

2017 Workplace Predictions: An Increased Focus on Inclusion, Change Leadership and Participant-led Learning

Top leadership development firm Fierce, Inc. provides key insight into what they predict organizations of all sizes will focus on in the coming year when it comes to developing leaders

SEATTLE (December 20, 2016) – Each year top leaders within every organization are forced to address issues that take place both internally, as well as with the world as a whole. 2016 was no exception. Through working directly with organizations ranging from small businesses to Fortune 500 companies, Fierce Inc., a global leadership development and training company, saw first-hand the way change affected leaders over the past year. Across the board one significant thing became clear: strong leaders are needed now, more than ever.

"There is no doubt that this year has been an eventful one for our country, the impact of which is affecting not only individuals, but organizations in a real way," said Susan Scott, CEO of Fierce, Inc. "2016 has brought to light a number of issues that organizations are looking to address head-on in 2017, with an unprecedented urgency. Employees are demanding their workplace not only be safe, but one in which they are able to advance on their own terms. These demands will no doubt shape the role of leadership development in the coming year."

As company leaders make a larger commitment to ensuring critical leadership development skills are taught across their organizations, Fierce predicts the following trends will take place in 2017:

- **Diversity and inclusion initiatives and programs will be expanded:** Whatever your political views entail, there is no denying the great divide that has taken over much of our country due to this year's presidential election. This confluence of beliefs can create issues in the workplace if individual workers feel marginalized, unsupported, or even fearful. Taking control of this conversation is key for organizations to not only maintain the well-being of their employees, but to ensure that their workplace is one of acceptance across the board. Fierce anticipates that in the coming year there will be a heightened focus on diversity and inclusion programs both within, and in addition to, existing training curriculum.
- **Change leadership will be incorporated into all levels of the company:** In the fast-paced world we live in today, change is inevitable- from structural shifts to leadership changes to industry disruption. These can be significant transformations or several small adjustments over time. Historically, organizations have created change management teams or individuals in charge of getting a company or team through these efforts, yet data shows that 70% of change initiatives fail. In 2017, Fierce predicts a fundamental transference of expertise from a singular team to a critical skill for every leader within an organization to master.
- **The role of conversations will gain emphasis in performance management:** The once-a-year review is gone for good, however many employees, millennials in particular, are looking for more action-based feedback from their employers, on an as-needed basis. In addition to the uptick in data-driven reviews, Fierce predicts that in 2017 more organizations will focus on the competency of conversations – from coaching to feedback to confrontation. The goal is to empower individuals to obtain their goals through initiating conversations to ensure they receive what they need, when they need it.

- **New technologies will continue to be sought out, adapted and taken advantage of within companies:** Advancements in technology are happening rapidly, and their relevance to HR training and development continues to increase. Fierce trainers hear from clients that they want greater options when it comes to on-demand, digitized versions of our teachings that provide lessons in a truly interactive way. Learners want more concrete options for implementing what they've learned beyond a session, and technology can and will play a large role in making this not only possible, but a real game changer. In 2017 Fierce believes there will be an increased focus in using innovative digital options when it comes to both expanding the depth, scope and reach of training to ensure the largest number of individuals are impacted.
- **Participant-driven learning will play a larger role:** In part due to the influx of millennials in the workplace, there has been a heightened desire from employees to have the ability to take control of what, and how, they learn and apply leadership training skills. Fierce predicts that in the coming year, there will be a greater focus on placing participants in the driver's seat of their education.

For more information, visit www.fierceinc.com.

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ABOUT FIERCE

Fierce, Inc. is an award-winning leadership development and training company that changes the way people communicate with each other. Fierce helps organizations transform company cultures by building conversational skills that spark curiosity, ignite innovation, invite cross-boundary collaboration, and drive results. These conversations help create authentic, energizing, and rewarding connections with colleagues and customers that ultimately lead to successful outcomes and measurable ROI. Tailored to any size or type of organization, Fierce principles and methods translate across the globe, ensure individual and collective success, and develop skills that are practical, easy-to-learn and can be applied immediately. Fierce's programs have been successfully implemented at blue-chip companies, non-profits, and educational organizations worldwide, including Ernst & Young, Wal-Mart, Coca-Cola, CARE, and Crate & Barrel. Fierce has been honored as an Inc. 500|5000 company six times, in 2011 was named to TrainingIndustry.com's "Companies to Watch" list, and for the past four years was selected to Seattle Business magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" in Washington lists.