

## BETWEEN STRATEGY AND PRACTICE: LEADERSHIP AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH IN BUSINESS CONTEXTS

### ENTRE ESTRATÉGIA E PRÁTICA: LIDERANÇA E CONSTRUÇÃO DO CRESCIMENTO ORGANIZACIONAL EM CONTEXTOS EMPRESARIAIS

### ENTRE ESTRATEGIA Y PRÁCTICA: LIDERAZGO Y LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DEL CRECIMIENTO ORGANIZACIONAL EN CONTEXTOS EMPRESARIALES



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#### ABSTRACT

Leadership has become a central dimension in understanding strategic implementation processes within organizations operating in environments marked by competitiveness, constant change, and the ongoing need for adaptation. This chapter examines how business leaders from medium- and large-sized companies perceive their role in conducting organizational growth strategies, considering the articulation between people, processes, and results. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach and was developed through a survey based on a structured questionnaire applied to 16 leaders holding strategic positions across different organizational sectors. The findings indicate that leadership is recognized as a structuring element of strategic execution, particularly regarding clarity in goal definition, encouragement of collaboration, and systematic monitoring of organizational performance. Participants' narratives further reveal that leaders perceive themselves as mediators between planning and practice, responsible for aligning teams, fostering autonomy, and sustaining adaptation processes. It is concluded that leadership performs an integrative role in organizational growth processes, contributing to strategic effectiveness in complex organizational contexts.

**Keywords:** Organizational Leadership. Organizational Growth. Strategy Implementation. Organizational Climate. Leadership and Management.

#### RESUMO

A liderança tem se consolidado como dimensão central na compreensão dos processos de implementação estratégica em organizações inseridas em ambientes marcados por competitividade, mudança e necessidade contínua de adaptação. Neste capítulo, analisa-se como líderes empresariais de empresas de médio e grande porte percebem sua atuação na

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condução de estratégias de crescimento organizacional, considerando a articulação entre pessoas, processos e resultados. A investigação, de abordagem quali-quantitativa, foi desenvolvida por meio de survey com aplicação de questionário estruturado a 16 líderes com atuação estratégica em diferentes setores organizacionais. Os resultados indicam que a liderança é reconhecida como elemento estruturante da execução estratégica, especialmente no que se refere à clareza na definição de objetivos, ao estímulo à colaboração e ao acompanhamento sistemático do desempenho organizacional. As narrativas dos participantes revelam ainda que os líderes se percebem como mediadores entre planejamento e prática, responsáveis por alinhar equipes, favorecer autonomia e sustentar processos de adaptação. Conclui-se que a liderança exerce função integradora nos processos de crescimento organizacional, contribuindo para a efetividade estratégica em contextos organizacionais complexos.

**Palavras-chave:** Liderança Organizacional. Crescimento Organizacional. Implementação Estratégica. Clima Organizacional. Liderança e Gestão.

## RESUMEN

El liderazgo se ha consolidado como una dimensión central en la comprensión de los procesos de implementación estratégica en organizaciones insertas en entornos marcados por la competitividad, el cambio y la necesidad continua de adaptación. En este capítulo se analiza cómo los líderes empresariales de empresas medianas y grandes perciben su actuación en la conducción de estrategias de crecimiento organizacional, considerando la articulación entre personas, procesos y resultados. La investigación, con un enfoque cualitativo-cuantitativo, fue desarrollada mediante una encuesta con la aplicación de un cuestionario estructurado a 16 líderes con actuación estratégica en diferentes sectores organizacionales. Los resultados indican que el liderazgo es reconocido como un elemento estructurante de la ejecución estratégica, especialmente en lo que respecta a la claridad en la definición de objetivos, el fomento de la colaboración y el seguimiento sistemático del desempeño organizacional. Las narrativas de los participantes también revelan que los líderes se perciben como mediadores entre la planificación y la práctica, responsables de alinear equipos, promover la autonomía y sostener procesos de adaptación. Se concluye que el liderazgo desempeña una función integradora en los procesos de crecimiento organizacional, contribuyendo a la efectividad estratégica en contextos organizacionales complejos.

**Palabras clave:** Liderazgo Organizacional. Crecimiento Organizacional. Implementación Estratégica. Clima Organizacional. Liderazgo y Gestión.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Contemporary organizations are inserted in environments marked by accelerated transformations, high competitiveness and permanent need for adaptation. Technological changes, economic reconfigurations, new forms of work organization and growing demands for innovation make strategic decisions cease to be punctual events and become continuous processes of interpretation and response to the environment. In this scenario, organizational growth does not only mean expanding operations or results, but developing internal capacity for coordination, learning, and adaptation.

Organizational expansion, especially in medium and highly complex business contexts, requires more than formal planning instruments. Although strategic plans, indicators and goals remain central to contemporary management, their effectiveness depends on the way they are appropriated in the organizational routine. Between planning and practice there is a relational space in which decisions need to be translated, priorities need to be negotiated, and people need to be mobilized. It is precisely in this space that leadership plays a decisive role.

Recent literature has shown that leadership cannot be understood only as a hierarchical exercise of authority. It is a social process of influence, construction of meaning and institutional mediation, through which leaders articulate expectations, guide behaviors and produce conditions for the execution of collective objectives. In complex organizational environments, leadership begins to operate as a link between strategic rationality and human dynamics, connecting organizational goals to daily work practices.

Such an understanding becomes even more relevant when analyzing strategies aimed at organizational growth. Processes of expansion, innovation, competitive repositioning and increase in production capacity imply internal changes that often require redefinition of roles, reorganization of decision-making flows and strengthening of the capacity for coordination between different areas. In these circumstances, leadership ceases to be just a supervisory function to assume a role of sustaining the conditions that make strategic implementation possible.

Bernardes and Ferreira (2023) highlight that organizational growth results from the articulation between institutional context, organizational competencies, and leadership's capacity for strategic action. Such a perspective shifts the debate on growth as a simple consequence of technical decisions to understand it as a process dependent on the way the organization mobilizes its human and symbolic resources. Growth, in this sense, also involves consolidating forms of leadership capable of producing alignment and direction.

At the same time, recent studies have shown that leadership styles directly influence

the quality of work relationships and the organizational climate, affecting levels of trust, engagement, and willingness to change. Poubel, Sincorá and Brandão (2022) show that transformational leadership favors well-being at work and expands the capacity for collective mobilization, especially in contexts that require continuous learning and adaptation.

The relationship between leadership and strategic implementation is also expressed in the way leaders communicate objectives, build legitimacy, and distribute responsibilities. Organizations often have clear guidelines at the formal level, but they face difficulties when these guidelines need to be incorporated into routines, intermediate decisions, and collective behaviors. The distance between formulation and execution remains one of the main challenges of contemporary strategic management.

A significant part of these difficulties stems from factors that go beyond the technical design of the strategy. Cultural resistance, insufficient communication, decision-making ambiguities and lack of coordination between organizational areas become recurrent obstacles to the implementation of growth initiatives. In these cases, leadership assumes a mediating role, capable of reducing uncertainties and producing coherence between strategic direction and organizational action.

From this perspective, understanding leadership also implies analyzing its relational dimension. Leaders not only set priorities, but produce environments of trust, influence perceptions of legitimacy, and organize shared meanings about change and performance. The daily performance of leadership becomes, therefore, a decisive component for sustaining lasting strategic processes.

Mata, Ferreira, and Bastos Filho (2024) demonstrate that situational leadership contributes to the formation of more responsive organizational environments, by adapting behaviors to the concrete needs of teams and contextual challenges. This flexibility becomes especially relevant in growth scenarios, in which different sectors and hierarchical levels respond unevenly to organizational transformations.

People development is also part of this debate as an inseparable dimension of strategic leadership. Martins et al. (2024) point out that the leader's mindset directly influences the organizational capacity for learning, innovation, and adaptation. Growth-oriented leaders tend to value mistakes as a possibility for development, strengthening organizational cultures that are more open to experimentation and the collective construction of solutions.

In addition, Oliveira et al. (2022) highlight that leadership directly interferes with emotional health and organizational climate, demonstrating that practices based on listening, communicational clarity, and professional recognition contribute to more stable and

cooperative environments. In contexts of strategic implementation, such elements cease to be ancillary and become part of the very conditions of viability of the strategy.

It is in this set of relationships that the purpose of this chapter is situated: to understand how leadership acts in the implementation of organizational growth strategies from the perception of business leaders inserted in medium and large companies. More than identifying isolated practices, it seeks to interpret how these professionals mean their performance in processes of coordination, adaptation and construction of results.

The analytical path is based on the understanding that leadership does not act in isolation, but in permanent interaction with organizational climate, institutional culture, decision-making processes, and governance practices. Thus, organizational growth is approached as a multidimensional phenomenon, in which people, structures, and strategies are dynamically articulated.

Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative-quantitative approach, articulating data obtained by survey with interpretative analysis of the perceptions expressed by the participants. This combination allows you to simultaneously examine general trends and meanings attributed by leaders themselves to the experience of conducting strategic processes in complex organizational environments.

## **2 ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP: CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES**

### **2.1 LEADERSHIP IN THE CONTEMPORARY ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT**

Leadership is understood as a process of intentional influence that aims to guide individuals and teams towards common goals. In the organizational environment, leading means going beyond the occupation of a formal position, involving the ability to inspire, coordinate efforts and promote collective engagement. According to Oliveira et al. (2022), the leader's performance has a direct impact on the organizational climate and on the emotional health of employees, demonstrating that effective leadership is related not only to operational results, but also to people's well-being and the quality of work relationships.

In the current context, marked by constant transformations and high competitiveness, leadership assumes an essentially strategic character. Leaders become central agents in the conduct of organizations, acting as mediators between planning and execution. Bernardes and Ferreira (2023) highlight that organizational growth depends on the articulation between context, internal competencies, and roles played by leaders, showing that strategic decisions only materialize when there is leadership capable of aligning people and processes with institutional goals.

In addition, the literature points out that leadership involves a set of technical and

behavioral competencies that are indispensable to organizational performance. Clear communication, decision-making skills, conflict management, and people development are fundamental attributes for the leader to exert a positive influence on his team. In this sense, Martins et al. (2024) argue that the leader's mindset – whether fixed or growth – directly interferes in the way he faces challenges, leads changes and stimulates organizational learning, reinforcing the idea that leading is also a process of cultural construction.

Finally, it is understood that leadership does not manifest itself in a single or static way, but as an adaptive practice to the demands of the environment. Different leadership styles have different impacts on team engagement, satisfaction, and productivity. Mata et al. (2024) demonstrate that situational leadership, by adapting behaviors to the needs of the subordinates, contributes to the construction of a more favorable organizational climate. Similarly, Poubel et al. (2022) point out that transformational leadership approaches favor the implementation of strategies and the achievement of better institutional results. Thus, understanding the fundamentals of leadership becomes an indispensable condition to analyze its role in the implementation of organizational growth strategies.

## 2.2 LEADERSHIP STYLES AND THEIR IMPACTS

Leadership styles represent different ways in which leaders exert influence on their teams and drive organizational processes. The specialized literature shows that there is no single leadership model capable of meeting all situations, and it is necessary to consider the context, the characteristics of the subordinates and the strategic objectives of the organization. In this sense, Mata et al. (2024) state that situational leadership stands out for its flexibility, allowing the leader to adapt his behavior to the specific needs of the team, favoring a more productive and collaborative organizational climate.

Among the most discussed styles in the field of management, transformational leadership has received special attention for its positive impact on organizational performance. According to Poubel et al. (2022), transformational leaders are able to inspire their subordinates, stimulate the development of competencies, and promote greater engagement with institutional objectives. This leadership style contributes to the creation of more innovative work environments and to overcoming organizational challenges, and is especially relevant in contexts of implementing growth strategies.

Another relevant aspect concerns the influence of behavioral and cognitive factors on leadership practice. Martins et al. (2024) highlight that the leader's mindset plays a decisive role in the way he leads his team and faces adverse situations. Leaders with a growth mindset tend to see mistakes as learning opportunities, encouraging autonomy and innovation. On

the other hand, leaders with a fixed mindset have greater resistance to change and less openness to development, which can compromise the effectiveness of organizational strategies.

In addition to the impacts on performance and results, leadership styles also directly influence the well-being and emotional health of employees. Oliveira et al. (2022) show that leadership based on clear communication, emotional support, and professional recognition contributes to the improvement of the organizational climate and the reduction of stress factors at work. Thus, understanding the different leadership styles and their effects becomes essential to analyze how leaders can act more effectively in leading teams and implementing organizational growth strategies.

### **3 LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE**

#### **3.1 LEADERSHIP AS A DETERMINING FACTOR OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE**

Organizational climate refers to the set of perceptions shared by employees about the work environment, management practices, and interpersonal relationships established in the organization. This climate directly influences aspects such as team motivation, productivity, satisfaction, and commitment. Several studies point out that leadership plays a central role in the formation and maintenance of this environment, since the leader's behavior defines patterns of communication, recognition, and interaction within the organization (Oliveira et al., 2022).

The way leaders lead their teams directly impacts the quality of work relationships and the level of employee engagement. Mata et al. (2024) highlight that situational leadership, by adapting its style to the needs of the subordinates, favors the creation of a healthier and more productive organizational climate. When the leader demonstrates support, clarity in guidelines and openness to dialogue, he tends to promote greater trust and cooperation among team members, fundamental elements for the achievement of institutional objectives.

In addition, the organizational climate is closely related to the ability of organizations to implement changes and strategies. Environments characterized by poor communication, frequent conflicts, and low employee participation tend to hinder the execution of strategic plans. In this sense, Poubel et al. (2022) state that transformational leadership practices contribute to building a more favorable climate for innovation and development, strengthening the alignment between people and organizational goals.

Another relevant factor concerns the influence of the leader's mindset in building the organizational climate. Martins et al. (2024) argue that leaders with a growth mindset encourage continuous learning, value collaboration, and encourage employee autonomy,

which results in more positive and development-oriented environments. Thus, it is evident that leadership not only interferes in individual and collective performance, but also constitutes a determining element for the creation of an organizational climate capable of sustaining processes of change and growth.

### 3.2 MINDSET, CULTURE AND PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

The concept of mindset has been widely discussed as a fundamental element to understand the behavior of leaders and their influence on teams. According to Martins et al. (2024), mindset can be understood as the set of beliefs and attitudes that guide the way an individual interprets challenges, learns from mistakes, and positions himself in the face of change. In the organizational context, leaders with a growth mindset tend to encourage continuous learning, innovation, and collaboration, creating favorable conditions for the development of people and the strengthening of organizational culture.

Organizational culture, in turn, is built from shared values, practices, and behaviors, and is strongly influenced by the performance of leaders. When the leader adopts a posture open to dialogue, feedback, and constant improvement, he contributes to the formation of more participatory and development-oriented environments. In this sense, Oliveira et al. (2022) emphasize that leaders who value emotional support, recognition, and transparent communication favor the creation of a healthier organizational climate, positively impacting team engagement and performance.

People development is another aspect directly related to the mindset and culture promoted by leaders. Organizations that invest in the training of their employees and encourage autonomy tend to have a greater capacity for adaptation and innovation. Poubel et al. (2022) show that transformational leadership practices encourage the professional and personal growth of individuals, strengthening commitment to strategic objectives and expanding organizational capacity to respond to challenges and opportunities.

Thus, it is understood that the alignment between growth mindset, organizational culture, and people development is essential for the effectiveness of leadership. Mata et al. (2024) demonstrate that leaders who are able to adjust their style to the needs of the team and promote continuous learning environments contribute to building more resilient organizations that are prepared to implement strategies. Thus, the role of the leader goes beyond the coordination of tasks, becoming a central agent in the formation of a culture that values human development as the basis for organizational growth.

## 4 ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH STRATEGIES

### 4.1 CONCEPTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

Organizational strategy can be understood as the set of guidelines and planned actions that guide the organization in the pursuit of its long-term objectives. It is a continuous process of defining goals, allocating resources, and choosing paths that allow the company to position itself competitively in the market. In the contemporary business environment, marked by uncertainties and constant changes, strategy plays a fundamental role in ensuring the sustainability and growth of organizations.

Traditionally, strategy is conceived as a process involving two complementary dimensions: formulation and implementation. Formulation concerns the definition of organizational plans, goals, and policies, while implementation refers to the transformation of these plans into concrete actions. Bernardes and Ferreira (2023) highlight that organizational growth does not depend only on the development of good strategies, but mainly on the organization's ability to articulate them with its internal competencies and with the effective performance of leaders, responsible for conducting the strategic execution process.

In addition, organizational strategy is directly related to the ability of companies to adapt to the context in which they are inserted. Technological changes, competitive pressures, and transformations in consumer behavior require organizations to respond quickly and flexibly. In this sense, strategy should be understood as a dynamic process and not just as a static plan. Poubel et al. (2022) argue that organizations that are able to align strategies with effective leadership practices are more likely to achieve consistent and sustainable results.

Another relevant aspect refers to the role of people in the strategic process. The execution of any strategy depends fundamentally on the engagement and coordinated action of employees. Therefore, organizational strategy cannot be dissociated from human and cultural factors. Mata et al. (2024) point out that strategic success is strongly conditioned by the ability of leaders to mobilize teams, promote internal alignment, and create environments conducive to innovation and performance. Thus, understanding the concepts of organizational strategy is essential to analyze how leadership acts as a key element in the implementation of growth strategies.

### 4.2 THE STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Strategic implementation corresponds to the set of actions and decisions necessary to transform plans and guidelines into concrete results. While strategic formulation defines "what to do", implementation answers the "how to" question, involving the coordination of

people, processes, and resources. Several studies indicate that most of the difficulties faced by organizations are not in the elaboration of strategies, but in their effective execution, evidencing the complexity of this process.

The strategic implementation process requires alignment between different organizational levels and clarity in communicating objectives. Bernardes and Ferreira (2023) emphasize that organizational growth depends on the ability of leaders to articulate strategies with internal competencies and to promote coherence between strategic decisions and daily practices. Without this alignment, even well-structured strategies tend to lose effectiveness, resulting in poor performance and wasted resources.

Another determining factor for the successful implementation of strategies is the engagement of teams. Strategic execution involves changes in behavior, adoption of new practices, and overcoming internal resistance. In this sense, Poubel et al. (2022) highlight that transformational leadership styles favor employee commitment, stimulating cooperation and willingness to face organizational challenges. Leaders who communicate clearly, offer support, and value the development of people contribute significantly to the effectiveness of the strategic process.

In addition, strategic implementation is directly related to the organizational climate and the ability of leaders to adapt. Mata et al. (2024) state that situational leadership, by adjusting behaviors to the team's needs and context, creates more favorable conditions for the execution of strategies. Martins et al. (2024) add that leaders with a growth mindset tend to see difficulties as learning opportunities, favoring innovation and problem-solving. Thus, strategic implementation reveals itself to be an essentially human and relational process, in which leadership plays a decisive role in achieving organizational results.

#### 4.3 LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

Organizational growth is one of the main strategic objectives of companies and involves processes of expansion, innovation, increased competitiveness and continuous improvement of performance. However, the simple planning of actions aimed at growth does not guarantee their effectiveness. The literature has shown that the success of expansion strategies depends decisively on the ability of leaders to lead people and processes towards organizational objectives. In this sense, leadership is a central element in the articulation between planning and strategic execution.

Bernardes and Ferreira (2023) highlight that organizational growth results from the interaction between three fundamental dimensions: the institutional context, organizational competencies, and the role played by leaders. According to the authors, effective leaders are

able to interpret external demands, mobilize internal resources, and promote decisions aligned with the needs of the environment. Thus, growth should not be understood only as a consequence of good strategies, but as a result of leadership practices that favor learning, innovation, and organizational adaptation.

The relationship between leadership and growth is also evident in the ability of leaders to create environments conducive to strategic execution. Poubel et al. (2022) argue that transformational leadership has a direct impact on institutional performance by stimulating employee engagement, motivation, and development. Leaders who communicate a clear vision, inspire confidence, and encourage active team participation significantly increase the chances of success of strategic growth-oriented initiatives.

Another relevant aspect refers to the influence of the organizational climate on the expansion process of companies. Mata et al. (2024) demonstrate that situational leadership, by adapting behaviors to the characteristics of the subordinates and the demands of the context, contributes to the formation of more collaborative and productive environments. Such environments favor the implementation of changes, the overcoming of internal resistance, and the alignment of teams around strategic goals, indispensable factors for sustainable organizational growth.

In addition to the organizational climate, the mindset of leaders plays a decisive role in driving growth. Martins et al. (2024) state that leaders with a growth mindset tend to value continuous learning, innovation, and people development, essential characteristics in organizational expansion processes. On the other hand, leaders with a fixed mindset may have greater difficulty in dealing with uncertainties and transformations, limiting the organization's ability to take advantage of growth opportunities.

The well-being and emotional health of teams also relate directly to the ability of organizations to grow consistently. Oliveira et al. (2022) point out that leaders who offer support, recognition, and transparent communication contribute to the creation of psychologically healthy environments, reducing stress levels and increasing employee commitment. More engaged and emotionally balanced teams tend to perform better, which is positively reflected in the organization's strategic results.

In addition, organizational governance and compliance practices influence the growth process by establishing ethical and management standards that strengthen internal and external trust. Paz, Azevedo, and Sousa (2023) show that organizational environments structured on principles of compliance and transparency favor safer decisions that are aligned with strategic objectives. In this context, leadership plays a fundamental role in promoting an organizational culture based on integrity, responsibility, and results-orientation.

In view of these considerations, it is observed that leadership acts as an integrating axis between strategy, people and results, constituting a decisive factor for organizational growth. Leaders' ability to communicate vision, mobilize teams, adapt to dynamic contexts, and foster innovation-friendly environments is essential for organizations to be able to transform strategic intentions into effective performance. Thus, understanding the relationship between leadership and organizational growth becomes indispensable to analyze how leadership practices influence the implementation of strategies and the sustainability of business development.

## **5 LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS**

### **5.1 ETHICS, GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE**

The effectiveness of organizational strategies is directly related to the governance environment in which the organization is inserted. Management practices based on ethics, transparency and regulatory compliance are essential pillars for institutional credibility and for the sustainability of business growth. In this context, corporate governance and compliance emerge as mechanisms that guide strategic decisions and reduce organizational risks, strengthening the trust of internal and external stakeholders (Paz, Azevedo & Sousa, 2023).

Compliance can be understood as the set of procedures and controls aimed at ensuring that the organization acts in accordance with laws, standards, and ethical principles. More than a control instrument, compliance represents a strategic element that contributes to the improvement of decision-making processes and the construction of an integral organizational culture. Paz, Azevedo, and Sousa (2023) show that companies that adopt consistent compliance practices tend to have greater managerial maturity and better alignment between organizational objectives and professional conduct.

In this scenario, leadership plays a decisive role in promoting ethical values and consolidating governance practices. The way leaders lead their teams and make decisions directly influences organizational behavior and the perception of legitimacy of strategic actions. Bernardes and Ferreira (2023) highlight that sustainable organizational growth depends on the ability of leaders to integrate governance principles into daily practices, ensuring coherence between discourse and action.

In addition, organizational environments guided by ethics and transparency tend to favor the implementation of growth strategies. Leaders who value integrity, respect for standards, and social responsibility contribute to the creation of relationships of trust, an indispensable factor for team engagement and the effective execution of strategies. Thus,

the articulation between ethics, governance, and compliance is a fundamental component for leadership to be able to exercise its role legitimately and effectively, promoting an organizational environment conducive to development and sustainable growth.

## 5.2 THEORETICAL SYNTHESIS AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The theoretical review shows that leadership is a central element for the effectiveness of organizational strategies and, consequently, for the growth of companies. The different authors analyzed demonstrate that strategic implementation is not limited to technical or formal aspects of planning, but depends fundamentally on the performance of leaders in conducting people, processes and decisions. Bernardes and Ferreira (2023) reinforce that organizational growth results from the articulation between context, internal competencies, and leadership practices, confirming that the execution of strategies is directly associated with the ability of leaders to mobilize resources and align collective efforts.

Studies on leadership styles and organizational climate reveal that the leader's behavior decisively influences team engagement and the work environment. Mata et al. (2024) show that situational leadership favors adaptation to the demands of the context and the needs of employees, creating more appropriate conditions for the execution of strategies. In a complementary way, Poubel et al. (2022) highlight that transformational leadership practices stimulate motivation, learning, and commitment, essential elements for organizations to be able to transform strategic plans into effective results.

Another relevant aspect refers to the influence of the *leader's mindset* and organizational culture on the growth process. Martins et al. (2024) demonstrate that leaders with a growth mindset tend to promote more innovative, collaborative, and people-development-oriented environments, which expands the organizational capacity for adaptation and expansion. Oliveira et al. (2022) add that emotional support, clear communication, and professional recognition contribute to the construction of healthier organizational climates, favoring collective performance and the implementation of strategic changes.

The integration of these elements allows the construction of a conceptual model that guides the present study. From the literature analyzed, it is understood that leadership directly influences the organizational climate, team engagement and the quality of decision-making processes, factors that, in turn, impact the effectiveness of strategic implementation. Thus, a model is proposed in which the performance of leadership, mediated by communication, people management, ethics, and governance practices (Paz, Azevedo, & Sousa, 2023), contributes to the creation of favorable organizational environments and to the alignment of

teams, resulting in the successful implementation of organizational growth strategies.

Thus, the theoretical synthesis maintains that organizational growth should be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon, in which leadership, climate, culture, and governance act interdependently. This understanding underpins the methodological path adopted in the research and guides the analysis of the data collected, allowing us to examine how leadership practices, in the perception of business leaders, influence the implementation of strategies and the performance of organizations. The conceptual proposal constructed here does not intend to end the debate, but to offer an interpretative key capable of articulating leadership, organizational environment and strategic execution in business contexts marked by increasing complexity.

## 6 METHODOLOGY

To empirically understand how business leaders interpret their performance in the implementation of growth strategies, an investigative path of applied nature was adopted, with a qualitative-quantitative approach and an exploratory-descriptive design. The choice of this methodological design is justified by the need to understand, in depth, the perceptions of business leaders about the role of leadership in the implementation of organizational growth strategies. According to Gil (2019), exploratory research is indicated when greater familiarity with the investigated problem is sought, while descriptive studies allow the identification and analysis of characteristics of a certain phenomenon or social group.

As for the technical procedures, the survey method was adopted, with the application of a structured questionnaire composed of closed questions on a Likert scale and open questions, applied from December 2025 to January 2026. According to Creswell and Creswell (2021), the use of mixed instruments enables the collection of numerical and qualitative data, expanding the understanding of the investigated object. The research universe was made up of business leaders working in medium and large companies, and the sample was defined by accessibility and convenience, including professionals who perform strategic management functions in different organizational sectors.

Data collection took place electronically, by sending the questionnaire to previously invited participants. Quantitative data were treated by means of descriptive statistics, with analysis of frequencies and means of the answers obtained. The qualitative data, from the open questions, were examined based on content analysis, according to the procedures proposed by Bardin (2016), allowing the categorization and interpretation of the respondents' perceptions about leadership practices and their relationship with strategic implementation.

With regard to ethical aspects, the research strictly observed the guidelines

established for studies involving human beings. The project was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee (CEP) of the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Minas Gerais (IFMG), and was duly approved before the start of data collection, according to CAAE process: 92484425.5.0000.0293. All participants received information about the objectives of the study, guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality of the answers, expressing agreement through the Informed Consent Form (ICF).

Thus, the methodological path adopted allowed the obtaining of consistent information aligned with the proposed objectives, making it possible to analyze quantitative and qualitative data in an integrated way. The combination of these techniques favored the understanding of the investigated phenomenon from multiple perspectives, offering subsidies for the discussion about the role of leadership in the implementation of organizational growth strategies.

## 7 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 7.1 CHARACTERIZATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The initial reading of the data allows us to observe that the study participants are mostly inserted in organizational contexts of high decision-making complexity, which gives interpretative density to the perceptions presented below, with a predominance of professionals with more than six years of leadership experience (62.5%). There is an age concentration between 31 and 40 years old (56.3%), in addition to the majority of activities in the industrial sector (68.8%) and in large companies (81.3%).

This profile indicates insertion in structured organizational contexts, with greater strategic complexity and formalization of decision-making processes, which gives consistency to the perceptions analyzed.

**Table 1**

*Characterization of the study participants*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Time leadership	1 to 3 years	4	25,0%
	4 to 6 years	2	12,5%
	More than 6 years	10	62,5%
Age group	Under 30 years old	1	6,2%
	31 to 40 years old	9	56,3%
	41 to 50 years old	5	31,3%
	Over 50 years old	1	6,2%

Gender	Women	5	31,3%
	Male	11	68,8%
Company Area	Industry	11	68,8%
	Services	3	18,8%
	Technology	2	12,5%
Company size	Medium	3	18,8%
	Large	13	81,3%

The data presented in Table 1 show that the participants have consolidated experience in strategic functions, which reinforces the validity of subsequent analyses about the implementation of organizational growth strategies. Although the sample is small, the profile of the participants indicates high strategic experience, which reinforces the interpretative quality of the data.

## 7.2 CORRESPONDENCE OF THE ANALYZED ASSERTIONS

The organization of the assertions used in the data collection instrument favors the integrated reading of the dimensions investigated, which is why Table 2 systematizes the correspondence between the analytical codes used and their respective statements.

**Table 2**

*Correspondence between codes and assertions used in the research data collection instrument*

Code	Assertive
P1	Clear definition of objectives and expectations for the team
P2	Actively encourages the exchange of ideas and collaboration within the team
P3	The leader demonstrates trust and transparency in his or her interactions with the team
P4	My company's leaders handle change and uncertainty well
P5	Leaders encourage team autonomy and decision-making
P6	Leadership fosters a collaborative environment
P7	Leaders constantly seek professional improvement
P8	Leadership actively contributes to the implementation of growth strategies
P9	The results obtained are often analyzed and adjusted as necessary
P10	Strategic decisions are based on data and performance indicators

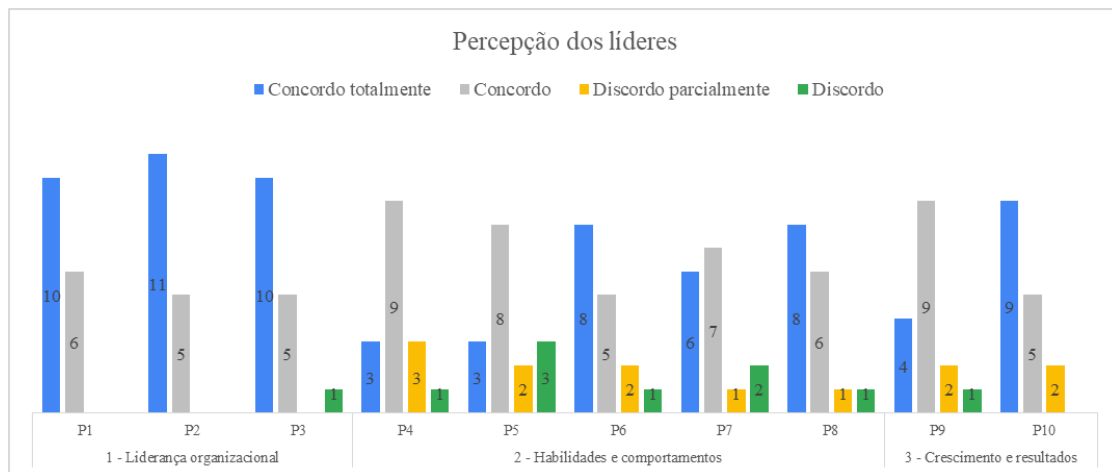
It should be highlighted, in addition to Table 1, that all the statements used the four-point Likert scale, namely, disagree, partially disagree, agree and totally agree.

## 7.3 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEADERS' PERCEPTIONS

The reading of the quantitative data reveals a consistent pattern of agreement around dimensions considered central to the performance of leadership in organizational growth processes.

**Figure 1**

*Leaders' perception of leadership practices and their influence on organizational growth*



Source: Survey data (2026).

Figure 1 shows a consistent pattern of agreement in the assertions related to the communication of strategic objectives, trust in interactions, and the active role of leadership in the execution of strategies (P1, P2, and P3). This result reinforces the theoretical perspective that leadership acts as an articulating element between strategic formulation and implementation, as pointed out by Bernardes and Ferreira (2023), when they argue that organizational growth depends on the ability of leaders to align internal competencies and strategic direction. The high agreement in these dimensions, then, suggests that the participants recognize leadership as a central mechanism for coordinating and mobilizing teams around organizational goals.

On the other hand, the greater dispersion observed in the assertions related to change management (P4), incentive to autonomy (P5), work environment (P6), continuous development (P7) and leadership behavior (P8) indicates that, although there is a general positive perception, these dimensions still present different levels of consolidation in the organizational contexts analyzed. This result dialogues with Mata, Ferreira, and Bastos Filho (2024), who argue that the effectiveness of leadership depends on the ability to adapt situationally to the characteristics of teams and the environment. Thus, the presence of partial disagreements may reflect structural and cultural challenges that hinder the transposition of more participatory leadership practices oriented to human development.

Regarding the assertions related to the analysis of results and data-based decision-making (P9 and P10), a high degree of agreement is again observed, suggesting that leaders perceive continuous monitoring and the use of indicators as indispensable components for organizational growth. This finding converges with the literature on strategic leadership, which emphasizes the need for evidence-based decisions and continuous evaluation

processes to sustain organizational competitiveness (Bernardes and Ferreira, 2023). In addition, this orientation towards metrics can be interpreted as a reflection of the expansion of governance and accountability practices discussed by Paz, Azevedo, and Sousa (2023).

The integrated analysis of quantitative data allows us to understand leadership as a multifaceted phenomenon, simultaneously guided by relational dimensions — such as communication, trust, and collaboration — and by technical aspects related to performance and strategic control. This combination is close to the characteristics of transformational leadership described by Poubel, Sincorá, and Brandão (2022), in which the leader exerts influence both through inspiration and engagement and through the ability to drive results. Thus, the data suggest that the organizational growth perceived by the participants emerges from the articulation between socio-emotional competencies and results-oriented management practices, reinforcing the centrality of leadership as an integrating element of strategic processes.

#### 7.4 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEADERS' PERCEPTIONS

The analysis of the open-ended responses allowed the researchers to deepen the quantitative results by evidencing interpretative dimensions that help to understand how leaders signify their role in strategic implementation, in such a way that, more than confirming trends observed in the assertions, the qualitative reports reveal relational and contextual processes that support the execution of organizational strategies, demonstrating that leadership is perceived as a dynamic and situated practice, and not just as a formal function.

First, the understanding of leadership as a mediation between planning and execution is highlighted. Participants describe the leader as responsible for translating strategic guidelines into concrete operational actions, establishing priorities and monitoring performance indicators. This perception converges with Bernardes and Ferreira (2023), when they emphasize that organizational growth depends on the ability of leaders to articulate internal competencies and transform strategic intentions into effective results. In this way, qualitative data reinforce the idea that leadership acts as a bridge between the strategic and operational dimensions, giving coherence to the implementation process.

A second interpretative axis refers to the role of communication as a structuring element of strategic leadership. The narratives indicate that clarity in the definition of goals, alignment between teams, and transparency of information are essential conditions for collective engagement and for the reduction of ambiguities during the execution of strategies. This finding dialogues with Oliveira et al. (2022), who associate open communication practices with building trust and strengthening the organizational climate, indicating that

communication is not only a management tool, but a central component of the exercise of leadership.

The third axis evidenced is related to the development of people and the promotion of autonomy. The answers indicate that leaders recognize organizational growth as a process dependent on continuous training and encouraging the active participation of employees. This perspective is close to the discussions of Poubel, Sincorá and Brandão (2022) on transformational leadership, in which human development and motivation constitute the basis for innovation and sustainable performance. At the same time, the narratives reveal that the consolidation of these practices faces cultural and structural barriers, which helps to explain the variability observed in the quantitative responses associated with autonomy and the collaborative environment.

Finally, the participants demonstrate that they understand organizational growth as a dynamic phenomenon, marked by continuous processes of evaluation, adaptation and integration between areas. This view reinforces the conception of situational leadership defended by Mata, Ferreira, and Bastos Filho (2024), according to which the effectiveness of leadership depends on the ability to adapt to the context and emerging demands. Thus, the qualitative analysis confirms that leaders perceive their performance as an integrating element between strategy and performance, showing that organizational growth is the result of collective processes mediated by the strategic action of leadership.

## 7.5 SUMMARY OF ANALYSES

The triangulation between quantitative and qualitative data shows high internal coherence of the findings and reinforces the analytical robustness of the study, allowing us to understand strategic implementation as a multidimensional process, in which technical and human factors are interdependently articulated. The results indicate that the effectiveness of growth strategies is not restricted to the formal formulation of plans, but depends fundamentally on the role of leadership as an integrating agent between people, processes, and organizational objectives, corroborating the perspective presented by Bernardes and Ferreira (2023).

Integrated analysis demonstrates that strategic clarity and structured communication emerge as central pillars of execution. Both quantitative data and qualitative narratives indicate that leaders capable of making objectives explicit, aligning expectations, and promoting transparency favor greater team engagement and reduce operational ambiguities. Such evidence converges with Oliveira et al. (2022), when they indicate that consistent communication practices contribute to the construction of environments of trust and to the

strengthening of the organizational climate, essential elements for the successful implementation of strategic changes.

In addition, the results show that behavioral competencies of leadership — such as adaptability, encouragement of autonomy and development of people — exert a direct influence on the effectiveness of strategic implementation. This perception is close to discussions about transformational and situational leadership, in which organizational performance is understood as the result of the combination of results-orientation and sensitivity to the team's needs (Poubel et al., 2022; Mata et al., 2024). The variability observed in some assertions suggests that these competencies are still conditioned by cultural and structural factors present in the organizations analyzed.

Another relevant aspect refers to the association between sustainable growth and continuous monitoring practices. The valorization of indicator analysis and data-based decision-making reveals a growing orientation towards more strategic management models aligned with the logic of governance and accountability, as discussed by Paz, Azevedo, and Sousa (2023). In this context, leadership plays a central role in balancing relational and analytical dimensions, articulating organizational performance and learning.

In summary, the findings reinforce that leadership maturity directly influences the organizational capacity to adapt and respond to dynamic contexts, configuring itself as a key element for the generation of value and for the sustainability of business growth. Thus, the integration of empirical data contributes to broaden the understanding of the role of strategic leadership in medium and large companies, showing that organizational growth is the result of collective processes mediated by the conscious and adaptive performance of leaders.

## **8 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Throughout this chapter, we sought to understand leadership as a constitutive dimension of the processes of strategic implementation in organizations inserted in contexts marked by demands for growth, adaptation and competitiveness. More than examining individual attributes of leaders, the analysis allowed us to observe leadership as a relational practice that articulates decisions, expectations and forms of coordination within organizations.

The data analyzed indicate that leadership is perceived by the participants as a structuring element of the strategic dynamics, especially because it acts in the space where institutional guidelines need to be translated into concrete work practices. In this sense, leadership does not appear only as an instance of supervision, but as a permanent mediation between strategic formulation and organizational capacity for execution.

The convergence between quantitative and qualitative data shows that clarity in the communication of objectives, building trust, encouraging collaboration, and systematic monitoring of results are dimensions particularly valued by the leaders investigated. These elements reveal that strategic implementation, far from depending exclusively on technical planning instruments, requires continuous processes of alignment and internal legitimation.

The recurrent presence of communication in the answers obtained reinforces the understanding that organizational strategies become effective when they manage to produce shared intelligibility. Clear objectives, explicit priorities, and consistent information flows reduce ambiguities and strengthen the collective capacity for action, making leadership a central operator of organizational coherence.

At the same time, the qualitative analysis shows that leaders attribute great importance to the ability to reduce resistance, sustain adaptation processes and stimulate autonomy in teams. Such a perception broadens the understanding of leadership beyond formal command, bringing it closer to an action aimed at creating favorable conditions for strategic changes to be incorporated into the organizational routine.

This relational dimension becomes particularly important in contexts of organizational growth, in which transformations often generate tensions between stability and change. Growing implies reorganizing practices, redefining priorities, and expanding internal capacities, processes that are difficult to sustain without leaders capable of interpreting the context and producing institutional cohesion.

The findings also suggest that organizational growth is not perceived by participants as a purely technical or linear phenomenon. On the contrary, it emerges as a dynamic process, dependent on the organizational capacity to learn, adjust decisions, and integrate different areas around common goals. Leadership, in this scenario, appears as an element that favors circulation between different levels of the organization.

From a theoretical perspective, the results reinforce contemporary approaches that understand leadership as an integrating variable between people, processes and results. By dialoguing with studies on strategic leadership, transformational leadership, organizational climate, and people development, the chapter broadens the understanding that strategic effectiveness depends heavily on human and cultural factors.

The approximation between empirical data and the literature shows that effective leadership practices are not restricted to decision-making, but include the ability to listen, contextually read, build trust, and sustain collaborative environments. These competencies become especially relevant in organizations operating under increasing demands for innovation and adaptation.

From an organizational point of view, the results suggest that sustainable growth strategies require continuous investments in leadership development. It is not enough to have formal management instruments; It is necessary to strengthen skills related to communication, change management, people development, and strategic reading of organizational environments.

The relevance of practices guided by systematic monitoring of results is also evidenced. The valorization of indicators and the continuous analysis of performance reveals that the leaders investigated recognize the importance of decisions supported by evidence, bringing leadership and governance closer together in more consistent decision-making processes.

Even so, it should be recognized that the results presented are the result of a specific cut, constructed from a small number of participants and convenience sampling. Although such a configuration does not compromise the interpretative power of the analysis, it recommends caution regarding generalizations to other organizational contexts.

Another aspect to be considered refers to the fact that the perceptions analyzed derive exclusively from the view of the leaders themselves, which naturally favors certain interpretations of the organizational dynamics. Incorporating other voices—especially employees and middle managers—can significantly broaden the understanding of the relationships between leadership and strategic implementation.

In this sense, future investigations may explore comparisons between different economic sectors, different organizational sizes and varied institutional contexts, allowing us to observe how leadership practices are configured in environments marked by specific challenges of growth and transformation.

In summary, the analysis developed in this chapter reinforces that leadership occupies a central position in organizational growth processes because it acts as a mediation between strategy, people, and institutional capacity for adaptation. More than an individual attribute, leadership proves to be a decisive social practice for the production of organizational coherence and for the sustenance of development trajectories in complex business contexts.

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