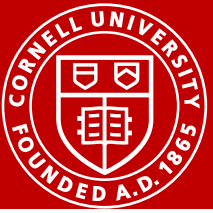# Early Career Development

Bradford S. Bell
Associate Professor of HR Studies
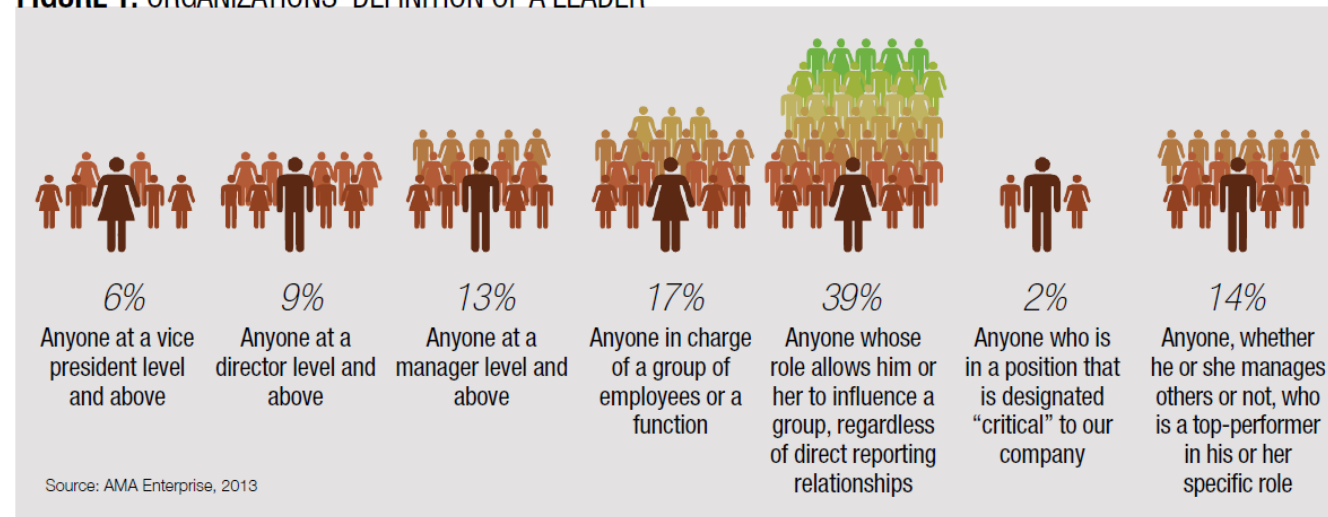Director, Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies (CAHRS)
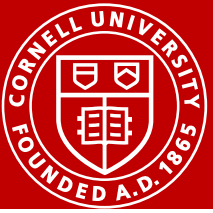
Background

- A survey by the Conference Board found that only 37% of companies report being effective at identifying future leaders.

- A study by the Corporate Leadership Council found that 40% of high potential internal job moves end in failure.

- A study by Willis Towers Watson found that 40% of identified high potentials say they need to leave their organization to advance their career.

Growing Focus on Early Career Talent

- Growing prevalence of flatter work structures and an increased emphasis on collaboration is shifting the definition of what it means to be a leader.

FIGURE 1: ORGANIZATIONS' DEFINITION OF A LEADER

6%	9%	13%	17%	39%	2%	14%
Anyone at a vice president level and above	Anyone at a director level and above	Anyone at a manager level and above	Anyone in charge of a group of employees or a function	Anyone whose role allows him or her to influence a group, regardless of direct reporting relationships	Anyone who is in a position that is designated "critical" to our company	Anyone, whether he or she manages others or not, who is a top-performer in his or her specific role

Source: AMA Enterprise, 2013

Source: Jones (2014)

Growing Focus on Early Career Talent

- Demographic trends are resulting in individuals moving into senior positions earlier than in the past, necessitating advanced planning and preparation

- Recognition that career development, mentoring, and coaching are significant drivers of engagement, particularly among early and mid-career employees
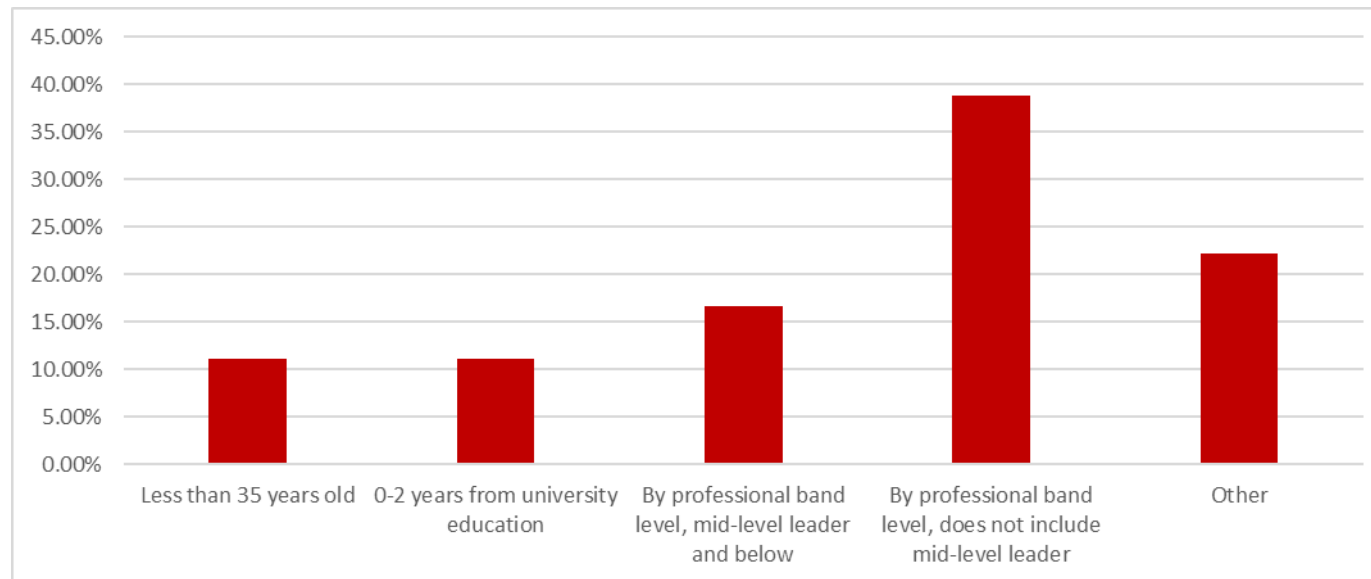
CAHRS Research

- Survey of 18 human resource professionals responsible for early career development within their organizations.

- CAHRS working group hosted by Johnson & Johnson, attended by individuals from 13 different companies.
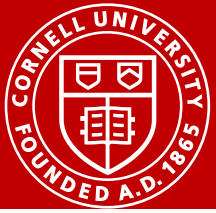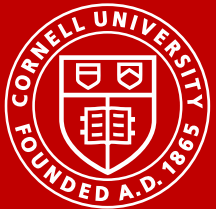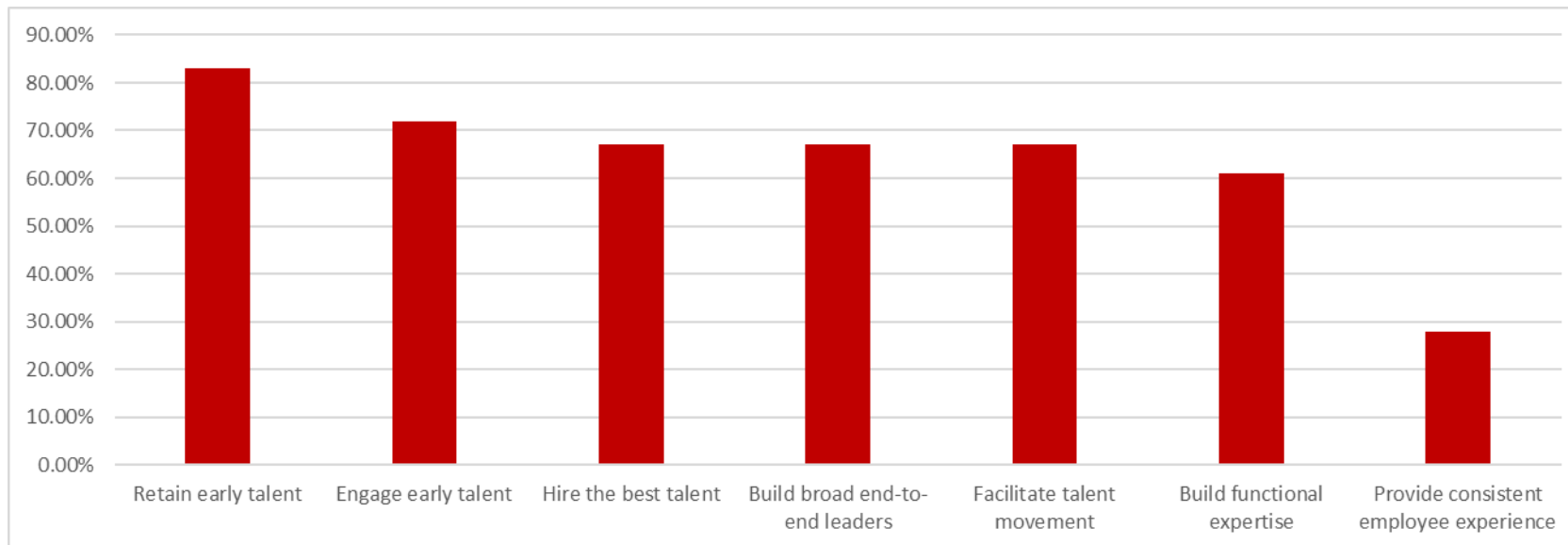
Defining Early Career

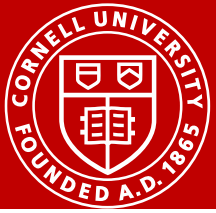- Companies adopt varying definitions of "early career" employees.
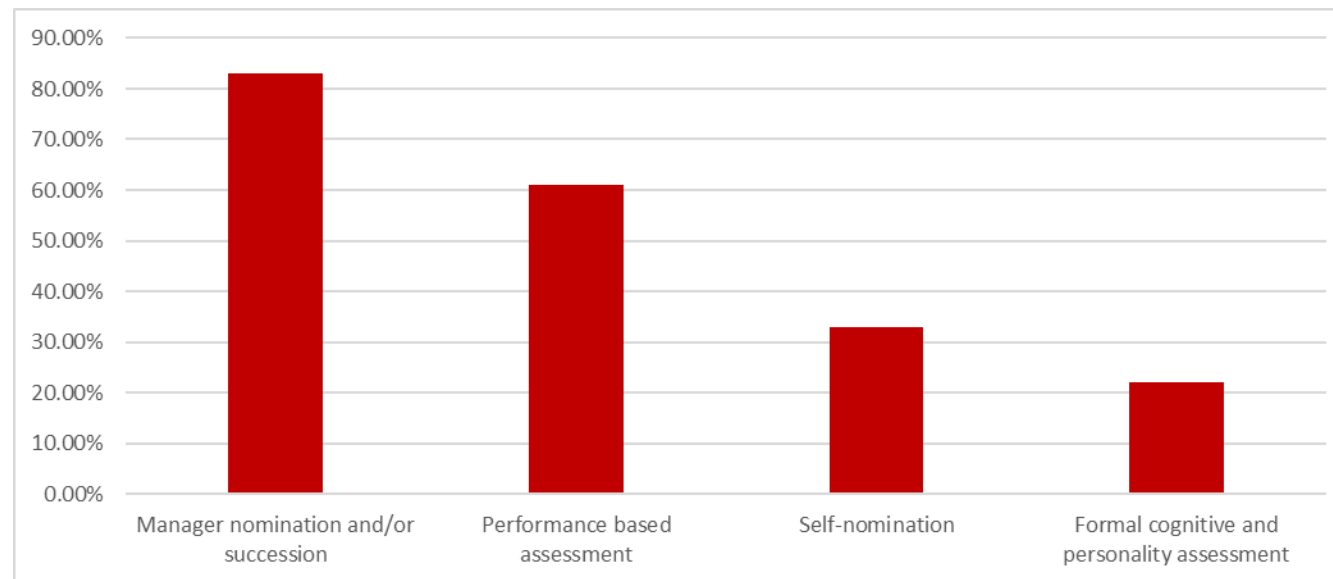
Goals of Early in Career Strategy

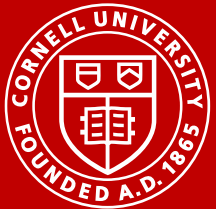- Companies aim to achieve an array of goals through their early in career strategy.
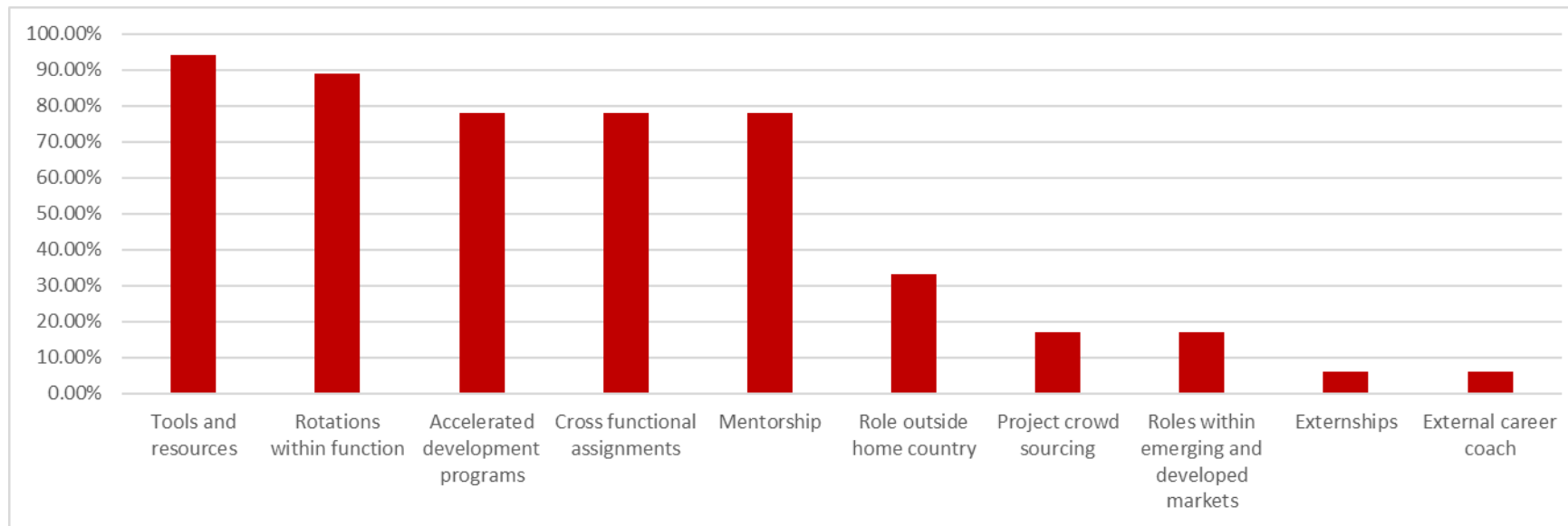
Identifying Talent

- Companies use different methods for identifying talent for differentiated development, although manager nomination dominates.
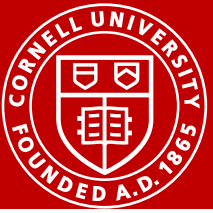
# Elements of Early Career Strategy

- Companies employ a variety of strategies for developing their early in career employees.

Rotational Development Programs

- Many companies believe RDPs yield a greater return for employees coming directly out of undergraduate.

- Cross-functional rotations remain rare. Cross-functional projects and assignments are used more frequently.

- Short-term metrics (e.g., retention, immediate advancement, participant reactions) often used to measure success. ROI remains unclear.
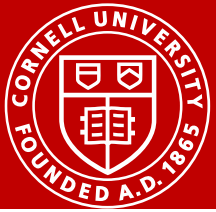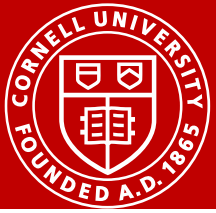
Rotational Development Programs

- Employees often fall into a "black-hole" following the program, during which engagement and retention can be challenges.

- Often unclear who owns the headcount as employees rotate between assignments.

- Can be challenging to ensure post-program assignment.
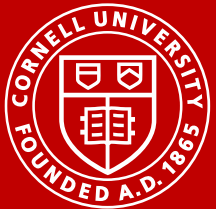
The Changing Nature of Work and the Evolution of Early Career Development

- Global experiences increasingly critical to advancement, but different views on when and how to provide them.

- Technological advances (e.g., artificial intelligence) are creating new approaches to identifying talent and providing career and development recommendations to early in career talent.

- Growing focus on creating integrated talent management strategies that can provide consistency in experience throughout the employee lifecycle.

Thank You!

Questions?