

# Reimagining Leadership in Life Sciences

INSIGHTS FROM LEAP HR EAST

GEORGE QUINN | 2025



WittKieffer was proud to attend **LEAP HR: Life Sciences East 2025**, where over 200 HR leaders gathered to explore the future of talent in the life sciences sector. The conversations were bold, the strategies actionable, and the energy unmistakably focused on **transforming leadership**.

As a firm deeply committed to identifying, developing, and supporting impactful leaders, here are the insights that resonated most with our mission:

### The Talent Paradigm Shift

- Life sciences organizations are moving beyond the “where we work” debate to fundamentally rethink how teams are composed. With **40% of companies now leveraging fractional and flexible talent models, up from just 16% five years ago**, leadership is increasingly fluid, agile, and outcome-driven. This shift underscores the growing relevance of interim and on-demand leadership as a strategic advantage.

### Onboarding Is Retention

- Organizations are rethinking onboarding as a strategic lever for long-term engagement. A well-designed first 90 days can **set the tone for cultural alignment and performance**, reinforcing the importance of **leadership transition planning** in our advisory work.

### Leadership Pipelines That Scale

- Company-specific cohort-based development programs (based on tenure, experience, function, title, etc.), often spanning 12 months or more, help companies **build future-ready** leaders. These programs are increasingly tied to business strategy and performance metrics.

### Learning That Feels Personal

- Mandatory training is out, Immersive, **customized learning journeys**, often built on employee feedback, drive real engagement and performance. Following this strategy, one organization created “Learning Labs” which quickly became an integral part of the performance evaluation process, increasing investment in development and applied knowledge.

### Hiring for Impact, Not Just Fit

- New frameworks are helping HR teams identify “game changers” through **behavior-based interviewing, competency mapping, leadership assessment**, and data-driven selection tools. The goal? Spot high-impact hires who elevate teams.

### AI in Talent Management

- AI is being used to uncover hidden skills, personalize feedback, and identify future leaders. While technology is evolving, the human element remains essential, especially in **executive assessment and succession planning**, where nuance and context matter.

### EVP is a Living Strategy

- Organizations are reshaping their Employer Value Propositions to better attract and retain top talent. Clear EVP communication is critical for interim and on-demand leaders to ensure alignment and engagement from day one.

### Remote Work with Purpose

- Remote-first organizations thrive when they are intentional about connection and collaboration. This is especially relevant for **interim leaders and consultants**, who must quickly integrate into distributed teams and drive results across geographies.

# What This Means for Leadership

The most forward-thinking life sciences organizations are:

- **Investing in leadership development** as a business imperative.
- **Using data and analytics** to inform succession and talent strategies.
- **Building cultures of resilience and transparency**, especially during change.
- **Creating agile workforce models** that support internal mobility and interim leadership.

At WittKieffer, we are driven by purpose—to identify transformative leaders, guide organizations through pivotal change, and shape leadership strategies that advance the future of healthcare and science. Whether through permanent placements or interim executives, we partner with our clients to ensure leadership continuity and impact when it matters most. Our commitment is unwavering: to build leadership that makes a lasting difference.

## Additional Insights From WittKieffer

[Unleashing Interim & On-Demand Expertise](#)

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