



# Sample

This document contains the introduction to a Snapshot Research Report.

## IT leadership: getting below the surface

# Snapshot Research Report

May 2013

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## A. Introduction

IT managers are often criticized for lacking management and/or leadership skills, but it is not easy to explore the specific aspects of their performance that are weak or those where they generally perform well.

This Snapshot Research report presents the results of a survey into several specific aspects of leadership among the top layers of today's IT functions. In so doing, it provides some useful evidence on the kinds of steps that might be considered by those seeking to improve IT's performance. Participating companies were:

AstraZeneca  
BNP Paribas  
British Airways  
Diageo  
Electricity Supply Board  
F. Hoffmann-La Roche  
HSBC  
Irish Life  
Mars  
Novartis  
Orange  
RBS  
Standard Life  
Thomson Reuters  
Unilever  
VocaLink  
Zurich

## B. Key messages

The key findings of this research are:

1. IT leaders are better at **managing tasks and activities**, where there is a clear focus on deliverables, than they are at managing relationships, vendors or people. **Vendor management** is the area they are least comfortable, in most participating companies.
2. IT leaders mostly use a wide range of styles, though there is an **undue reliance on pace-setting** styles that may be ineffective and undermine the development and morale of their people.
3. IT leaders are mostly good or very **good at the 'management' side** of their jobs, and at setting out directional visions, but they are seldom **very good at mobilizing** others.
4. The impact of these issues is mainly on morale and productivity: but this could spread to **attrition** (i.e. staff turnover) when the employment market revives.
5. Recruitment is not a reliable way to fill the leadership void, because participants see these same issues in potential recruits; **improved leadership development** is probably the best answer.

*'Recruitment is not a reliable way to fill the leadership void, because participants see these same issues in potential recruits.'*