



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## ***PDI Pulse on Leaders Survey Shows Organizations Put Key Talent Retention at the Bottom of the Priority List***

### ***Top Global Leadership Firm Warns Companies to Pay Attention to Talent if They Want to Survive Recession***

**MINNEAPOLIS (Feb. 19, 2009)** – Personnel Decisions International (PDI) today announced a new *Pulse on Leaders* global study that showed a dramatic shift in leaders' top business challenges. Study respondents around the world ranked financial pressures to cut costs and rapid market decline as their toughest business challenges, with talent management falling to last on a list of challenges.

The latest findings are in stark contrast to a study conducted by PDI from 2006 to 2008. In the study, company leaders said top-line growth and talent management were the key issues. Yet, in the study conducted from December 2008 to January 2009 and released today, only 5 percent of respondents said "loss of leaders in key areas or insufficient talent to quickly adapt to change" was a current business challenge.

"Organizations should be asking, 'do we want to be in business after the downturn?'" said Marc Sokol, Ph.D., senior vice president and global practice leader, PDI. "If the answer is 'yes,' they must focus on the leaders who can guide them through these turbulent times."

Sokol added, "The best executives are focusing on both short-term challenges and long-term strategies. They recognize the need for key talent that can help the company get through current tough times, while also setting the stage for a competitive advantage once the recession ends. Our clients understand that if key talent leaves now, it may save money in the short term, but will leave the company vulnerable after the recession."

The *PDI Pulse on Leaders* study asked leaders at more than 500 global organizations for their top business challenges. Respondents included a cross section of leaders from North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. Respondents were given several choices, and could select as few or as many as they felt appropriate.

The study responses were as follows:

1. Financial pressures to cut costs (83 percent)
2. Rapid market decline (54 percent)
3. Competitive threats (23 percent)
4. Access to capital (23 percent)
5. Realizing the full potential of a recent merger or acquisition (16 percent)
6. Taking advantage of pockets of rapid market growth (16 percent)
7. Leveraging global expansion investments (13 percent)
8. Loss of leaders in key areas or insufficient talent to quickly adapt to change (5 percent)

"As organizations deal with cost cutting, they also are re-evaluating business strategies and are restructuring to meet today's demands," said Sokol. "It is critical these organizations also understand the talent and leadership

requirements to put these new processes and structures in place. Developing and retaining top-performing employees is an essential piece and should not be overlooked.”

#### **MEDIA NOTE**

Look for future data releases from the *PDI Pulse on Leaders*.

The *PDI Pulse on Leaders* analyzes different workplace questions on a regular basis and can be used as a source for gaining insight on the inner values of talent management and leadership development.

#### **ABOUT PERSONNEL DECISIONS INTERNATIONAL**

Personnel Decisions International (PDI) and Ninth House recently combined to create a premier global leadership solutions company that accelerates leadership effectiveness to maximize organizational performance. The combined company helps clients identify, manage, develop and promote superior leaders, across all levels of their organizations PDI and Ninth House use a unique combination of innovative, field-tested strategies, state-of-the art technology and proven processes to tailor specific solutions for clients.

With 750 team members in 30 offices around the globe, PDI and Ninth House partner with the world’s leading organizations, enabling them to address critical leadership challenges with innovative solutions. The company serves more than 2,000 clients, including 80 percent of U.S. *Fortune* 100 organizations and 75 percent of *Forbes* Global 100 firms.

The aim of PDI and Ninth House is simple – the well-placed confidence that clients’ current and future leaders are distinctively stronger than their competition, resulting in sustained, superior performance.

For more information, contact client relations at 920-997-6995 (in the U.S. 800-633-4410) or visit the website at [www.pdininthhouse.com](http://www.pdininthhouse.com).

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