?

1. **Communication** – not too much, honest, human, short, interactive.

Listen more and **trust** us with financial information.

2. **Compassion and Connection** – check in on the person, caring, approachable, supportive, empathetic.

Consistent 121s with the focus on the person as a human being and enabling them to contribute.

3. **Empowerment** – less micromanagement, stop checking up, less meetings, less reporting.

Enable people to take ownership and accountability by handing over control.

4. **Flexible working arrangements** – don't go back to normal, allow different ways of working.

Help people to **work remotely** and **leaders to lead remotely**.

5. **Visible leadership** – be visible and available, especially if you are working remotely from your team.

Make time to **watch the game** and give your people your full attention.

6. **Recognition and appreciation** – be deliberate. Don't fall victim to 'out of sight, out of mind'.

Recognise for careful, **reward** for extra-mile.

In Summary...

Insight 1:

People draw conclusions about what you care about by looking at where you spend your time, what you give your attention to, and whose agenda you prioritise.

Insight 2:

Trust is not a function of circumstance, situation or position in the hierarchy – it is a function of intent.

Insight 3:

Leaders have been significantly more successful in demonstrating care and compassion than they have been in using the crisis to empower and bring out the best in their people.

Insight 4:

In this crisis people have valued hard-working leaders with a personal touch over visionaries and strategists.

Insight 5:

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Insight 6:

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Recommendations

For trust to increase further **leaders need to maintain the positive leadership behaviours and practices** evidenced during the crisis and do still more to convince their people of their change in intent.

1. To **retain the gains made in trust** managers should continue to:
 - Show genuine concern.
 - Keep communication brief but human and interactive.
 - Work as a team.
 - Stick to short, focused meetings where decisions are made without delay.
2. To **increase trust further** managers should:
 - Trust their people more; relax the controls and reduce the reporting.
 - Deliberately increase decision making authority and autonomy.
 - Make both behavioural and performance expectations crystal clear.
 - Hold their people accountable for their value-added delivery not presence or results.

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