

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN IT: A CASE STUDY OF INFOSYS LTD

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ABSTRACT

In an era defined by rapid digital transformation and global complexity, leadership development has emerged as a cornerstone for sustainable organizational growth. This research explores the leadership development framework at Infosys Ltd., one of India's most prominent IT service companies. Using a qualitative, secondary data analysis approach, the study examines Infosys's structured initiatives—such as the Infosys Leadership Institute (ILI), LEAD, and INSPIRE programs—and assesses their effectiveness through program outcomes, promotion trends, and employee engagement metrics. Anchored in leadership theories and models like the 70-20-10 development principle, the findings demonstrate how Infosys integrates technology, values-based culture, and experiential learning to foster leadership talent. The paper concludes with strategic recommendations to address gaps and enhance leadership agility in the digital era.

I. INTRODUCTION

Leadership development is increasingly critical for organizations striving to stay competitive amid dynamic global markets, technological shifts, and evolving workforce expectations. For IT giants like Infosys, the ability to consistently groom future leaders is not just a talent strategy but a business necessity.

Infosys Ltd., a multinational IT services and consulting company, offers a robust case for examining modern leadership development. The company's growth from a start-up to a global technology leader has been underpinned by a strategic focus on leadership programs tailored to build adaptive, innovative, and globally competent leaders.

This study addresses three key questions:

- What leadership development initiatives exist at Infosys?
- How effective are these initiatives in building leadership capabilities?
- What improvements can be made to future-proof leadership development?

II. LITRATURE REVIEW

Infosys's leadership philosophy reflects a blend of **Transformational**, **Servant**, and **Situational** leadership theories. These are operationalized through the **70-20-10 learning model**, wherein:

- 70% of learning comes from on-the-job experiences,
- 20% from coaching and mentoring,
- 10% from formal training programs.

Studies by Burns, Greenleaf, and Hersey-Blanchard reinforce the relevance of adaptive, ethical, and development-centric leadership styles, especially in tech-driven contexts. Research by Lombardo and Eichinger on adult learning further supports Infosys's experiential approach to leadership training.

In India's IT sector, Infosys leads in integrating leadership development into business strategy, while many firms still struggle with mid-level talent gaps and reactive succession planning.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a **qualitative, descriptive case study** design, analyzing leadership practices at Infosys using only **secondary data** sources:

- Annual reports (2020–2024),
- Industry whitepapers,
- Academic journals,
- Infosys training material,
- Glassdoor and LinkedIn testimonials.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) such as program completion rates, promotion ratios, and internal hiring trends were used for interpretation.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Completion and Promotion Rates

Infosys's leadership program completion rate rose from **78% in 2020** to **91% in 2023**. Simultaneously, promotion rates for trained employees increased by **27%** over non-participants.

b. Shift to Internal Talent Promotion

Internal hiring for leadership roles grew from **67% in 2020** to **74% in 2023**, reflecting reduced dependence on external recruitment and stronger internal pipelines.

c. Program Highlights

- **ILI (Infosys Leadership Institute)**: Focused on senior talent, featuring global exposure and executive coaching.
- **LEAD**: Aimed at middle managers; uses simulations, case studies, and labs.

- **INSPIRE**: Builds foundational skills in first-time managers.

d. Employee Engagement

78% of program participants reported high engagement levels. Infosys's AI-powered learning platform, **Lex**, personalized the learning journey and boosted program adoption.

Infosys's success in leadership development lies in aligning **learning strategy with business objectives**, leveraging **digital infrastructure**, and fostering a **culture of mentorship and continuous learning**.

However, the study also identifies key challenges:

- Limited **cross-functional** leadership exposure.
- Need for more **personalized** development using data analytics.
- Lack of **behavioral impact measurement** post-training.

V. CONCLUSION

Infosys exemplifies how structured leadership development, backed by technology and values, can create a future-ready workforce. The shift from external hiring to internal promotions, rising completion and engagement metrics, and alignment with strategic goals underscore the efficacy of its programs. However, to stay competitive in a rapidly changing digital world, Infosys must enhance flexibility, feedback, and cross-functional integration in leadership development.

VI. REFERENCE

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