



**CONTACT:**  
Bonnie Hagemann  
bhagemann@executivedevelopment.com  
866 EXEC DEV (393-2338) ext. 201

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## **Major Study Reveals Next Generation of Corporate Leaders Lacks Critical Thinking Skills to Successfully Take the Helm**

(Oklahoma City, OK) --- As today's corporations grapple with everything from a volatile global economy to technology evolving at warp speed, the biggest challenge they face may be a mass exodus from the executive suite. According to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Baby Boomers are retiring at a rate of one every eight seconds and top companies have as many as 60 percent of their workforce eligible for retirement in the next three years.

Findings from a study of top corporations released today reveal that current corporate leaders don't believe the next generation of executives has the critical and strategic thinking skills requisite to navigate these volatile times and the uncharted future.

The "2011/2012 Trends in Executive Development: A Benchmark Report" is the product of collaboration between Pearson TalentLens and Executive Development Associates Inc. (EDA). Leaders from a record number of 81 large national and multinational corporations with substantial business operations in the United States participated in the biennial survey, which has been conducted by EDA every two years since 1983 to follow the trends, growth and evolution of executive development in corporate environments. The complete report can be purchased at [executivedevelopment.com/OnlineStore](http://executivedevelopment.com/OnlineStore).

"The leaders at the helm of today's corporations – most of whom are Baby Boomers – are telling us that they believe the next generation of leaders are not prepared to move into the executive suite and face the challenges of effectively making critical decisions, solving complex problems and thinking creatively and strategically," said Dr. Judy Chartrand, Consultant Chief Scientist at Pearson TalentLens. "Significant investments in the identification and development of the next generation of corporate leaders will play a crucial role in the success and, perhaps survival, of these large national and multinational corporations. Bonnie Hagemann and John Mattone's research report couldn't come at a better time."



As in the 2009 study, this year's survey respondents continued to cite the importance of building their "bench strength" for leadership succession. However, this year's research revealed a troubling disconnect between the belief that succession planning and development are critical and actual corporate initiatives to support those needs.

In a similar vein, this year's respondents admitted that their organizations need to use more objective assessments to evaluate employee performance and potential, but then reported that they were continuing to use subjective measures that often have very little to do with predicting likely future performance in more challenging and difficult roles.

Interestingly, companies' struggles with today's economic crisis and global upheaval were apparent during the survey process. A representative from one company that has typically participated in the research reported that because of economic changes and financial constraints, they had nothing to contribute. Another leader from a Global 1000 company said that because of cutbacks, the human resources team is much smaller than two years ago and expected to do twice the work with fewer resources, and therefore couldn't even spare the 30 minutes to complete the survey.

## **About EDA**

Founded in 1982, EDA has a 29-year history of successfully designing and delivering custom-designed, world-class executive development programs for high potentials and senior executives. EDA has worked at the top of the house with leading organizations around the world. In addition to executive development, executive assessment and executive coaching, EDA has led the state-of-the-art with innovative, high-impact solutions, proprietary processes, research and publications with 4 published books in the field, numerous published articles and Trends research in Executive Development, High Potential Development and Executive Coaching. For more information contact Dawn Ciarlone at 866 EXEC DEV (393-2338) ext. 106.