

DIVING INTO THE CORE OF
LEADERSHIP

SURVEY REPORT



**Funded by
the European Union**

Project description

Leadership is characterised as a transformative relationship between leaders and followers who aim for tangible changes aligned with their shared goals. An effective leadership style significantly influences team performance, subsequently impacting the well-being of individuals such as youth workers and young people.

With this perspective, our project, Diving Into the Core of Leadership (2022-3-DK01-KA210-YOU-000099657), seeks to equip youth workers and young individuals with essential knowledge and enhance important skills. This includes the ability to exchange information, foster healthy relationships by providing support and actively listening to others' needs and perspectives. Moreover, the project aims to inspire participants to take initiative and create a work environment conducive to both personal and professional growth, believing that a caring and responsible leader is pivotal in shaping a positive organisational climate and healthy organisational culture.

The Research

The survey, developed by youth workers, was distributed within the European youth work sector. Its primary purpose was to pinpoint the learning requirements and potential challenges faced by youth workers in contemporary leadership scenarios. A total of 181 responses were collected for the survey, which comprised 25 closed questions categorically focusing on six main areas: Demographic data, Leadership experience and style, Work environment and well-being, Toxic leadership, Digital tools for effective leadership, Training and development.

The respondents were drawn from key countries within the project consortium, namely Denmark, Spain, and Romania, as well as from youth workers across Europe and beyond. The survey results are integral to the analysis that will lay the foundation for the development of an e-learning Moodle Course.

Survey results

What age category do you fit in?

181 Responses

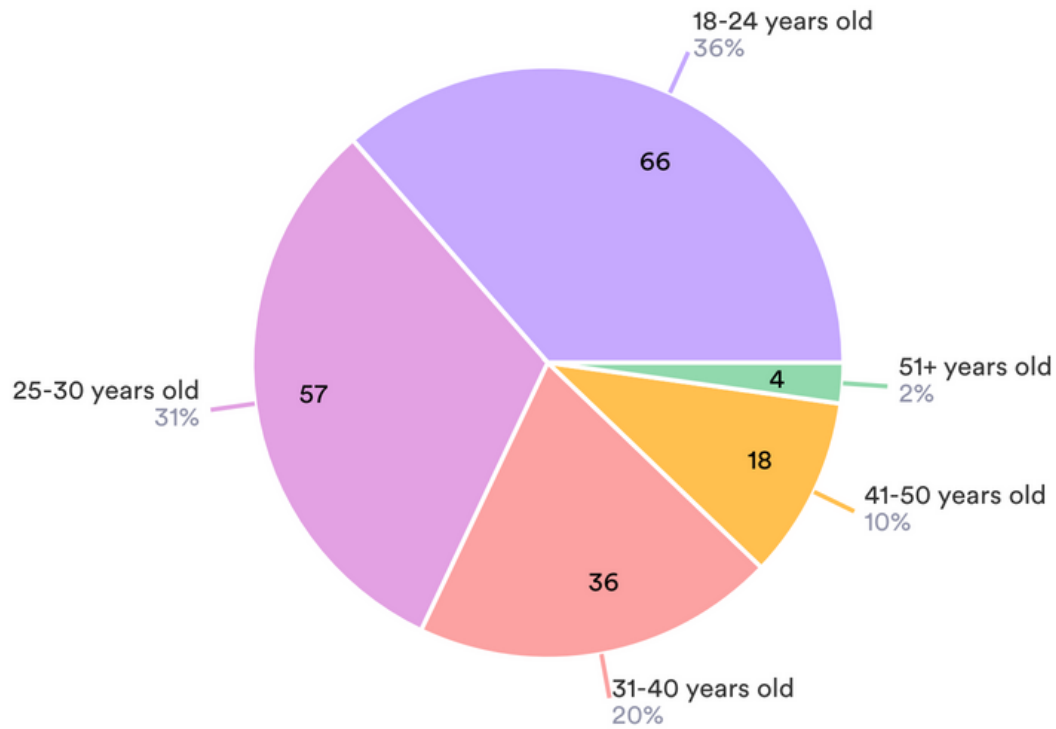


Figure 1

Of the 181 responses received, 67% originated from individuals aged between 18 and 30 years. Within this range, the highest percentage (36%) fell within the 18-24 age bracket. The substantial alignment between the age distribution of our respondents and our target audience makes the gathered data particularly insightful.

What is your gender?

181 Responses

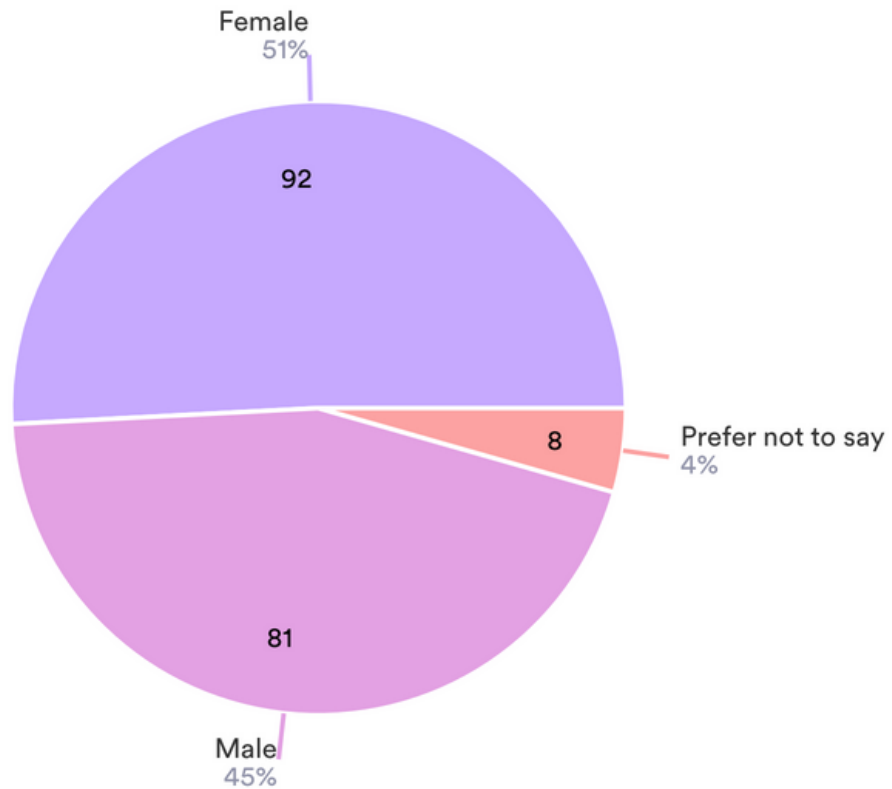


Figure 2

An equitable representation of genders was observed among the respondents, signifying a balanced participation in the survey. Specifically, 51% of respondents identified as female, while 45% identified as male, reflecting a fairly even distribution. Additionally, 4% of participants opted not to disclose their gender preference, maintaining anonymity in this aspect of the survey data.

How many years of experience do you have in the field of youth work?

181 Responses

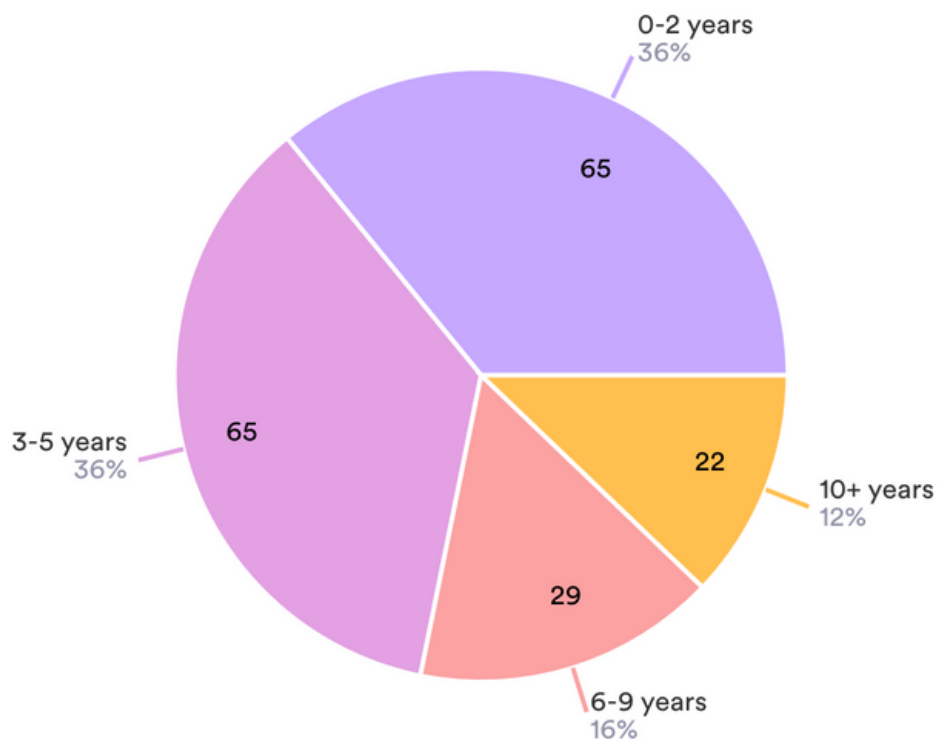


Figure 3

Similar to Figure 1, Figure 3 reaffirms that our survey is reaching the appropriate demographic aligned with our target audience. A significant portion of respondents (36%) reported having 0-2 years of experience in the field of youth work, while an equal percentage (36%) indicated having 3-5 years of experience in this field.

How would you describe your leadership style?

181 Responses

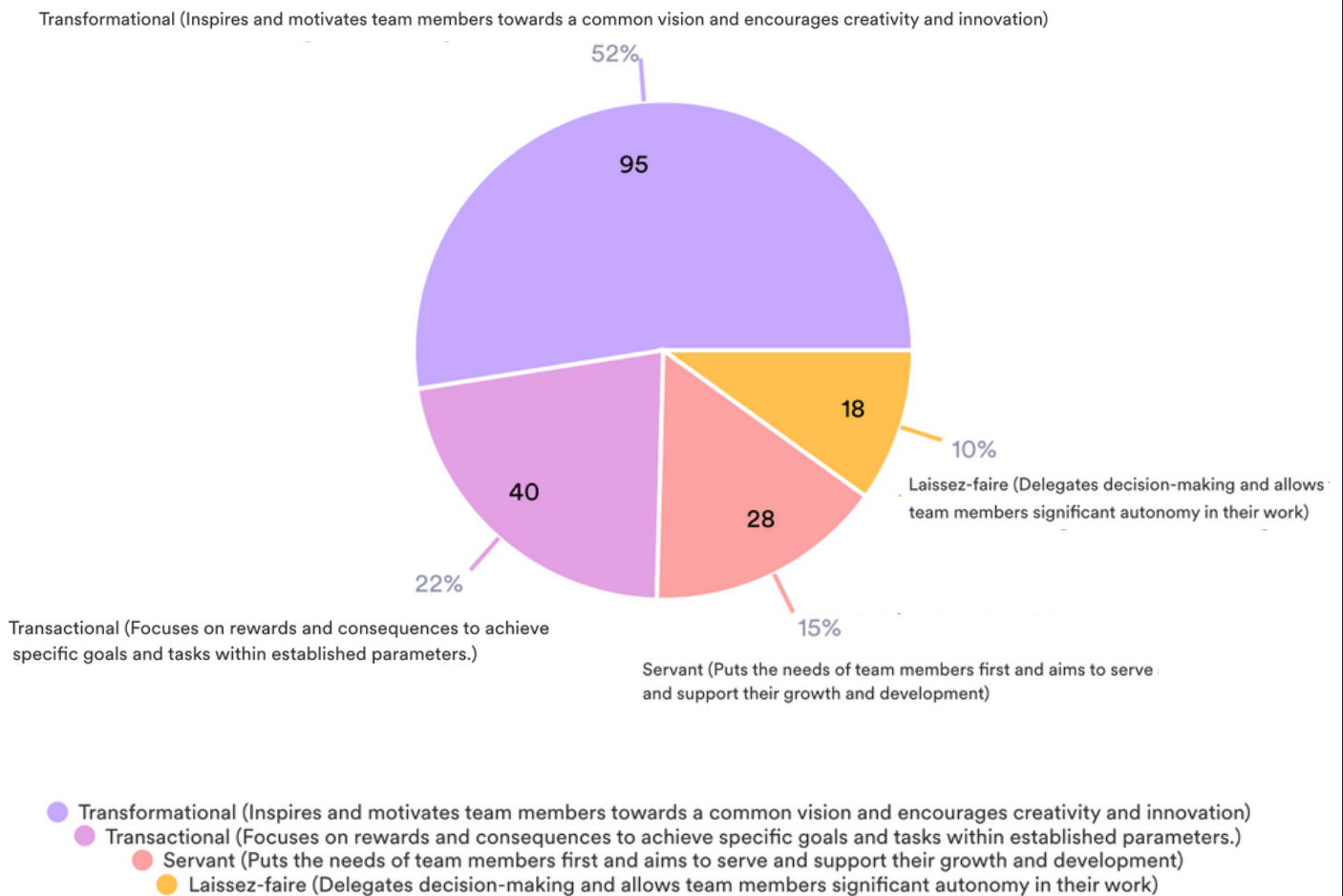


Figure 4

52% of respondents would describe their leadership style as: Transformational (Inspires and motivates team members towards a common vision and encourages creativity and innovation), followed by 22% describing it as Transactional (Focuses on rewards and consequences to achieve specific goals and tasks within established parameters).

Remembering that 36% of the respondents only have 0-2 years experience and that some individuals wouldn't want a leadership role. Therefore, the answers could also include what individuals expect from a good leader or who they would "want" to be as a leader.

What leadership qualities do you consider most important for a youth worker?

603 Responses

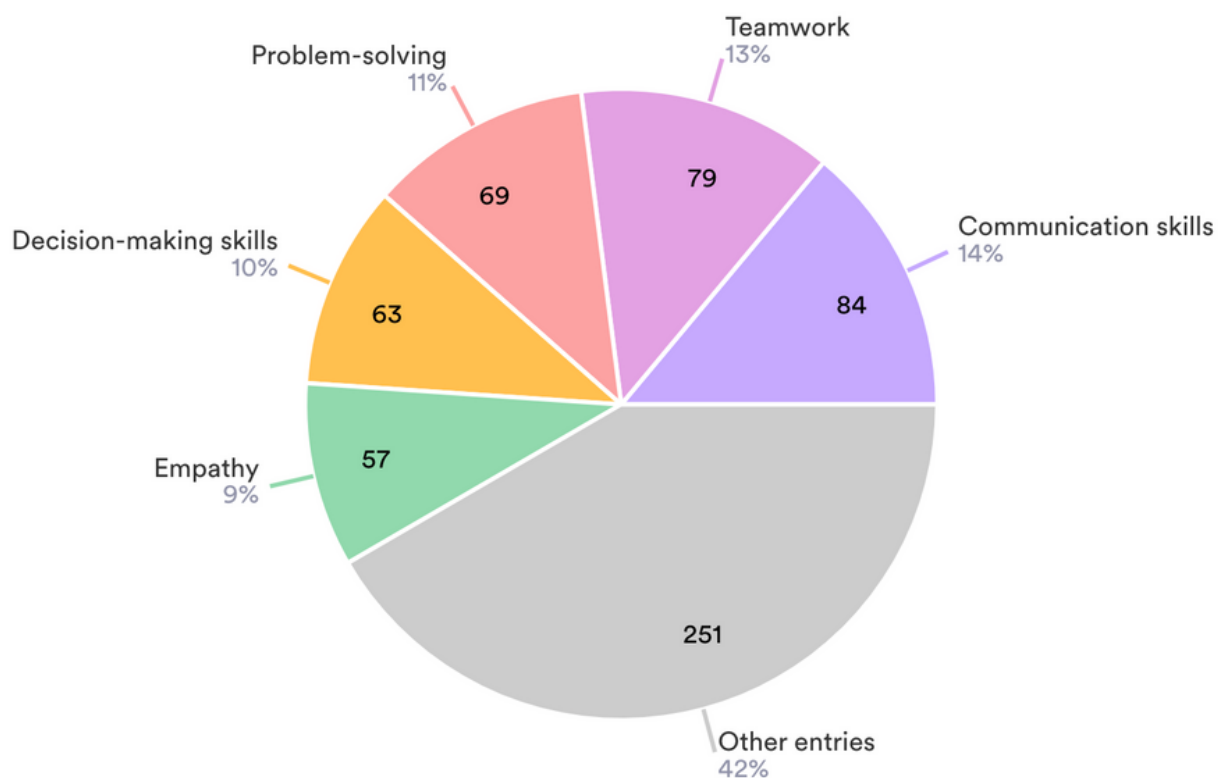


Figure 5

For this question there were multiple options to choose from. The named categories of the graph above were the highest voted, "Other entries" is the collection of the lower voted categories.

When asked what leadership qualities they consider most important for a youth worker the respondents answered: Communication skills 14%, Teamwork 13%, Problem-Solving 11%, Decision-making skills 10% and Empathy 9%. These are the main qualities our respondents look for in a leader and therefore should be taught and trained in our program.

Have you received any formal leadership training?

181 Responses

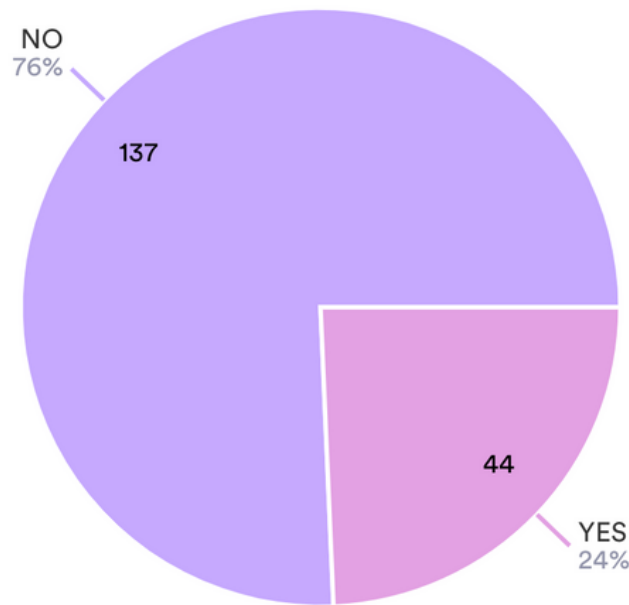


Figure 6

Figure 6 displays that the high majority (76%) have not received formal leadership training, showing us that it isn't common for organisations and companies to provide these kind of trainings especially as we saw in Figure 3, 68% of respondents have over 3 years work experience and yet the majority still have not received any formal leadership training. This tells us there is open potential to provide youth workers with leadership training.

How do you handle usually challenges and conflicts within your team?

181 Responses

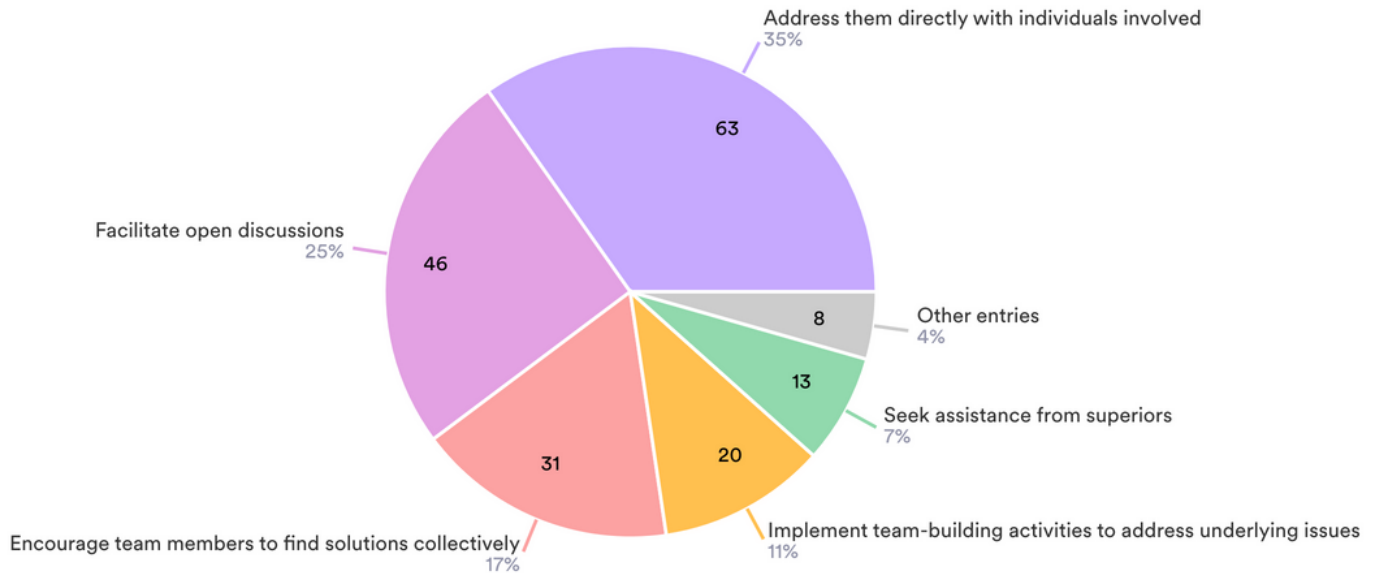


Figure 7

The survey reveals a diverse approach to handling challenges and conflicts within teams. A majority of respondents (35%) opt for a direct approach, addressing conflicts head-on with the individuals involved. Meanwhile, 25% prefer facilitating open discussions to navigate challenges collaboratively. Recognising these varied conflict resolution strategies provides valuable insights for improving collaboration and fostering growth within teams and youth organisations.

How often do you experience stress in your role as a youth worker?

181 Responses

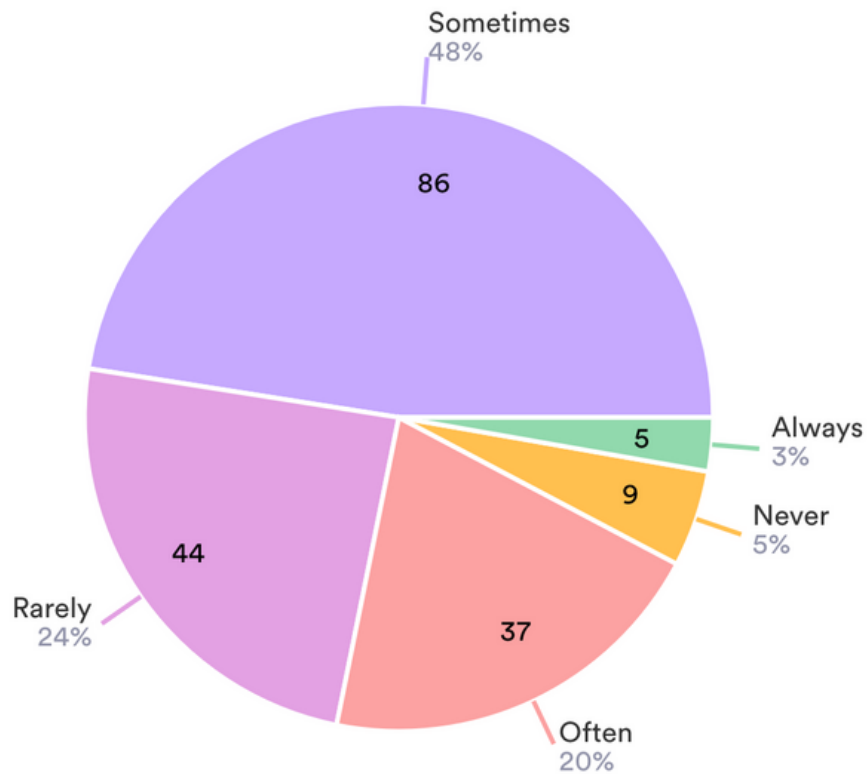


Figure 8

Figure 8 illustrates that 48% of youth workers experience occasional stress, while 23% encounter heightened stress specifically during their roles. This aligns with affirmations from international journal studies, indicating a consistent trend within the youth work sector. Building on this, it is suggested to leverage these findings to equip future leaders with knowledge and skills promoting workplace well-being.

What values do you believe a caring and responsible leader should be guided by?

705 Responses

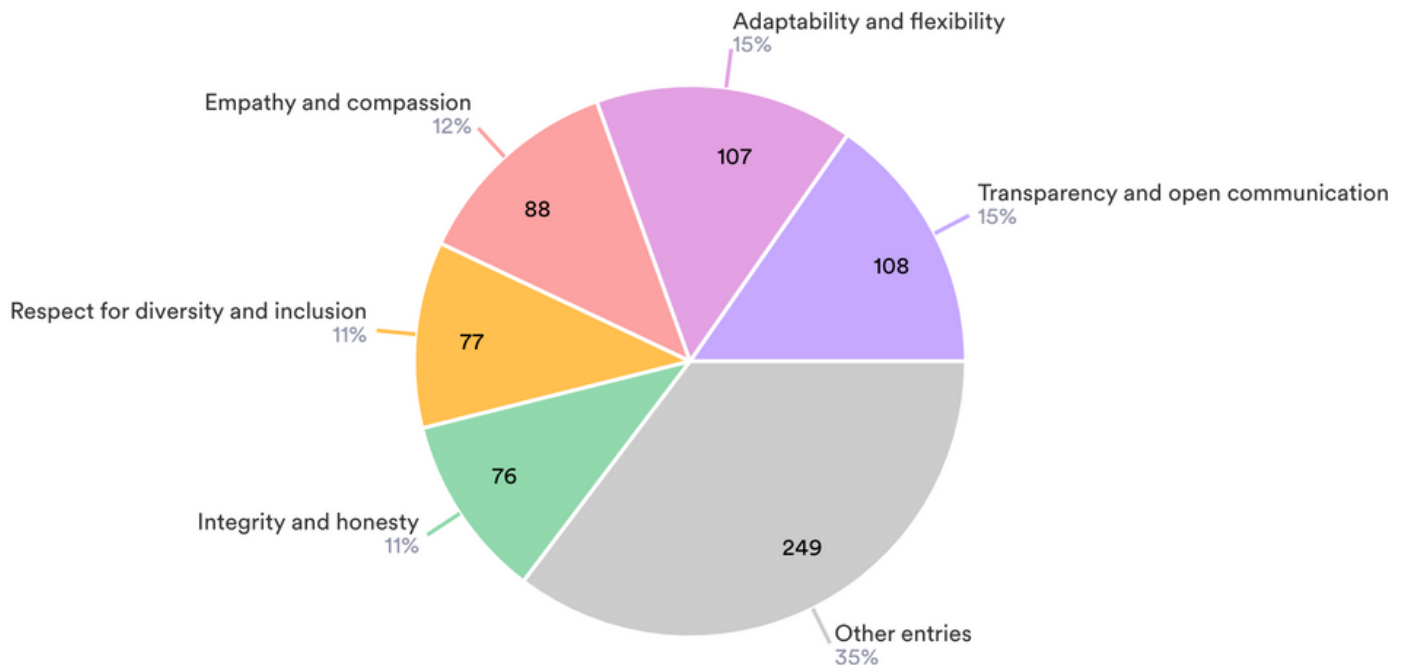


Figure 9

For this question there were multiple options to choose from. The named categories of the graph above were the highest voted, "Other entries" is the collection of the lower voted categories.

Figure 9 shows us what the respondents believe a caring and responsible leader should be guided by. 15% chose both "Transparency and open communication" and "Adaptability and flexibility". Followed by "Empathy and compassion" 12%, "Respect for diversity and inclusion" 11% and "Integrity and honesty" 11%. It is clear that respondents respect a leader who is empathetic, organised, respectful, honest and has the ability to communicate openly. This data could suggest that our program should include open communication training and the implementation of organisational and management tools and methods.

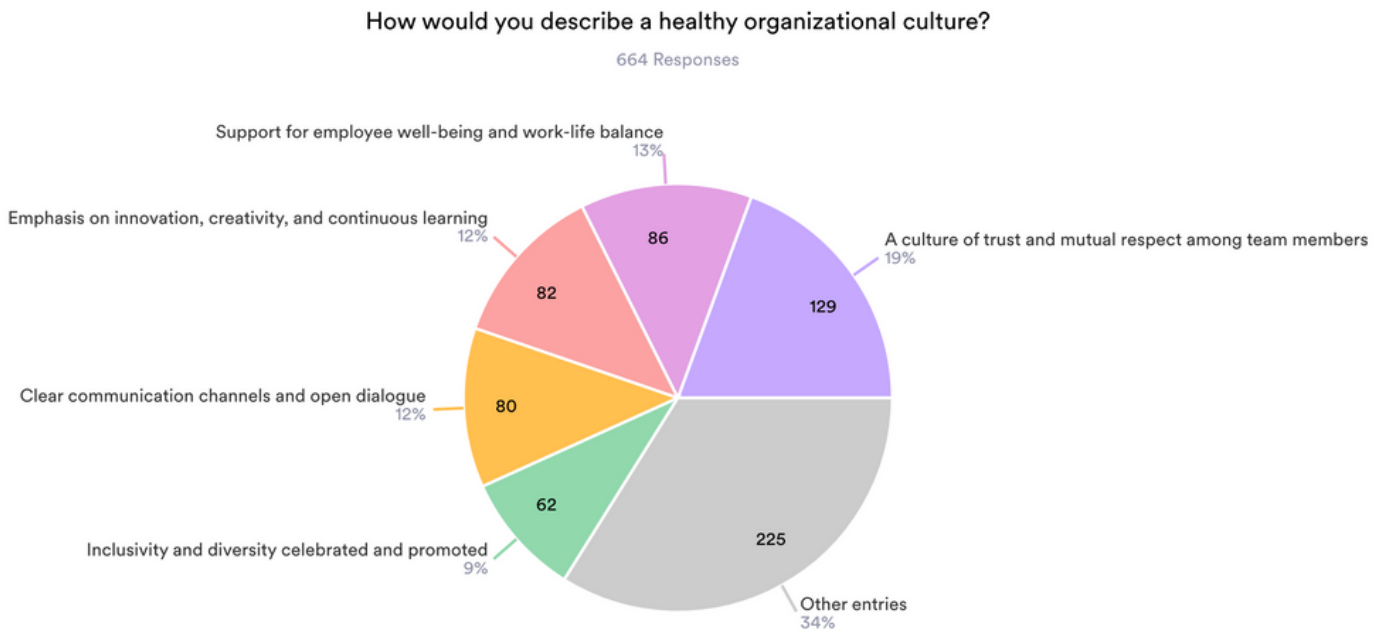


Figure 10

For this question there were multiple options to choose from. The named categories of the graph above were the highest voted, "Other entries" is the collection of the lower voted categories.

Most respondents describe a healthy organisational culture as: A culture of trust and mutual respect among team members 19% with Support for employee well-being and work-life balance 13%, Emphasis on innovation, creativity, and continuous learning 12%, Clear communication channels and open dialogue 12% and Inclusivity and diversity celebrated and promoted 9%.

From Figure 9 we can see how a lot of the highest voted categories correlate to those of Figure 8 showing us that both a good leader and an organisation should have similar morals and qualities.

In your experience, how does a supportive and people-centered leadership style impact the overall well-being of team members?

181 Responses

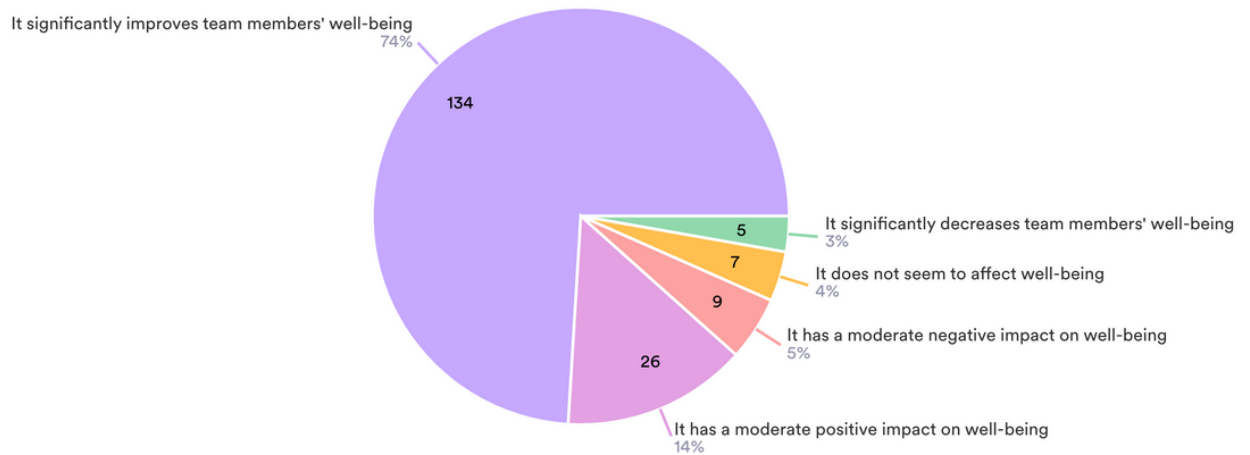


Figure 11

A significant majority, comprising 74%, believes that a supportive and people-centered leadership style positively impacts the overall well-being of team members, while 14% perceive it to have a moderately positive impact. Only 8% of respondents believe that this leadership style has a negative effect on the well-being of team members. These findings emphasize the importance of incorporating the teaching of a supportive and people-centered leadership style into our project.

In your opinion, how does the well-being of a team directly impact their work performance and overall efficiency?

181 Responses

A positive well-being enhances teamwork, creativity, productivity and increase job satisfaction

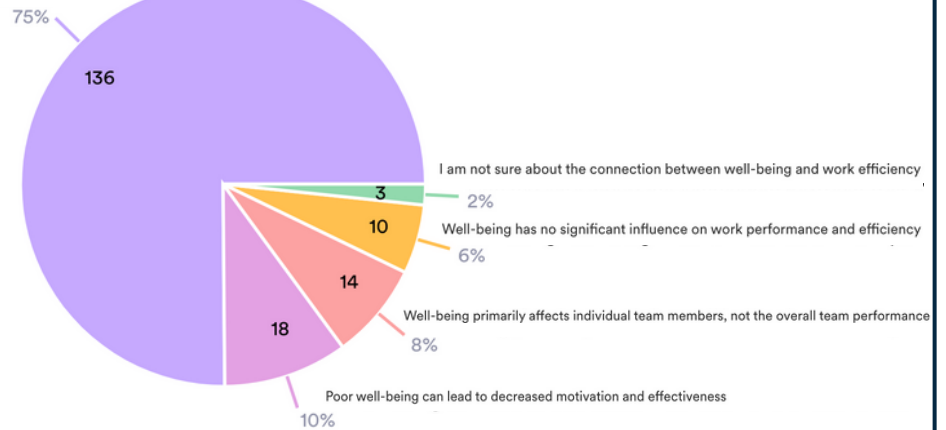


Figure 12

In Figure 12, when respondents were asked about the direct impact of team well-being on work performance and overall efficiency, the majority, at 75%, indicated that "Positive well-being enhances teamwork, creativity, productivity, and increases job satisfaction." The second-highest response, at 10%, stated, "Poor well-being can lead to decreased motivation and effectiveness." The data from both Figure 11 and Figure 12 suggest a correlation between effective leadership and the overall well-being of a team, which, in turn, influences the team's overall efficiency.

Have you ever experienced toxic leadership in your workplace?

181 Responses

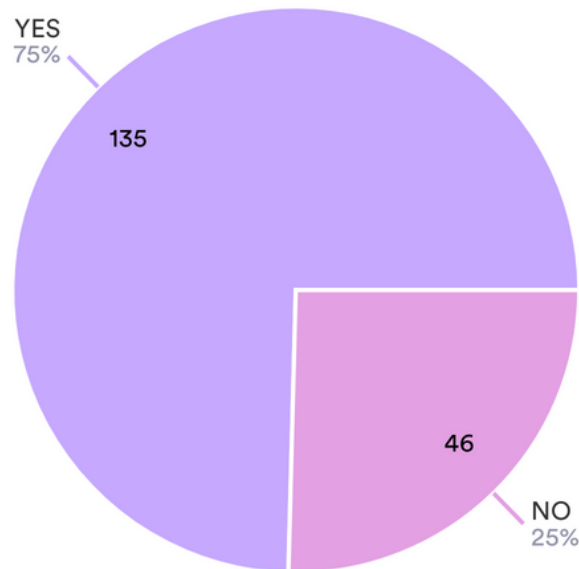


Figure 13

The overwhelming majority of respondents, 74% have unfortunately encountered toxic leadership. This makes it clear that there are a lot of poorly trained people in leadership roles, underscoring the project's objective to educate people about leadership and raise awareness about toxic leadership.

Which of these behaviors/traits do you believe characterize a toxic leader?

687 Responses

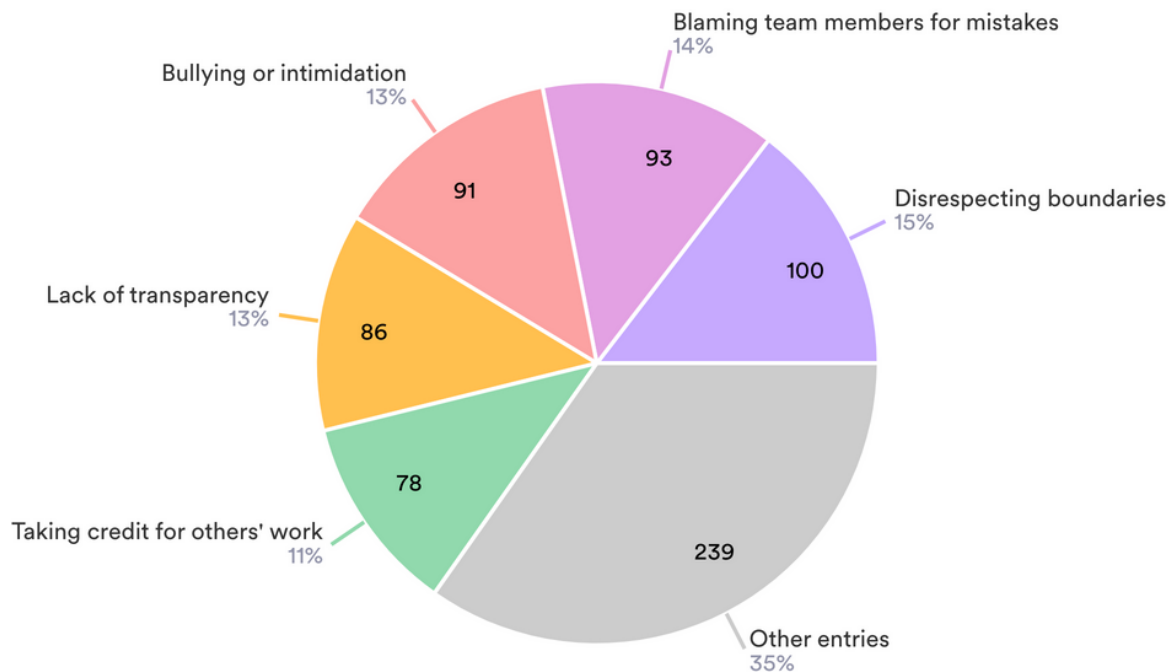


Figure 14

For this question there were multiple options to choose from. The named categories of the graph above were the highest voted, "Other entries" is the collection of the lower voted categories.

The highest voted traits and behaviours believed to characterise a toxic leader were: Disrespecting boundaries 15%, Blaming team members for mistakes 14%, Bullying or intimidation 13%, Lack of transparency 13% and Taking credit for others' work 11%. With 74% of respondents saying they have experienced toxic leadership Figure 13, we can get a good idea what kind of experiences were the most common at their workplaces.

In your opinion, how does toxic leadership affect the overall team atmosphere and productivity?

507 Responses

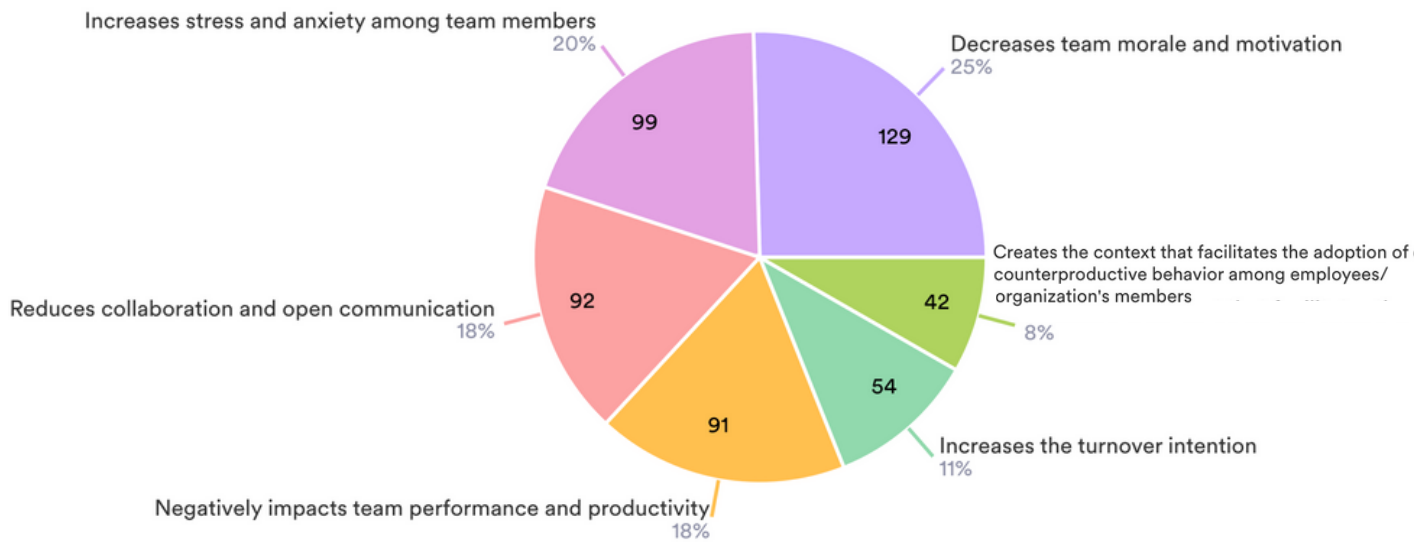


Figure 15

When asked, 'In your opinion, how does toxic leadership affect the overall team atmosphere and productivity?' 25% of respondents answered that it 'Decreases team morale and motivation', 'Increases stress and anxiety among team members' 20%, 'Negatively impacts team performance and productivity' 18% and 'Reduces collaboration and open communication' 18%. In conclusion, the majority of respondents believe that toxic leadership has an overall negative effect on the team.

How can organizations address and prevent toxic leadership behaviors?

539 Responses



Figure 16

For this question there were multiple options to choose from. The named categories of the graph above were the highest voted, "Other entries" is the collection of the lower voted categories.

Most respondents believe the best ways to address and prevent toxic leadership behaviours are by 'Providing leadership training and development programs' 20%, 'Encouraging open communication and feedback channels' 18%, 'Establishing clear expectations for leadership behaviour' 14%, 'Offering coaching and mentoring for leaders' 14% and 'Implementing regular performance evaluations for leaders' 12%. The data shows that 20% of respondents believe that toxic leadership behaviours can be prevented by training and development programs.

Which digital tools do you currently use for communication and collaboration within your team?

501 Responses

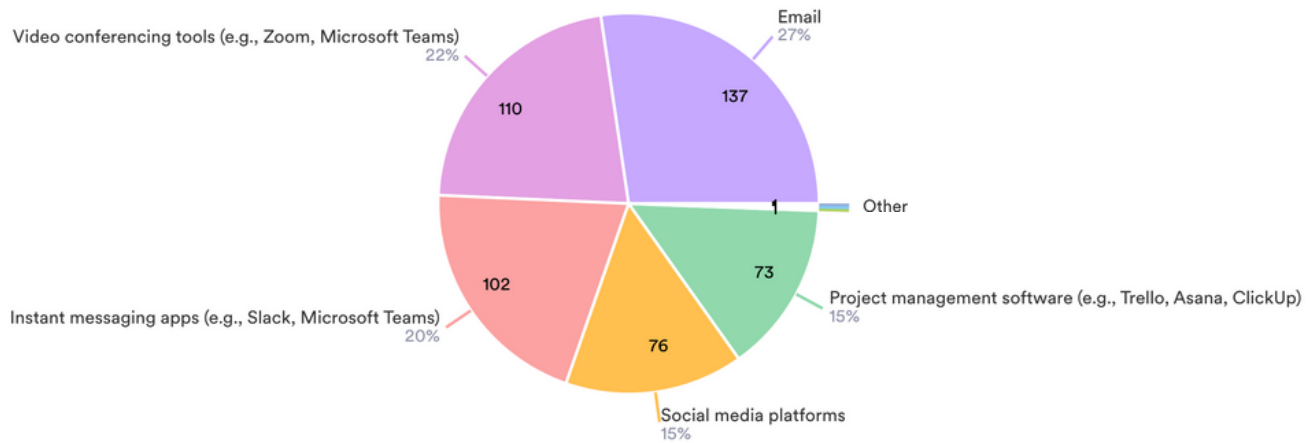


Figure 17

When asked what digital tool do you currently use for communication and collaboration within your team, the majority, 27% answered: Email. Video conferencing tools (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams) 22%, Instant messaging apps (e.g. Slack, Microsoft Teams) 20% and 15% using both Social media platforms and 15% Project management software (e.g. Trello, Asana, ClickUp). With the majority still using email for most of their collaboration and communication, there is room for implementation of a better digital tool or software.

How do you think digital tools contribute to effective leadership and team coordination?

759 Responses

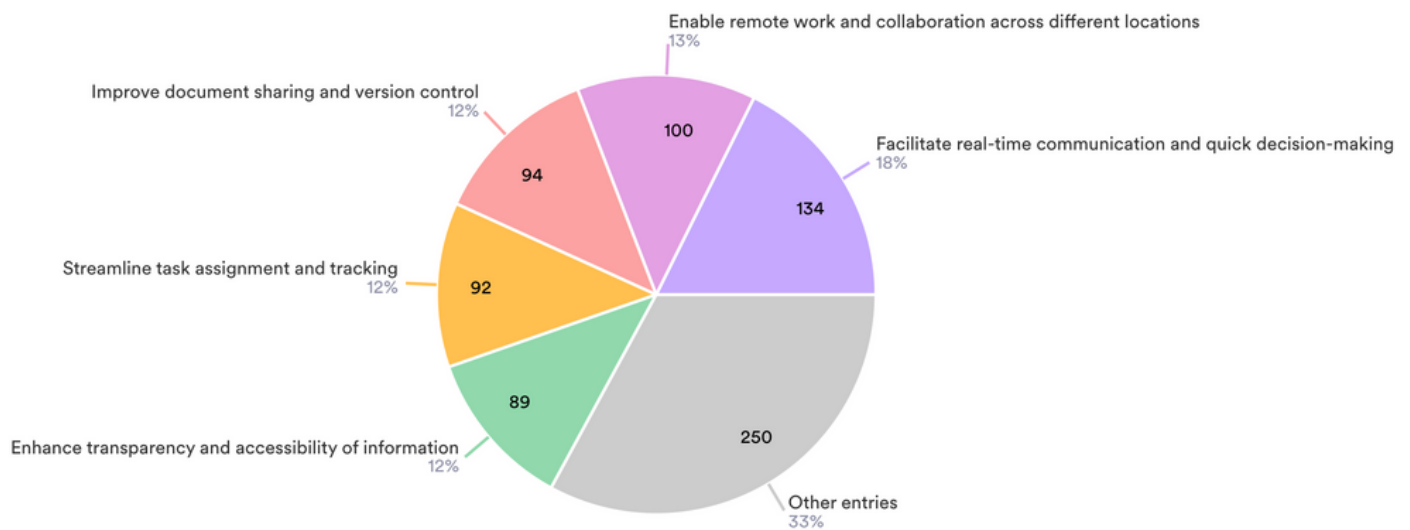


Figure 18

For this question there were multiple options to choose from. The named categories of the graph above were the highest voted, "Other entries" is the collection of the lower voted categories.

How open are you to adopting new digital tools that can enhance your leadership capabilities?

181 Responses



4.65
Avg. Response

181
Responses

Figure 19

Figure 18 shows us that the majority of respondents see the benefit of having digital tools and believe that they help being an effective leader and team coordinator, Figure 19 displays a 3.64/5 rating showing respondents openness to adopting new digital tools to enhance their leadership capabilities, especially since seen in Figure 17 only 15% of respondents having used project management software (e.g. Trello, Asana, ClickUp).

What specific skills or knowledge would you like to acquire to enhance your leadership abilities?

788 Responses



Figure 20

The skills or knowledge most commonly selected by respondents to enhance their leadership abilities were as follows: 'Motivating and inspiring teams' (13%), 'Conflict resolution' (9%), 'Strategic thinking and planning' (10%), 'Effective delegation' (9%), and 'Public speaking and presentation skills' (8%). These aspects constitute key areas that should be prioritized for teaching and training youth leaders.

How important do you believe continuous leadership training is for improving your effectiveness as a youth worker?
178 Responses- 3 Empty



* Data	Response	%
★★★★★	123	69%
★★★★☆	45	25%
★★★☆☆	9	5%
★★★☆☆	0	0%
★★★★☆	1	1%

Figure 21

When asked about the importance of continuous leadership training for improving their effectiveness as youth workers, 69% of respondents awarded a 5-star rating, while 25% rated its importance as 4 stars. This data underscores the significant value our respondents place on a continuous training program.

Would you be interested in participating in a leadership development program offered through the Erasmus+ Programme?

181 Responses

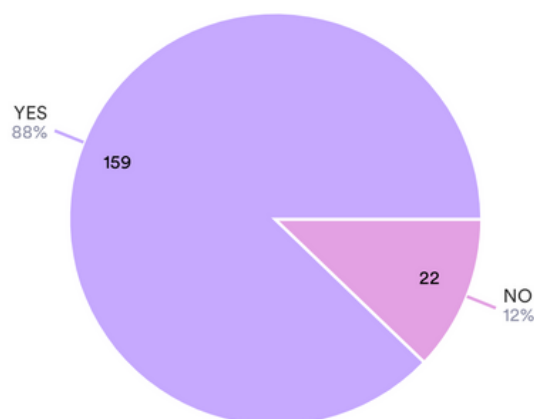


Figure 22

What format of leadership training would you prefer?

159 Responses- 22 Empty

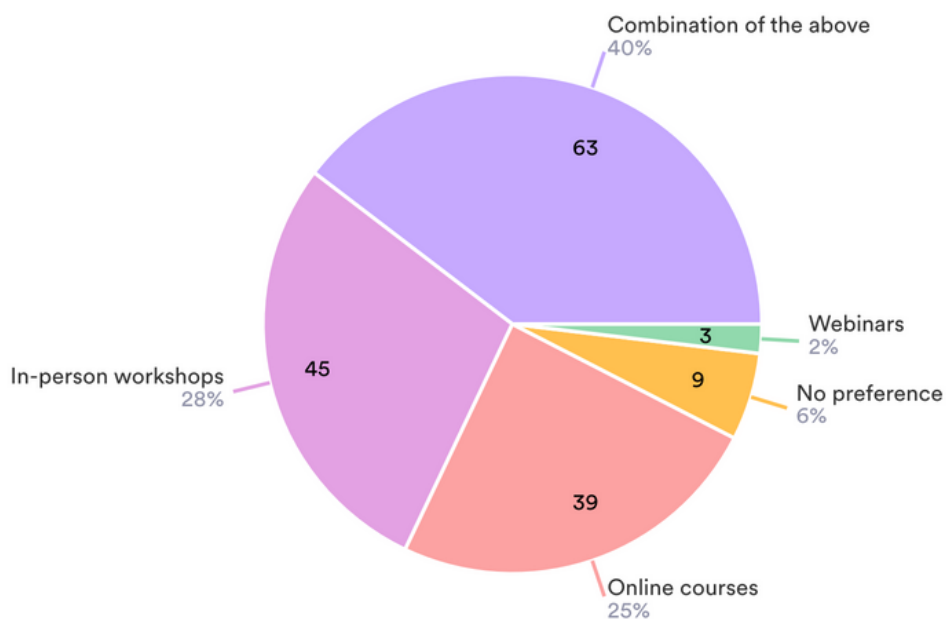


Figure 23

88% of respondents answered yes that they would be interested in participating in a leadership development program offered through the Erasmus+ Programme and 39% would prefer the program to be a combination of In-person workshops and online courses.

Conclusion

The survey results provide valuable insights into the needs and challenges faced by youth workers in the realm of leadership. It highlights that 76% of respondents have never received leadership training, despite its importance. The identified leadership qualities considered most important encompass communication skills, teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making, empathy, motivating teams, and conflict resolution. These findings signify essential areas for program development and targeted training initiatives to better equip youth workers in their roles.

Furthermore, the data underscores the prevalence of toxic leadership experiences, with 74% of respondents having encountered such behaviours. Behaviours like disrespecting boundaries, blaming team members for mistakes, and lack of transparency were identified as common characteristics of toxic leaders. The negative impact of toxic leadership on team morale, stress levels, and overall productivity further emphasizes the need for addressing this issue.

The respondents expressed a keen interest in continuous leadership training, with a high percentage recognizing its importance for improving effectiveness as youth workers. The majority also showed openness to digital tools, indicating a potential for the integration of innovative technologies in leadership development programs.

In light of these findings, the focus of our module development for youth workers should center around key areas. This includes emphasizing transformational leadership, which highlights inspiration, motivation, and the fostering of creativity and innovation. Additionally, there is a need for materials addressing communication and soft skills, offering training in effective communication, teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making, and empathy.

Furthermore, it is essential to raise awareness about toxic leadership, educating youth workers on how to identify and address behaviours that can be detrimental to team dynamics. Another important aspect involves the incorporation of digital leadership tools, introducing and training on the utilization of modern digital tools for seamless communication and collaboration within teams.

These materials aim not only to address the identified needs but also to foster a healthy organizational culture, promoting trust, mutual respect, and the well-being of team members. In doing so, our project can effectively equip youth workers for the challenges and responsibilities inherent in their roles.