



LEADERSHIP

BEHAVIOURS FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE

MINDSHOP'S 2021 BUSINESS LEADER INSIGHTS REPORT

Executive Summary

After a rollercoaster ride in 2020, 2021 will be an opportunity for business leaders to reflect, reset and take advantage of a wealth of new opportunities driven by changing consumer demand, digital advances, flexible workforces, economic shifts and lingering COVID restrictions.

The insights from this report are drawn from the results of a global survey of Mindshop leaders and advisors undertaken in late 2020. It explores the capabilities, behaviours and traits needed for leaders to navigate 2021 successfully, inviting leaders to reflect on their own gaps through five key questions, and mapping their training and development needs to address each gap.

The survey results highlighted that business leaders who had their resilience tested through 2020 have good confidence to push for growth in 2021 but need to lock in the lessons learnt navigating COVID impacted markets to get the most from their teams (through improved coaching) and importantly themselves (through improved productivity habits and behaviours) to achieve their goals.

The strategies and plans leaders develop for 2021 also need to be 'change ready' and stay agile to pivot as market and customer demand will evolve rapidly through the year.

Leaders want to spend more time discovering what is working and what is not from experienced fellow leaders to help shape their 2021 strategies.

A November 2020 *McKinsey* article entitled '[Closing the capability gap in the time of COVID-19](#)' draws attention to an evolved, blended way of building capability that focuses not just on learning but also the importance of behavioural changes that only come from regular, practical application of that knowledge.

To guide the development of these behavioural changes Mindshop developed in this report a new 'Five Phases of a High Performing Leader' model which ties together the report insights and lessons from 2020 to map the behaviours and traits for a high performing leader.

Where are your gaps and opportunities for improvement?

Top 10 Key Capability Needs

1. Coaching your team
2. Insights on best practice from peers
3. Implementation and project team skills
4. Marketing and growth strategies
5. Profit and efficiency skills
6. Strategic planning skills
7. Understanding emerging business trends
8. Digital applications for productivity improvements
9. Personal resilience
10. Innovation skills

The insights from this report resulted in the identification of five questions leaders need to ask themselves in 2021 to reflect on strategies for higher leadership and business performance:

1. **How will you boost your businesses value and scale up in 2021?**
2. **Are you building the right high performance behaviours or are you just ticking capability boxes?**
3. **Are gaps in foundational traits your Achilles' heel?**
4. **How will you reset your daily habits to ensure you stay productive, not just busy?**
5. **How will you pivot in 2021 to drive greater innovation across your organisation?**

In conclusion, you're invited to document the observable leadership behaviours and traits you want to improve in 2021 and identify capability building activities you need to undertake to achieve your goals.

Discuss support and training options with your Mindshop advisor who can assist you with a tailored advisory solution specific to your business and leadership needs.

8 High Performance Behaviours

1. Business & financial acumen
2. Continuous improvement
3. Communication
4. Coach & develop others
5. Implementation of change
6. Problem solving
7. Growth and profit results
8. Strategic thinking

8 Foundational Traits

1. Reliability
2. Likeability
3. Tenacity
4. Authenticity
5. Core Values
6. Energy
7. Community
8. Change

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About the Mindshop 2021 Business Leader survey

In late 2020, Mindshop surveyed over 200 business leaders and advisors from around the world to understand their thoughts on the impact on their business and themselves of the global pandemic, their thoughts on the business environment in 2021 and their training needs for the year ahead.

This report draws on the findings from the survey and Mindshop's 26 years' of experience working with thousands of global business leaders.

About Mindshop

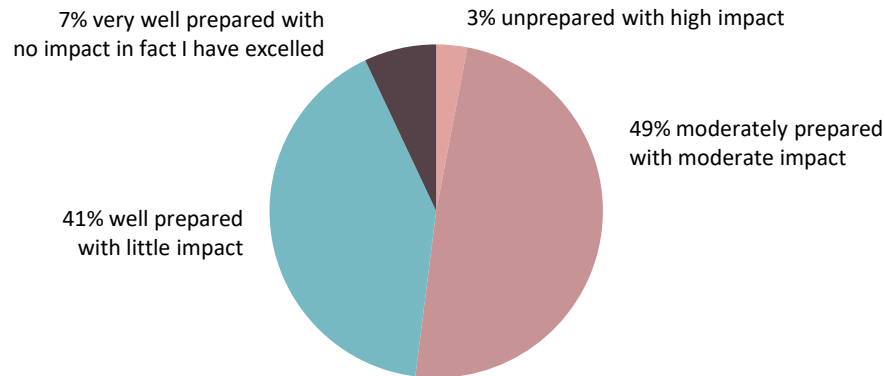
Mindshop is a global business advisory training and coaching organisation.

Founded in 1994 in Melbourne, Australia by Dr Chris Mason, Mindshop has now grown to support thousands of business advisors and leaders in 11 countries.

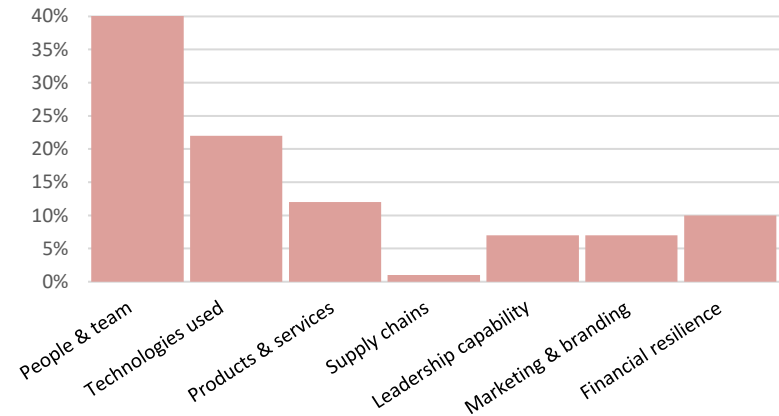
www.mindshop.com

Mindshop Business Leader Survey – COVID insights

Q. Reflecting on your performance as a leader since the impact of COVID what comment would best categorise your preparedness to tackle this period of uncertainty?



Q. Where would you say you have invested the most time pivoting or adapting in your business during the pandemic?



Q. If you needed to take one positive away from the COVID impacted period when reflecting on your performance as a leader what would it be?



KEY INSIGHT SUMMARY

1. **48%** of respondents were well prepared / very well prepared for COVID and experienced little or no impact.
2. Only **3%** of respondents were unprepared and highly impacted by COVID.
3. **41%** invested the most time during COVID pivoting their people and teams during the pandemic.
4. Leaders felt the **no.1 benefit from the pandemic** was working from home and having a flexible workforce.

Mindshop Business Leader Survey Insights

Q. What do business leaders want more (and less) of from their advisor / coach in 2021?



MORE

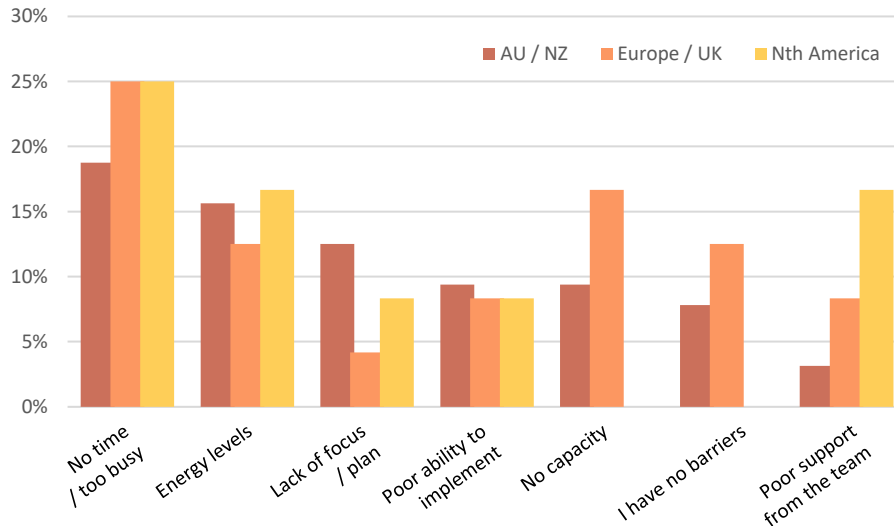
1. Accountability and challenging my thinking
2. One on one time and acting as a sounding board
3. Building my confidence, resilience and personal development



LESS

1. Talking, I want my advisor to listen more
2. Physical meetings and travel time
3. Articles to read

Q. What do you see your biggest barrier will be in 2021 to being an effective leader?



Q. How important are the following training needs to drive greater success for you as a leader in 2021? Top ten results.

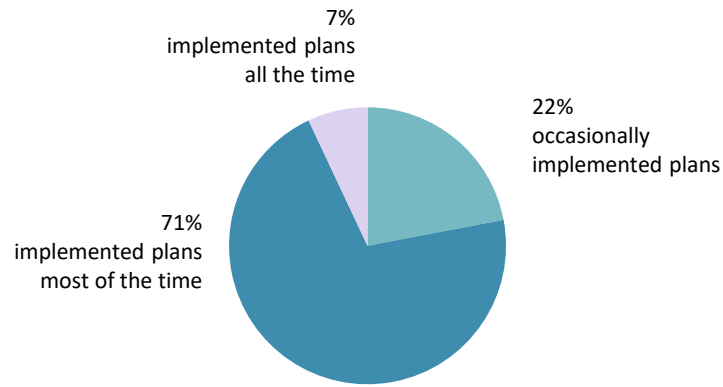
1. Coaching your team
2. Insights on best practice from other leaders
3. Implementation and project team skills
4. Marketing and growth strategies
5. Profit and efficiency skills
6. Strategic planning skills
7. Understanding emerging business trends
8. Digital applications for productivity improvements
9. Personal resilience
10. Innovation skills

KEY INSIGHT SUMMARY

1. **Ability to coach a team** continues to be leaders' most important training need.
2. **Lack of time / too busy** is the no.1 barrier to being an effective leader worldwide.
3. Leaders want their business advisors to be a **'sounding board'** who **challenges their thinking**.

Mindshop Business Leader Survey Insights

Q. Reflecting on 2020 and your ability to implement change or the tactics in a strategic plan which statement would best describe your situation?



Q. Reflecting on various approaches to building new leadership capabilities, please rate the importance of the following delivery methods:



Q. How clear and confident are you that the following areas of your strategic plan or thinking for 2021 will deliver your growth targets?

Responses from most to least confident.

1. Overall business model
2. Targets and budgets
3. Vision and competitive advantage
4. Capability of leaders and the team
5. Technology adoption across the business
6. Product and service innovation
7. Operations strategy
8. Change readiness and ability to address barriers
9. Sales and marketing.

KEY INSIGHT SUMMARY

1. **78%** of respondents implemented their plans most or all the time in 2020.
2. Leaders are looking to develop nuanced behaviours by learning from others rather than just 'ticking a box', **discussions with business peers** are of most importance.
3. Leaders are least confident about their **sales and marketing plans**, but most confident about their **business model** for 2021.

Mindshop Business Leader Survey Insights

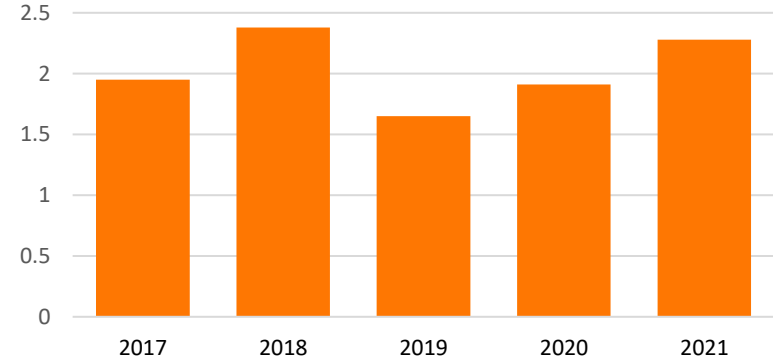
Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Q. What emerging leadership trend will you focus on in 2021 and why?

1. Being an effective leader to guide and support a team
2. Focus on outcomes
3. Sharing best practice with other leaders
4. Leading a team post COVID

Q. On a scale of -5 to +5 (where -5 is very poor and +5 is very good) please rate your level of confidence about the business climate in 2021.



KEY INSIGHT SUMMARY

1. **26%** of respondents said they have attempted too much change in 2019 compared to only **9%** in 2020.
2. **40%** don't have clarity on their vision or strategy for 2021.
3. **91%** were comfortable with level of change undertaken in the past 12 months.
4. **68%** have growth on their agenda rather than consolidation in 2021.
5. **Business confidence** is the highest it's been since 2018.
6. There has been strong emphasis on creating a **high performing virtual teams**.

Five questions key to high performance leadership

Based on the survey results, five questions have emerged to guide the success of business leaders in the coming year. Reflect on these insights in the context of you and your own business. Use the table in this report to identify the observable behaviours or traits you need to work on in 2021 to achieve your desired goals.

1. How will you boost your business value and scale up in 2021?

Whilst disruption will continue in some industries, many leaders will review and reset strategies to boost business value.

2. Are you building the right high performance behaviours or are you just ticking capability boxes?

Anyone can complete a course, but do you have the right habits and traits behind you, practising what you have learnt and taking advantage of your learnings in the real world?

3. Are gaps in foundational traits your Achilles' heel?

You can have all the capability, capacity and technology in the world, but if you are not authentic and likeable you will struggle to succeed.

4. How will you reset your daily habits to ensure you stay productive, not just busy?

What are you going to do to ensure you have time to look at strategic opportunities, avoiding getting burnt out on day-to-day tasks?

5. How will you pivot in 2021 to drive greater innovation across your organisation?

You have a rare opportunity to pivot your business, how will you 'step change' your team, go-to-market and digital strategies?

Q1: How will you boost your businesses value and scale up in 2021?

Each global market post 2020 and continuing through 2021 will be impacted differently by COVID-19. While there are considerable negative impacts to mental health, social connectivity and disruption to certain industries in different countries there are also many areas of high growth, opportunities and brighter times ahead as vaccines are rolled out through the year. Proactive leaders in 2021 will rapidly turn to reviewing strategies to allow them to reset, boost business value and scale up.

When reflecting on potential strategies its important to start with the end goal in mind. It is also important to reflect on lessons learnt navigating 2020 and ensure changes for higher performance are 'locked in' through 2021. Below are a series of questions under three categories of vision, foundation / structure and change readiness leaders should ask themselves:

Vision

Ask yourself these questions:

- What market demand needs have changed? How do our products, services and people need to evolve?
- Are we digitally ready to scale up? What needs to change with our technology?
- Where are our emerging opportunities from the crisis? How do we capitalise on them?

Foundations and Structures

Ask yourself these questions:

- How can we simplify our structure? What do we need to adapt in our roles and team members?
- How do we turn working from home into an opportunity and how do we maintain our culture virtually?
- Do we have the right systems and processes that allow us to scale up in 2021?

Change Readiness

Ask yourself these questions:

- How do we maintain high energy levels as leaders and as a team during 2021?
- How do we drive accountability to our strategies and plans during 2021?
- How do we determine our biggest strategic priorities?

What is the number one strategy you will undertake to boost business value and scale up in 2021?

Q2: Are you building the right high performance behaviours or are you just ticking capability boxes?

A November 2020 *McKinsey* article entitled '[Closing the capability gap in the time of COVID-19](#)' stated,

'...the imperative to create more capable workforces has never been greater.'

However in setting the tone on the challenges in a COVID impacted market explained,

'...the traditional approach to corporate training was broken long before the pandemic arrived' and that there is now

'...a rising call from business leaders for a new kind of capability building that works in today's virtual environments and focuses not simply on learning but also on achieving the behavioral change that comes from the day-to-day application of new learning and skills across broad segments of the workforce.'

In 2021 and beyond more organisations will embrace online learning for pure capability building and education. Organisations will also use efficient, interactive webinars for learning and discussing best practice with peers and ultimately leave face-to-face workshops for live problem solving and collaboration. A blended learning approach is required to achieve success.

Organisations invest vast amounts of time, energy and money annually on capability building. However the majority of this effort is wasted for a number of reasons. The learning may not have resulted in a change of behaviour, accountability loops (or practise and teaching opportunities) aren't in place to lock in the behavioural changes so they become habit.

Often capability building has become a 'tick box' exercise for accreditation or a certificate rather than genuine personal development. So more needs to be done by business leaders as well as their training and development teams to reflect on the outcomes and goals sought, observable behaviours required to demonstrate consistent implementation and finally the capability building activities required to build new skills.

Mindshop has developed a five phase model (highlighted further in this report) that reinforces the high performance learning journey for a business leader but also outlines the eight observable behaviours and eight foundational traits that drive success.

What are the top 5 behavioural changes you want to make in 2021?

What capability building activities will you undertake to achieve those behaviours?

Q3: Are gaps in foundational traits your Achilles' heel?

For many years 'trust' has been one of the most important currencies supporting the success of a business leader. Trust in decision making as well as in relationships with team members, suppliers and customers.

Post COVID-19 this will be even more important as customers, suppliers and team members will not have the time or energy to waste dealing with a leader who doesn't deliver or is unreliable. While Mindshop has identified 8 high performance behaviour categories for business leaders, their achievement is only half the solution to being a successful business leader. Alone they will not build the trust critical for success. To build trust requires strength in eight foundational traits that Mindshop has identified. These become the firm foundation on which to build new behaviours and capabilities. The eight are:

1. reliability
2. likeability
3. tenacity
4. authenticity
5. core values
6. energy
7. community, and
8. change.

Any successful business leader over the long term will be strong in each of these areas.

In which of the eight areas do you need to improve in 2021?

Q4: How will you reset your daily habits to ensure you stay productive, not just busy?

'If you want something done properly give it to a busy person' is a cliché which during 2020 was amplified where the highest performers (and busiest) went from juggling 10 to 20 spinning plates due to the need to adapt rapidly to COVID changes.

For many leaders this forced new habits including where they spent their time, what they said 'no' to, how they structured their teams and how they implemented change. As highlighted in the survey results, 'no time / too busy' was again the biggest barrier to effectiveness highlighted by leaders.

In 2021 as more change continues to ramp up, quality leaders will attract new opportunities and new problems like a magnet as those around them know they will 'get it done'. It will be important therefore that leaders don't fall into the trap of once again 'getting too busy' in 2021 where strategic opportunities are pushed to the bottom of the priority list and burning, but not strategic issues are permanently at the top.

New habits and routines will help drive this including:

- good delegation
- clear roles
- quality team
- daily habits (set priorities for week / day / month)
- regular review of 'must, should, could' lists
- good technology habits (for example, shutting down email at times during the day to prevent distractions)
- blocking out 'strategic time' in your diary.

Watch for early warning signs your 'productive' habits are being tested and make time to reflect on why this is happening and what habits and routines need to change to get you back on track.

What productivity habits will you lock in for 2021 to ensure you operate at peak performance as a leader?

Q5: How will you pivot in 2021 to drive greater innovation across your organisation?

In late 2020, World Economic Forum Executive Chairman, Klaus Schwab said:

'The pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine and reset our world.'

Highlighting the need, when taken in a business context for business leaders to look at how to use the crisis as an opportunity to drive major positive pivots to the way they go to market. But where do you start? Where are the biggest opportunities in your business?

Leaders should reflect on potential innovations in three 'pivot' areas, reflecting on what will have the biggest impact for them in 2021:

1. Team and structure

Where can you adapt your team, roles, structure to drive innovation and higher performance in 2021? How will you coach them effectively?

2. Digital transformation

Where can technology help transform one of your key products or services or the way you go to market?

3. Market demand

What are emerging customer and market demands from your target customers?

What new products and services could you create to address them? Can you evolve existing offerings?

What are the top 3 areas you will pivot in 2021 to drive greater innovation across your organisation?

Mindshop's Five Phases of a High Performing Leader


Success means different things to different people. The 'catch all' definition of leadership success rarely applies. At Mindshop we have developed a table that outlines five phases of a high performing leader:

1. **Individual**
2. **Manager**
3. **Coach**
4. **Leader, and**
5. **Role Model.**

Some leaders may be content to remain at one level, others may be on a journey to develop their behaviours and capabilities to move up the ladder. On the next page you will find the full table, outlining each of the phases, the behaviours of high performance you will need to master to succeed at each level and the foundational traits that underpin success at every level.

Reflect on where in the five phases of a high performing leader you are now and where you would like to be. Use the tables following the five phases model to map your gaps and identify what training, coaching or resources you need to help you get there.

Mindshop's Five Phases of a High Performing Leader

Phases of leadership high performance	1. INDIVIDUAL FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS Individual seeking to build better leadership & problem-solving behaviours.	2. MANAGER TEAM BUILDER Manage a high performing team effectively. Can drive implementation and change well.	3. COACH COACH / MENTOR Coaches and develops their team for high performance. Leads by example.	4. LEADER STRATEGIST Strong leader who can develop and implement strategies effectively.	5. ROLE MODEL VISIONARY LEADER Visionary who guides the future direction of the business and acts as a role model for other leaders.
	VALUE TO BUSINESS 				

HIGH PERFORMANCE BEHAVIOURS

Business / Financial Acumen	Basic understanding of business / industry trends. Basic level of financial acumen.	Good understanding of business / industry trends. Adequate financial acumen.	Strong understanding of trends. Regular industry event attendee. Good financial acumen.	Periodic contributor on industry trends at events. Good financial acumen to interpret performance.	Thought leader and regular contributor on industry trends. Very strong financial acumen.
Continuous Improvement	Does more of what works and less of what doesn't with little to no systems and processes.	Good systems and processes that are occasionally updated based on best practice.	Good systems and processes that are regularly updated based on best practice. Clear KPI's.	Runs a very lean and efficient organisation. Embraces agile principles and regularly innovates.	Motivates and drives accountability for a culture of continuous improvement across the business.
Communication	Adequate communicator. Asks occasional good questions and listens with moderate interest.	Can communicate well across all seniority levels. Asks regular good questions and listens well.	Good communicator. Asks very good questions to dig to root causes. Listens very well.	Strong and adaptable communicator at all levels. Can facilitate workshops with the team well.	Very strong communicator. Motivates the team. Facilitates and presents at conferences regularly.
Coach / Develop others	Focuses first on their own development and putting in hard work rather than others in team.	Ability to effectively manage a cohesive and high performing team to achieve their goals.	Good coaching skills to guide the development of emerging leaders. Leads by example.	Strong coaching skills to shape behaviours and capabilities of leaders. Builds a great culture.	Challenges leaders. Explores new approaches and innovations to coaching and development of teams.
Implementation of change	Any project success that comes through hard work as well as trial and error.	Occasional project success through a basic understanding of elements of change success.	Regular project success through good application of elements of change success.	Successfully guides multiple teams / divisions in implementing successful change.	Identifies and mitigates emerging risks to change success. Maintains a 'change ready' culture.
Problem Solving	Uses natural acumen to problem solve based on prior business and life experiences.	Solves problems well using a handful of business tools and techniques.	Solves problems very well using a range of business tools and techniques. Teaches others.	Great problem solver who used a very broad range of tools. Regularly teaches others.	Unconsciously competent problem solver who is the 'go to' person for difficult decision making.
Growth and Profit results	Minor impact on results regarding growth and profitability in their area of the business.	Adequate impact on results regarding growth and profitability in their area of the business.	Good impact on results regarding growth and profitability in their area of the business.	Key driver of exceeding budgeted growth and profit targets in their area of the business.	Key driver of industry leading profitability and growth. Delegates well. Empowers the team.
Strategic Thinking	Understands the basics of strategic thinking and planning in the business.	Adequate understanding of strategic thinking and can implement a plan they are given.	Good understanding of strategic thinking and can develop a plan for their area of business.	Can develop with their team a market leading strategic plan and vision for the business.	Very strong strategic mindset. Anticipates industry shifts and customer demand changes.

FOUNDATIONAL TRAITS

RELIABILITY Safe pair of hands. Always punctual. Good life balance.	LIKEABILITY Very personable. Gets along well with people at all levels.	TENACITY Never gives up. Always striving for higher performance. Resilient.	AUTHENTICITY What you see is what you get. Self-aware. High emotional intelligence.	CORE VALUES Embraces value to others. Core values drive decision making.	ENERGY Provides energy to those around them. Strong self-belief.	COMMUNITY Strong connector with peers, team members and target customers.	CHANGE Strong level of change readiness. Embraces change. Growth mindset.
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Map your 2021 high performance behaviours or traits

What behaviours or traits do you need to work on for higher performance personally or in your team in 2021?

Put your top 5 desired outcomes or goals in the table below followed by the relevant observable behaviours or traits. Finally reflect on the capability building activities you need to complete to build the skills around those behaviours and traits.

Outcome / goals	Observable behaviour or trait	Capability building activity
Example: Grow revenue 10%	Successfully implement a range of growth strategies and vision for the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic planning course • Growth course • Run team through growth strategy tool
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Map your strategies against the five high performance questions

Reflect on the five high performance questions raised during this report and the strategies you can undertake to address each.

High performance questions	Reflect on...	Your strategies and actions
Q1: How will you boost your businesses value and scale up in 2021?	How you and your business will need to adapt to take advantage of new client demand in 2021.	
Q2: Are you building the right high performance behaviours or are you just ticking capability boxes?	The top 5 behavioural changes you want to make in 2021. What capability building activities will you undertake to achieve those behaviours?	
Q3: Are gaps in foundational traits your Achilles' heel?	The top three traits you need to work on in 2021.	
Q4: How will you reset your daily habits to ensure you stay productive, not just busy?	Which new habits and routines will help you become more productive in 2021?	
Q5: How will you pivot in 2021 to drive greater innovation across your organisation?	What are the top 3 areas you will pivot in 2021 to drive greater innovation across your organisation?	

Questions or support?

Do you have any questions or would like support to work through the insights in this report?

Please contact your Mindshop advisor for a confidential discussion.