

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS PROFILE

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	4
HOW DOES THIS WORK HELP ANIMALS?	5
WILL YOU HAVE GOOD PERSONAL FIT WITH MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES?	7
WHAT IS MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN ANIMAL ADVOCACY LIKE IN PRACTICE?	13
WHAT OPTIONS WOULD YOU HAVE IF YOU WERE TO LEAVE THIS PATH?	17
INTERESTED IN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES TO HELP ANIMALS?	18
HOW TO PREPARE FOR MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES	19
NOTES	30

SUMMARY

By reading this profile we hope that you can build a better understanding of whether seeking to develop management and leadership expertise seems like one of the best ways for you to use your time in order to help animals.

➤ HOW DOES THIS WORK HELP ANIMALS?

Managers and leaders can have a multiplier effect on the impact of their colleagues at animal advocacy nonprofits or food companies.

➤ WHO IS THIS WORK A GOOD FIT FOR?

Generalists with good communication skills and people skills, especially those who can inspire and motivate their team. Roles often require previous management and leadership experience.

➤ HOW MUCH DO WE NEED MORE EXPERTISE IN THIS AREA?

We believe that a career in animal advocacy management and leadership roles is one of the most promising career choices for those seeking to maximise their positive impact for animals.

➤ WHAT OPTIONS WOULD YOU HAVE IF YOU WERE TO LEAVE THIS PATH?

Other animal advocacy nonprofit roles, e.g. fundraising, campaigning, or lobbying. Possibly also roles in for-profit companies or in government.

➤ HOW TO PREPARE FOR MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES

It may be best to apply directly to roles in animal advocacy organisations. However, you can also gain relevant experience in the for-profit sector, through unpaid work, or through deliberate practice and training.



INTRODUCTION

In this profile, we will share some insights with you from the experiences of some of the movement's leaders (via 10 interviews), plus the findings of academic research into leadership and our own research into existing animal advocacy nonprofits.

You can read more about our [methodology](#) here.

Our understandings of what “leadership” and “management” mean differ from person to person. In this profile, we don't attempt to precisely define these terms or evaluate the differences between them. We focus on careers in positions of formal responsibility for managing and leading other animal advocates, especially in nonprofits.

MEET SOME OF THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY MOVEMENT'S INSPIRING LEADERS



RICARDO LAURINO

who joined the Brazilian Vegetarian Society by volunteering as a regional coordinator, and is now the president of the institution.



ELAINE SIU

who is building up a team for The Good Food Institute in Asia, to support the development of an industry that can replace animal products with high-quality animal-free foods.



GABRIELĖ VAITKEVIČIŪTĖ

who co-founded Tušti Narvai in Lithuania 6 years ago, and has been leading the organisation as Executive Director since then.

HOW DOES THIS WORK HELP ANIMALS?

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN HELPING ANIMALS EFFECTIVELY THROUGH YOUR CAREER, YOU SHOULD PRIORITISE WORK THAT HAS HIGH POTENTIAL FOR IMPACT.



Intuitively, M&L expertise seems highly important when it is applied to work at effective animal advocacy nonprofits. Managers and leaders can have a multiplier effect on the impact of their colleagues, such as by motivating, inspiring, and supporting them.¹ Even if they have distributed or shared leadership, the quality of M&L will likely affect the overall impact of animal advocacy organisations.²

Researchers have [found](#) that high performance on certain measures of M&L ability has small or moderate correlations with important organisational outcomes, including the commitment, job satisfaction, engagement, “organisational citizenship behaviour,” and job performance of supervisees.

If someone focuses on developing M&L expertise, there are plenty of paths in which this experience could be applied to have a high impact for animals.

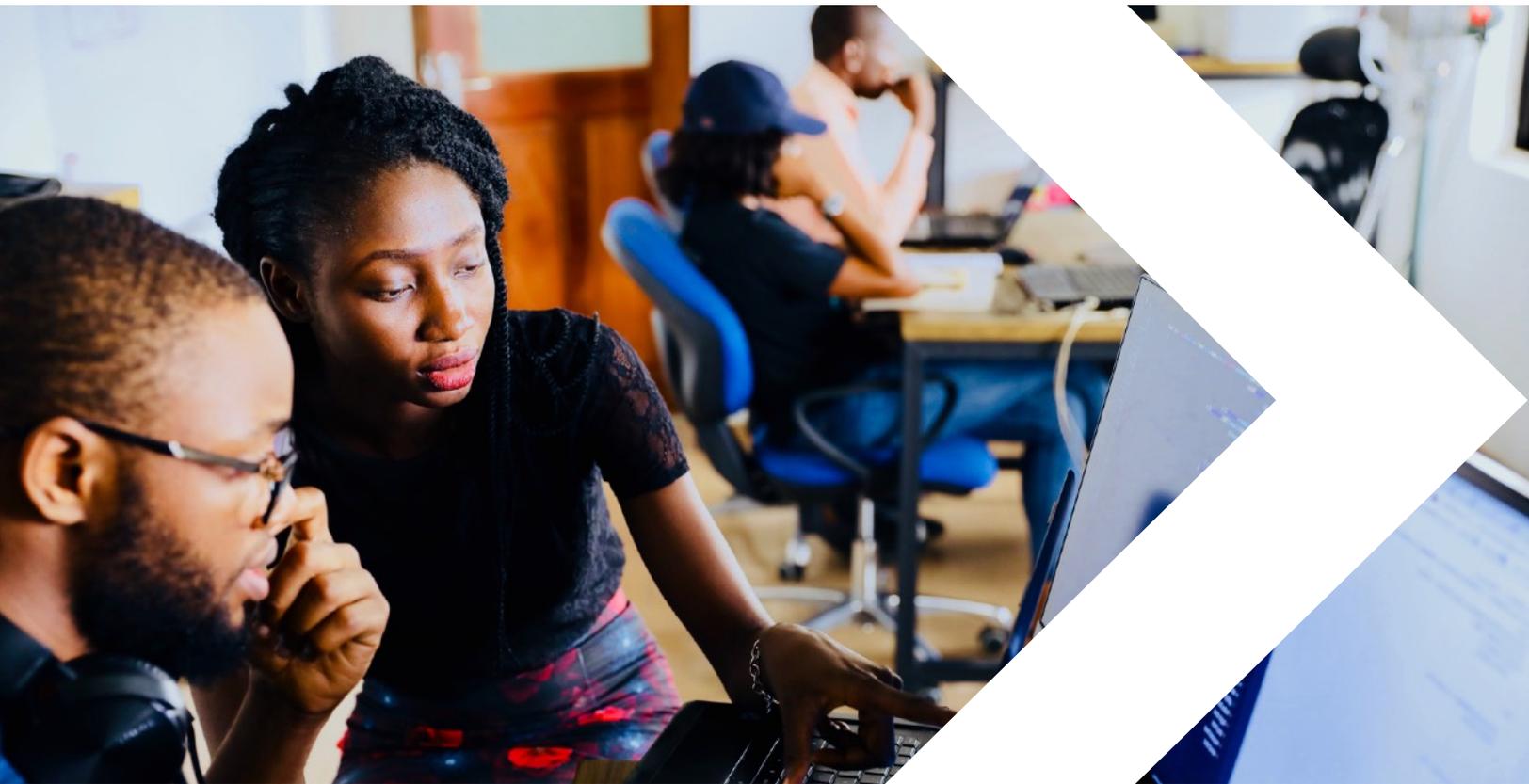
For example, M&L expertise could be applied in:

- ▶ An animal advocacy nonprofit (the main focus of this skills profile),
- ▶ Entrepreneurship — founding either a [new effective non-profit](#) or a new animal-free food technology company,
- ▶ Roles in government and policy,
- ▶ M&L roles at for-profit companies developing and selling animal-free food technologies,
- ▶ Corporate roles that allow individuals to earn high salaries and donate to animal advocacy nonprofits (“[earning to give](#)”; see also our skills profile on [fundraising](#)).

Though careers in any of these paths could be highly impactful, we expect that M&L expertise specifically is most urgently needed (from the perspective of maximising impact for animals) in effective animal advocacy nonprofits.³

WILL YOU HAVE GOOD PERSONAL FIT WITH MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES?

THE INFORMATION IN THIS SECTION IS INTENDED TO HELP YOU ASSESS WHETHER YOU WILL HAVE GOOD PERSONAL FIT WITH M&L ROLES. YOUR “[PERSONAL FIT](#)” WITH A ROLE OR CAREER PATH IS HOW WELL-SUITED YOU ARE TO IT AND YOUR CHANCES OF REALLY EXCELLING AT IT. WE THINK THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN [IMPACT-FOCUSED CAREER STRATEGY](#).



If you already have substantial M&L expertise and are reading this profile to decide whether you should seek to apply your expertise to animal advocacy, you might like to skip this section.

WHAT DO MANAGERS AND LEADERS DO?

You can read about our interviewees' answers to the question "What does a typical day involve?" in the [interview findings spreadsheet](#).

There were some notable themes which emerged in their answers:

- ▶ Lots of calls or meetings.⁴ The frequency of calls or meetings with colleagues varied, though once per week seemed a commonly used minimum frequency.⁵ Several interviewees noted that they had one day of the week designated specifically for meetings and check-ins with their supervisees.⁶
- ▶ Planning and strategising.⁷
- ▶ Administrative work and operations.⁸
- ▶ Hiring and onboarding new employees.⁹

Three interviewees¹⁰ also noted that there was no such thing as a typical day.

Of course, managers and leaders don't just manage and lead — they often have more direct responsibilities too.¹¹ We asked 12 interviewees what proportion of their time they spent doing independent work and what proportion of their time they spent managing others. Their estimates ranged from 20% of their time to 90%. On average, the time spent managing others was estimated at around 55% of their time. The time that our interviewees spent managing their team tended to increase as the number of people in their team increased.¹² To see what else our interviewees spent their time on, see the full answers in the [spreadsheet](#).

Previous research has found that leaders of organisations have to change tasks very regularly.¹³ When we asked interviewees to estimate "the average length of time that you spend on any one task," several interviewees gave the impression that they often had to change tasks after fairly short periods of time, though scheduling time for focused, "[deep work](#)" could help to address this.¹⁴

It's easy to Google search for "day in the life of" and M&L roles like "nonprofit executive director" or "director of communications." These write-ups often seem to mention early starts, lots of emails and meetings, and firefighting tasks, but this didn't seem very representative of our interviewees' routines. Additionally, maximising your impact over the course of your whole career requires that you [take care of yourself](#) and take steps to avoid [burnout](#).

WHAT MAKES GREAT MANAGERS AND LEADERS?

You can read about our interviewees' answers to the question "What makes great managers and leaders?" in the [interview findings spreadsheet](#).

Characteristics and behaviours that were mentioned by multiple interviewees included:

- ▶ The ability to trust and empower your supervisees¹⁵ and avoiding micromanaging them.¹⁶
- ▶ The ability to listen to and understand your colleagues, especially your supervisees¹⁷
- ▶ Being kind and supportive.¹⁸
- ▶ Having strong communication skills and people skills.¹⁹
- ▶ Being self-reflective and able to update in the light of feedback.²⁰
- ▶ Having charisma and being likeable.²¹
- ▶ Leading by example, as role models.²²
- ▶ Not seeking the limelight.²³
- ▶ Being organised.²⁴
- ▶ Being able to "see things to fruition" without getting distracted by "the next shiny thing that you see."²⁵

At various points, several interviewees emphasised that there are a variety of types of high-quality M&L styles and so there is no one-size-fits-all approach to great M&L.²⁶

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STYLES

Researchers have used numerous theories of leadership to explore whether certain types of behaviours are correlated with good leadership. For example, they have found that high scores on scales that measure "transformational leadership" are correlated with positive organisational outcomes.

Transformational leadership is comprised of the following characteristics and behaviours, as summarised by [Piccolo and Colquitt](#) (2006):

- ▶ "Idealized influence" — "the degree to which leaders behave in charismatic ways that cause followers to identify with them."
- ▶ "Inspirational motivation" — "the degree to which leaders articulate visions that are appealing to followers."

- ▶ “Intellectual stimulation” — “the degree to which leaders challenge assumptions, take risks, and solicit followers’ ideas.”
- ▶ “Individualized consideration” — “the degree to which leaders attend to followers’ needs, act as mentors or coaches, and listen to followers’ concerns.”

If you’re interested in reading more about research on leadership theories, start with our [blog post](#) about them.

We expect that there are a number of more specific behaviour types that are also associated with positive organisational outcomes. We may research this more extensively in future reports, though popular management books, podcasts, and online courses can probably provide tips on this; see our list of management and leadership resources for self-development [here](#).

LEADERSHIP AND PERSONALITY

A [meta-analysis](#) from 2002 looked at the relationship between the big five personality traits (Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism) and “transformational leadership.” All five traits had significant, small correlations with transformational leadership, though neuroticism was negatively correlated. What this means is that people who are extraverted, agreeable, conscientious, and open are more likely to be “transformational” leaders, while neurotic people are less likely to be. The largest correlation was for extraversion, though this correlation would still usually be [interpreted](#) as a “small” effect size. Transformational leadership [only has](#), in turn, small to moderate correlations with outcomes we care about, like supervisees’ job performance.²⁷ In other words, people who are introverted, disagreeable, or neurotic could still be excellent managers and leaders, they’re just slightly less likely to be so.

One advisor commented to us that people who lack empathy probably can’t ever become good managers. Empathy has been [conceptualised](#) as a key part of emotional intelligence, which intuitively seems like an important part of good management and leadership. Emotional intelligence has also been found to [correlate](#) with transformational leadership.²⁸ Innate empathy probably isn’t the only route to developing the key skills associated with excellent leadership, but we expect that it helps.²⁹

ARE THERE ANY OTHER REASONS YOU MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT BE A GOOD FIT?

Gabrielė Vaitkevičiūtė of Tušti Narvai noted that, in M&L roles, “you have to face your worst weaknesses. You have to admit to yourself how you suck. And facing that is not comfortable. I’m glad that I’m doing it and I have benefitted from doing it. But I know that some employees left our organisation, because they were seeing too much of what they don’t like about themselves.”

Vicky Bond of The Humane League commented that, “it’s worth knowing if you love your specific job” — “the more you manage, the more you get towards leadership, the less you get to do the [specialised jobs and tasks that] you love.” Brian Alexander of Mercy For Animals made a similar point.

When we asked 9 interviewees about the number of hours that they worked, all of them answered that the average per day was somewhere between 7 and 10 hours.³⁰ However, a couple of interviewees mentioned that, depending what you counted, the hours might be longer, such as due to further communications with staff outside usual hours. A couple of interviewees also noted that the hours worked per day varied according to the time of year and the projects that were ongoing.



[Michelle Rojas-Soto](#) was managing director of Better Eating International and is now managing director of Encompass.

HOW CAN YOU ASSESS YOUR PERSONAL FIT?

- ▶ Look honestly at your previous success in related fields with overlapping requirements that use the skills described above; does it seem likely that you would excel in M&L roles?
- ▶ Be proactive in trying to identify and explore small M&L opportunities in (or adjacent to) your current role.³¹ Are there interns or new staff that you could manage, design tasks for, mentor, or otherwise support? Several interviewees emphasised that M&L expertise is something that can be learned on the job³² — this implies that it is important to just take on opportunities with M&L responsibilities where they are available.
- ▶ Consider seeking out extra-curricular or voluntary M&L responsibilities.
- ▶ Consider seeking out experiences that, while not technically involving management, help you to develop M&L expertise.
- ▶ Try to understand the roles and work of managers and leaders better by reading or listening to materials about them.
- ▶ Two interviewees encouraged introspection on your motives; if you're aiming for M&L responsibilities for the power and spotlight, then you might not make a good manager or leader.³³
- ▶ Talk to managers and leaders; ask them about your uncertainties and ask them to candidly assess your chances at excelling in similar work. We recommend using your personal connections as a starting point. In some circumstances, reaching out through the [effective animal advocacy community directory](#) could be appropriate.
- ▶ If you think that you are plausibly a good candidate, you could apply for roles at effective animal advocacy nonprofits. This can provide useful insights, such as during test tasks and interviews, and sometimes you can get direct feedback from those running the hiring process.



WHAT IS MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN ANIMAL ADVOCACY LIKE IN PRACTICE?

A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE LANDSCAPE OF THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY MOVEMENT MIGHT HELP YOU UNDERSTAND SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF WHETHER YOU ARE WELL-SUITED TO WORK IN THIS AREA.



It's also important for understanding how your strengths compare to other members of the animal advocacy movement who might plausibly do similar roles. This determines your [comparative advantage](#) — the job or path that is highest-impact for you, taking into account the possibility of coordination with others in the animal advocacy movement. This is something we can talk through with you if you apply for a [one-to-one careers advice call](#) with us.

HOW MUCH DOES THE MOVEMENT NEED MORE EXPERTISE IN THIS AREA?

We are moderately confident that M&L is one of the top 5 areas where the movement most urgently needs to either upskill current employees or bring in new people with relevant expertise.

Here are some of the reasons why:

- ▶ In our short initial [survey and interviews](#) with 12 CEOs and hiring professionals from 9 of the “top” or “standout” charities currently or formerly recommended by Animal Charity Evaluators, 7 respondents selected “management” as one of up to 6 skills (out of 25 options) that their organisation most needed. Additionally, 3 respondents selected “leadership and management” as the bottleneck that they “identify most” with in their organisation, though most respondents selected more than one option.³⁴ 2 out of 10 respondents to the same survey mentioned “management” or “leadership” roles as being “the hardest to fill” and another 2 respondents mentioned “senior” roles.
- ▶ This issue has been emphasised to us in informal conversations with experienced animal advocates³⁵ and in a [short survey](#) of nine attendees of Effective Altruism Global London.
- ▶ In a 2019 [survey](#) of effective altruism organisations by the Centre for Effective Altruism, “management” was rated as the most needed skill or ability.³⁶ Importantly, however, Animal Charity Evaluators and the Good Food Institute were the only included organisations that focused primarily on animal issues, representing 3 out of 29 listed respondents. Using a similar methodology, 80,000 Hours’ surveys from [2018](#) and [2017](#) had found that management was the second most-needed skill. 80,000 Hours have [noted](#) that there are many limitations of these results.³⁷

Animal Advocacy Careers’ understanding of the career and talent bottlenecks in the animal advocacy movement is still mostly based on anecdotal evidence and we hope to conduct more systematic research of the needs of animal advocacy organisations in the near future. Nevertheless, at present, the evidence that M&L *is* a bottleneck seems substantially stronger than the evidence that we have seen to the contrary.³⁸

WHICH COUNTRIES ARE MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES BASED IN?

From our [spot-check](#) of 27 animal advocacy nonprofits, we identified 194 roles that seemed to have some sort of M&L responsibility. Of those, 42% were based in the US, 8% were based in other English-speaking countries, and the other 50% were based in countries where English is not the first language.³⁹ Roles were identified in 20 countries in total.⁴⁰ Note, however, that our inclusion criteria for the search were fairly arbitrary, and the identified roles are not necessarily fixed in those particular countries.

When searching for advertised roles, we found 20 paid roles with some form of M&L responsibilities; of these, 12 were remote and 3 had the option of remote work, but only 1 seemed to be highly flexible in terms of the country of residence.⁴¹

Some readers may also find our profile on “[Growing the animal advocacy community in countries where it is small or new](#)” helpful.

IS THERE A GENDER GAP?

Open Philanthropy [found](#) in 2019 that men seem to be overrepresented in M&L roles in farmed animal nonprofits; around 70% of staff were female, compared to around 40% of CEOs and directors on boards. This reflects a trend found in other sectors.⁴²

In our [spot-check](#) of 27 animal advocacy organisations, 70% of the full-time, paid employees were women, while 64% of the full-time, paid M&L roles were held by women, providing further evidence that women are underrepresented in M&L roles, relative to other role types.⁴³ The difference between our spot-check and OpenPhil’s research may be because roles with responsibility for fewer individuals were included in the former but not the latter.⁴⁴



[Pei Su](#) is Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of ACTAsia, a nonprofit that has provided humane education for over 100,000 children in China.

However, this may be due to greater self-confidence among men and to implicit bias. Indeed, a number of meta-analyses provide reason to expect that women will make better managers and leaders, on average.⁴⁵ We hope that female potential managers and leaders reading this profile will be encouraged by this. We'd also encourage them to check out [WANBAM](#) (Women and Non-Binary Altruism Mentorship).

It is also important that organisations take proactive steps to ensure they are using [effective strategies for equity and inclusion](#) in their organisation.⁴⁶

WHAT OPTIONS WOULD YOU HAVE IF YOU WERE TO LEAVE THIS PATH?

SINCE DEVELOPING M&L EXPERTISE REQUIRES BUILDING UP GENERALIST SKILLS, IF YOU WERE TO FOCUS ON THIS BUT THEN DECIDE THAT YOU ARE NO LONGER INTERESTED IN PURSUING THE PATH, THE [CAREER CAPITAL](#) (SKILLS, CONNECTIONS, AND CREDENTIALS) THAT YOU GAIN WOULD LIKELY BE APPLICABLE TO A NUMBER OF AREAS WITHIN ANIMAL ADVOCACY.

Given the findings in the “What makes great managers and leaders?” section above, it seems likely that efforts to build M&L expertise would help you to build good communications skills and people skills. From this perspective, the career capital that you build might be highly applicable to other areas that rely on these sorts of skills, such as fundraising, campaigning, government, policy, or lobbying.

Presumably, one cost of focusing on developing M&L expertise would be that you develop less expertise in specific skills and role types than you might otherwise have had.⁴⁷ If you seek to develop M&L expertise outside the animal advocacy movement (see the discussion of this below), then the counterfactual costs might be higher.

As noted above,⁴⁸ M&L expertise can certainly be applied outside nonprofits. However, the credentials and prestige gained from roles in animal advocacy seem likely to be lower-value for application outside the movement than roles in the for-profit or public sphere.⁴⁹



Jakub Stencel has had a number of leadership roles at Otwarne Klatki and is now Anima International's Director of Development.

INTERESTED IN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES TO HELP ANIMALS?

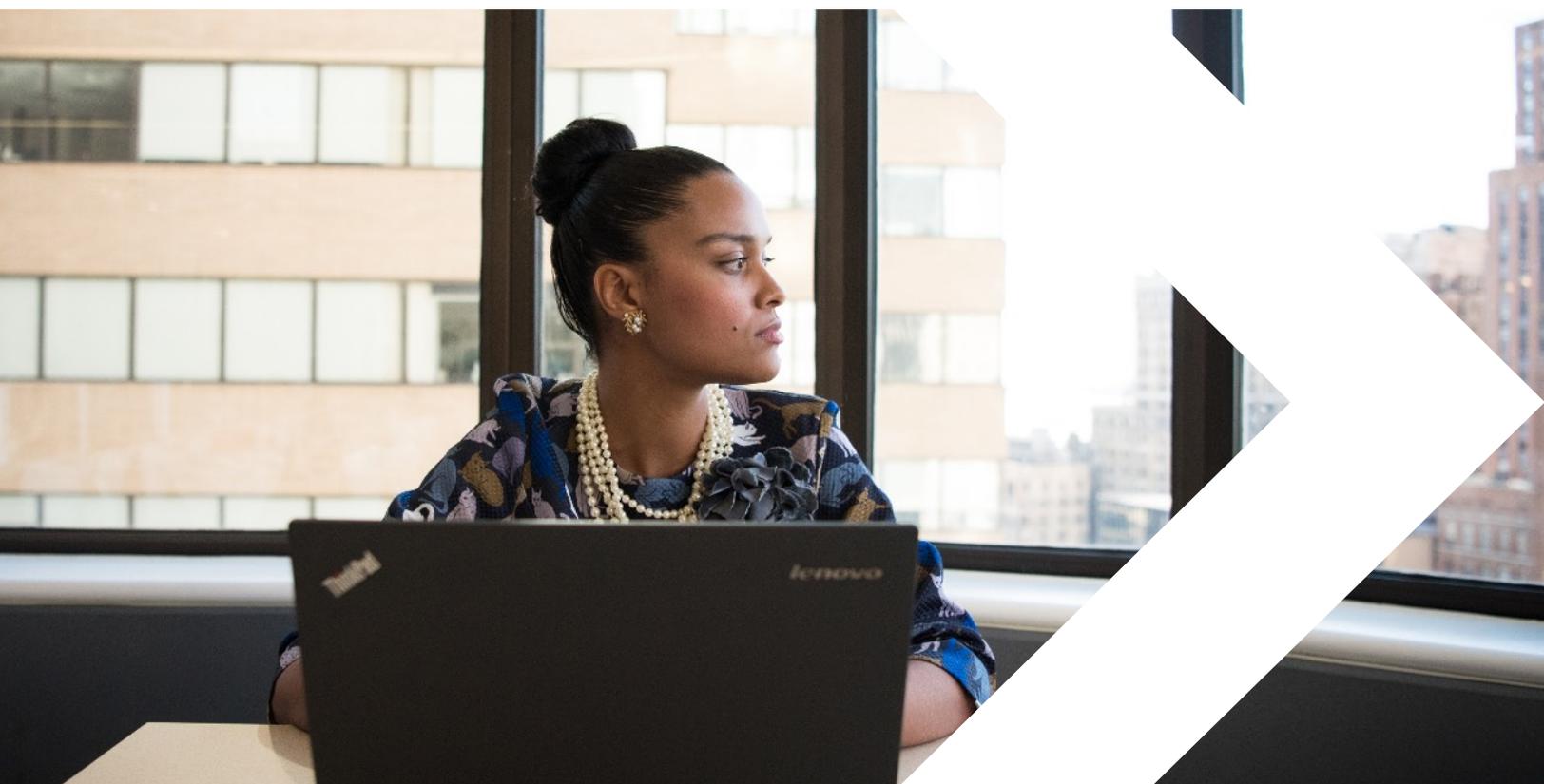
IF YOU NEED TO DO SOME CAREER PLANNING, 80,000 HOURS' ["TIPS ON MAKING CAREER PLANS"](#) WILL LIKELY BE HELPFUL.

If you're considering whether you'd like to focus on developing M&L expertise, or bringing your existing M&L expertise to support the animal advocacy movement, we might be able to help you talk through your options. You can apply for a [one-to-one careers advice call](#) with us.



HOW TO PREPARE FOR MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES

SO FAR, THIS PROFILE HAS FOCUSED ON INFORMATION TO HELP YOU DECIDE WHETHER SEEKING TO DEVELOP M&L EXPERTISE TO PUT TO USE IN ANIMAL ADVOCACY NONPROFITS WOULD BE A HIGH-IMPACT USE OF YOUR TIME. THE INFORMATION BELOW IS MORE FOCUSED ON HELPING YOU DECIDE WHAT YOU COULD DO NEXT IF YOU DECIDE THAT YOU **DO** WANT TO FOCUS ON THIS.



WHAT ARE THE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

During our [spot-check](#) of advertised animal advocacy nonprofit opportunities, the average number of years of prior experience in related fields that was required in the job specifications for the 20 M&L opportunities that we identified was 3.7. This figure may have underrepresented the required levels of experience,⁵⁰ though this experience does not necessarily (all) need to be in M&L roles. 3 out of 20 job adverts specified that prior experience in nonprofits was required, though another 3 implied this or stated that such experience was preferred. 4 out of 20 explicitly stated that a

university degree was required and a further 2 implied this or noted that it was preferred.

Note that sometimes formal entry requirements are [not as “required”](#) as the job advert implies. Of course, beyond the formal entry requirements, you’ll also want to ensure that you have good personal fit (see the relevant section above).

SHOULD YOU SEEK TO DEVELOP MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP EXPERTISE INSIDE OR OUTSIDE OF THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY MOVEMENT?

If someone thinks that they have good personal fit with M&L roles, they may well be faced with a trade-off of seeking to develop M&L expertise outside the animal advocacy context, or taking on entry-level animal advocacy roles with little immediate opportunity to gain M&L experience. Some factors are listed below to help you think about this trade-off. Some of these factors might be more or less important for different people.⁵¹

EVIDENCE AND ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF PRIORITISING MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE INSIDE THE MOVEMENT

ANIMAL ADVOCACY ROLES ARE MORE COMPARABLE

Animal advocacy roles seem likely to be more comparable to each other than to M&L roles in the for-profit or public sectors. Working in an entry-level animal advocacy role, you might not build up an excellent understanding of M&L best-practice, but you will probably more efficiently learn what the needs of animal advocates are; if you’ve been part of that campaigns team for several years by the time you take on leadership responsibilities, you’ll know what campaigners need and what difficulties they face.

One advisor suggested that, in business, employees often don’t care about the “mission” of the organisation that they work for and they don’t make working for that company part of their identity. A key task of managers in this context is therefore to keep employees engaged and motivated. However, managers in animal advocacy organisations have “almost the opposite” task; motivation and emotional attachment run high, so avoiding or resolving the tensions and conflicts that this might create becomes more of a priority. Avoiding burnout might also be a higher priority. Fernanda Fernandes of Sociedade Vegetariana Brasileira (SVB) noted a

similar concern, saying that everyone at SVB “loves their job because they love the cause. They love veganism, they love animals... And we often put aside our lives and always work a little bit more than we should. So you have to understand the cause and have experience to understand the people working here.” Managers and leaders have to be able to “say stop — you’re overworking yourself, you have to have time for yourself. You have to be well to work well.” But Fernanda took this as evidence that leadership skills and experience were crucial.

Paweł Rawicki of Otwarte Klatki, Gabrielė Vaitkevičiūtė of Tušti Narvai, and Ricardo Laurino of SVB emphasised the importance and usefulness of developing experience and familiarity within an organisation for taking on M&L responsibilities within that organisation. Our overall impression from these interviews was that, if you are confident that you want to work in M&L roles in effective animal advocacy organisations, your time is probably better spent applying to animal advocacy roles sooner, rather than later. For example, Vicky Bond of The Humane League commented that, “if you know there’s nothing else you want to do and want to work in animal advocacy, then start from the bottom and work your way up.” But if your interests are more varied, “then I think you should go for that too and not feel bad you’re not working for animal advocacy yet” because you can bring skills over.

ANIMAL ADVOCACY ROLES HELP YOU TO BUILD DOMAIN-SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE

In our short initial [survey and interviews](#) with 12 CEO’s and hiring professionals from 9 of the “top” or “standout” charities currently or formerly recommended by Animal Charity Evaluators, 5 of 11 respondents to the question “What are the 3 most common things candidates are missing?” mentioned “mission alignment” or an “EA mindset.”⁵² It seems more likely that you would be able to hone these skills within animal advocacy organisations than in an organisation in the for-profit or public sector.

ANIMAL ADVOCACY ROLES HAVE LOWER RISK OF VALUE DRIFT

If you work outside the animal advocacy context, it could be easy to forget your motivations for engaging with animal advocacy in the first place. After tracking 38 aspiring effective altruists over a five year period, Joey Savoie [found](#) that around 50% of these individuals seemed to experience value drift over a five year period.⁵³ It’s important to take this consideration seriously, even if you currently feel highly confident in your altruistic motivations.⁵⁴

EXPERIENCE FROM OUTSIDE THE MOVEMENT DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE HELPED OUR INTERVIEWEES MUCH

Consider the following correlations from the information provided by our interviewees:

Variables	Correlation	Number of individuals
Number in team and years since first started managing in animal advocacy	0.91	9
Number in team and total M&L experience	0.86	9
Years from first animal advocacy role to first animal advocacy M&L role and years of pre-animal advocacy M&L experience	-0.28	10

We interpret the similarity between the first two listed correlations as evidence that M&L experience from outside the movement does not help much with advancement into M&L positions inside the movement. However, the third correlation suggests that a relationship does exist between years of prior M&L experience and being able to move into M&L roles in animal advocacy. Given the small number of individuals involved, we should not place much weight on these findings.⁵⁵

YOU CAN DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE MOVEMENT FOR LONGER IF YOU WORK YOUR WAY UP FROM THE INSIDE

If you think that working in entry-level roles in the animal advocacy movement is valuable (we do!), then you might not think that it is worth sacrificing several years of direct contributions in order to build up experience, even if that experience would be helpful.⁵⁶

EVIDENCE AND ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF PRIORITISING MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE MOVEMENT

YOU CAN DONATE WHILE BUILDING UP EXPERIENCE

Nonprofit organisations mostly run on donations. While working in roles outside of animal advocacy, your salary will come from some other source. Therefore, you will not be drawing on the limited finances available to the animal advocacy movement and may even be contributing to it yourself if you are able to donate part of your salary. Insofar as many M&L roles are well paid, working to build M&L expertise could be combined with [earning-to-give](#). Note, however, that it may be preferable to

optimise more thoroughly either for salary or for advancement into M&L roles; some technical roles are highly paid but might lack M&L opportunities.⁵⁷

OUR INTERVIEWEES ALSO PROVIDED SOME EVIDENCE THAT M&L EXPERIENCE FROM OUTSIDE THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY AND ANIMAL-FREE FOOD MOVEMENTS COULD BE HELPFUL

We asked interviewees a question designed to elicit their sense of the relative importance of M&L experience and experience in the animal advocacy or animal-free food movements.⁵⁸ Of the 8 interviewees who seemed to lean to one side or the other (sometimes only when pushed to choose), 6 (i.e. 75%) chose M&L experience as being more important. However, interviewees noted several limitations to this question and caveats to their answers.⁵⁹

When we asked respondents what sorts of experience are most useful for developing M&L expertise, respondents provided us with a number of suggestions. We also directly asked two interviewees whether they had found their M&L experience from outside the movement to be helpful for their current roles, and both said that they had.⁶⁰

HAVING DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES IN THE MOVEMENT MIGHT INCREASE ITS EFFECTIVENESS

There is [evidence](#) of correlations between demographic diversity and performance. One possible explanation for this is that a diversity of perspectives and life experiences can add dynamism to an organisation or movement. This idea also makes intuitive sense. For example, if an organisation was comprised of 10 individuals who had all attended similar universities and gone straight into advocacy roles, the organisation might fall into particular habits or strategic pitfalls without realising it. Developing M&L expertise in an external context could help you to bring different perspectives and types of expertise to your later animal advocacy work.

ENTRY-LEVEL ROLES AT ANIMAL ADVOCACY ORGANISATIONS MIGHT BE QUITE “REPLACEABLE”

80,000 Hours have discussed the issue of [replaceability](#) in nonprofit roles. They don't put a lot of weight on this consideration. But, compared to the organisations that 80,000 Hours discuss, we think that farmed animal advocacy organisations tend to be more funding-constrained.⁶¹ Additionally, our impression is that entry-level positions at effective animal advocacy nonprofits are highly competitive.⁶² These factors suggest that if you don't take a job at an animal advocacy organisation, someone else who is capable will do it anyway, and there won't be many positive “spillover” benefits from you having taken the role.

IF YOU'RE PROACTIVE, YOU CAN PROBABLY REDUCE THE RISK OF VALUE DRIFT

You could sign up to relevant newsletters, stay up-to-date with relevant [research and resources](#), or do some form of (skilled) [volunteering](#).⁶³

THE CREDENTIALS AND PRESTIGE GAINED FROM ROLES IN ANIMAL ADVOCACY SEEM LIKELY TO BE LOWER-VALUE FOR APPLICATION OUTSIDE THE MOVEMENT

Experience in a leadership role at an advocacy nonprofit might not sound as impressive to someone in the for-profit sector as even an entry-level role at a prestigious company (say, Google, or McKinsey). 80,000 Hours [have written](#) more about the career capital in organisations associated with the effective altruism movement.

For some career paths, such as in government and policy, having worked for an animal advocacy nonprofit might actually set you back; you might be seen as less impartial and less able to complete the job you're applying for, which requires working with institutions involved in animal agriculture.

So if you're at the start of your career and you're uncertain whether you want to work in animal advocacy nonprofits longer-term, other options might look relatively more promising.

WHAT SORTS OF EXPERIENCE ARE MOST USEFUL FOR DEVELOPING MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP EXPERTISE?



WHICH EXPERIENCE IS MOST TRANSFERABLE TO MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ROLES IN ANIMAL ADVOCACY ORGANISATIONS?

Experience at some for-profit and public sector organisations will be more transferable to management and leadership roles in animal advocacy organisations than others.

When evaluating career options, you might like to bear the following features of animal advocacy nonprofits in mind:

- ▶ Many animal advocacy organisations are small; among the 27 animal advocacy organisations we looked up in our [spot-check](#), the average number of current employees was 32.⁶⁴ From this perspective, for-profit startups seem much more comparable than large bureaucratic organisations like the civil service or, say, a large insurance company.
- ▶ Common skillsets used by the employees of animal advocacy organisations, as identified by our spot-check, include operations and administration, marketing and communications, campaigning and corporate engagement, volunteer management, fundraising, and research. If you can gain M&L experience in a context where employees use a similar mixture of skills, that could be helpful.
- ▶ Some organisations, including The Good Food Institute, The Humane League, and most effective animal advocacy research organisations, work mostly remotely, with no central office.
- ▶ It's also worth considering whether experience from other nonprofits might be more applicable. Our instinct is that, in many cases, the experience you could gain from working in an unrelated nonprofit will be less useful than the experience you could gain from high-quality for-profit or public sector work environments. But for some roles (notably fundraising roles), this may not be the case.
- ▶ Fernanda Fernandes of SVB suggested that work experience in remote environments would not be good for developing the one-to-one connections and social skills needed for M&L roles. However, Erin Rees Clayton of the Good Food Institute and Catalina Lopez of Mercy For Animals suggested that the remote work environment at their organisations meant that the required skills or experience of M&L responsibilities were slightly different from M&L roles in other contexts; Catalina saw her previous M&L experience with a remote organisation as having been helpful for her M&L role at Mercy For Animals.

Of course, if you're planning to apply your M&L expertise to a different career path within the animal advocacy space, such as at an animal-free food technology startup (or you are just hoping to keep these options open), then there may be different factors to consider. For example, M&L experience in other technology or food business contexts might be most comparable.

It could be misleading to focus on gaining experience that seems most obviously comparable to animal advocacy organisations. Two of our interviewees suggested

that work that builds relevant skillsets could be helpful, even if it isn't directly related to M&L, such as one-to-one mentoring opportunities.⁶⁵ Others suggested that experience that you gained didn't need to be formal, paid experience to be useful: extra-curricular activities, volunteering, and hobbies where you can be proactive and take on additional M&L responsibilities could be great practice.⁶⁶ Ricardo Laurino of SVB advised working in a variety of different contexts, to get to understand different kinds of people and motivations — he saw this sort of understanding as crucial to effective M&L.

Bear in mind as well that M&L experience is not the only relevant form of [career capital](#) that you should consider when evaluating different job options.

WHAT ARE THE QUICKEST WAYS TO DEVELOP MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP EXPERTISE?

Whether taking on roles inside or outside the animal advocacy movement, previous M&L experience from another context may be required. So, if you're considering work in another sector in order to develop M&L experience, it's worth considering how long it will take you to take on M&L responsibilities. For some sectors, 2 to 3 years seems a reasonable expectation, although it could be longer in others.⁶⁷

There might be a few rules of thumb for opportunities that will enable you to gain M&L experience more quickly,⁶⁸ though seeking to do so might reduce the wider [career capital](#) that your experience brings you. If information is available, it would be helpful to seek out information on staff turnover, expansion rates, and promotion opportunities at specific organisations before you join them.

It's extremely important that you have good [personal fit](#) with the roles that you apply to. Even if you find an opportunity that seems to present unusually good opportunities for rapid advancement in an area that is highly comparable to animal advocacy nonprofits, you still need to be good enough at your role to get promoted so that you can gain the M&L experience that you're looking for.

DELIBERATE PRACTICE AND TRAINING

There is evidence from several meta-analyses to suggest that M&L expertise can be taught through training programmes and deliberate practice.⁶⁹ Of course, some specific behaviours and actions might be more easily learned than others.⁷⁰

We've created a list of [management and leadership resources for self-development](#). If you decide that you want to focus on developing M&L expertise, we encourage you to look at the list and select one or two resources to get started with.

As with any sort of deliberate practice, it's probably helpful to structure your reflection and development, such as by using some of the techniques below:

- ▶ Revisit your goals through your own weekly and monthly reviews, as recommended by David Allen in [Getting Things Done, individuals](#) in the effective altruism and rationalist communities, and various other [articles](#) on the internet (try Googling “monthly review productivity”).
- ▶ You should set yourself goals that are specific, challenging, and either short-term only or both short-term and long-term.⁷¹ You could use a sheet [like this](#) to track your progress over time.
- ▶ You could ask your line manager if you can integrate discussion on your goals for developing M&L expertise into your regular line management process. Organisational culture and contextual factors can be [important barriers](#) to the successful “transfer” from learning into new behaviours and meaningful change in your organisation; it's vital that you find ways to keep your colleagues supportive of your efforts to experiment with M&L techniques.
- ▶ Consider using [commitment devices](#) such as financial incentives.
- ▶ If there are key ideas that you want to memorise, services like [Anki](#) are great for helping you to remember things longer-term, through [spaced repetition](#).⁷²

We [found](#) that “spaced repetition,” “practice,” and “feedback” were highlighted by the education research literature as important components of effective education. For these reasons, we suspect that reading resources on M&L will be a much better use of your time if you already have some M&L responsibilities; this will provide you with opportunities to practice your learnings and gain feedback from your supervisees and your own supervisors. Of course, undertaking an online course could still provide useful signalling to your colleagues of your willingness and readiness to take on M&L responsibilities, but in general, we'd recommend focusing on **securing** M&L roles before devoting substantial time to reading up on M&L advice.

You can read about our interviewees' answers to the question “What are the best ways to deliberately practice and develop management and leadership expertise?” in the [interview findings spreadsheet](#).

Notable themes include:

- ▶ Being proactive and taking on opportunities to test out M&L responsibilities, including project management.⁷³
- ▶ Learning from other managers and leaders in effective animal advocacy organisations through conversations and networking, such as at conferences.⁷⁴
- ▶ Focused attention on self-improvement for various skills that are needed.⁷⁵ Some interviewees suggested that building up the most important skills in this manner could be done outside contexts with M&L responsibilities.
- ▶ Reading relevant resources.⁷⁶
- ▶ Attending workshops and courses.⁷⁷
- ▶ Meditation or other activities that might help you to connect with individuals better.⁷⁸

USEFUL RESOURCES

- ▶ [Our list of management and leadership resources for self-development.](#)
- ▶ [One-to-one careers advice calls](#) with us.
- ▶ The [interview findings spreadsheet](#) for this skills profile.
- ▶ Mentorship through [WANBAM](#) (Women and Non-Binary Altruism Mentorship) or [Encompass's Global Majority Caucus](#), which “empowers advocates of the global majority [i.e. people of colour] by cultivating our innate leadership potential, providing resources and support, and building a stronger community.”
- ▶ [The effective animal advocacy community directory.](#)
- ▶ Interviews with various leaders in the animal advocacy movement on the [Sentience Institute podcast.](#)

For securing M&L roles outside of animal advocacy nonprofits, the following resources may be useful:

- ▶ The discussion in the section “What are the quickest ways to develop management and leadership expertise?” above.
- ▶ 80,000 Hours’ advice on “[how to get a job.](#)”
- ▶ 80,000 Hours’ advice on entering specific [career paths.](#)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN HELPING ANIMALS!

Thank you for reading this skills profile. We hope this has been helpful for shaping your future steps. We wish you the best of luck in your animal advocacy career planning.

If you've found this skills profile useful, you can support our work by [donating to Animal Advocacy Careers](#). Your contributions will support us to help animals.

NOTES

¹ See this hypothetical example which explores this idea: "[The intuitive importance of management and leadership](#)."

² In our spot-check, we identified full-time, paid employees at 25 effective animal advocacy organisations; 24 of these had individuals with identifiable management and leadership responsibilities. For the last organisation, the Open Philanthropy Project, our results focused only on the 3 staff working on farmed animal issues; the wider organisation does have a management structure.

³ Most of the evidence that M&L expertise is a bottleneck (as discussed in the "How much does the movement need more expertise in this area" section) applies specifically to effective animal advocacy nonprofits. Hence, for example, we currently have little reason to believe that M&L expertise is substantially limiting the impact for animals of animal-free food tech companies (we're a little more concerned about technical scientific research expertise, which will be the subject of a forthcoming skills profile). For earning to give careers, you don't necessarily need to have previous managerial expertise to earn lots. For example, 80,000 Hours' profile on "Trading in quantitative hedge funds (for earning to give)" only mentions "Strong mathematical skills" for the skills required to enter and excel in this path. Applying M&L expertise to policy or political roles seems slightly more promising, since the required skills seem to overlap somewhat (e.g. having strong communications and people skills) and since higher-ranking policy employees or politicians seem more likely to be able to influence policies that affect animals. However, it's not M&L expertise per se that is needed; the requirements will be discussed more fully in our forthcoming profile on this topic.

⁴ See the answers by Paweł, Gabrielé, Elaine, Ricardo, Vicky, Kalista, Caroline, and Jakub.

⁵ Paweł noted that there was supposed to be a check-up about once a week with each employee. Gabrielé noted that, "with each employee have a monthly or bimonthly meeting." Vicky seemed to suggest once per week. Catalina commented: "I try to meet with my team at least 15 minutes every day. We usually just have one department meeting a week." Brian noted that "we'll have a once weekly team call," then "every two weeks we'll have a departmental call" to share initiatives and collaborate."

⁶ See the answers by Gabrielé, Elaine, and Vicky. Mondays or Fridays seemed to be used often either as focus days for meetings times or as protected times with minimal meetings.

⁷ See the answers by Jens, Vicky, Catalina, Kalista, and Caroline.

⁸ See the answers by Gabrielé, Catalina, Kalista, and Caroline.

⁹ See the answers by Paweł, Gabrielé, Elaine, and Jakub.

¹⁰ See the answers by Jens, Erin, and Vicky.

¹¹ From our [spot-check](#) of 27 animal advocacy nonprofits, we identified 194 paid, full-time roles that seemed likely to have some sort of M&L responsibility. Of those, 7% were at research-focused nonprofits, 14% were at nonprofits focused on animal-free food technology, 44% were at nonprofits focused substantially on corporate welfare campaigns, and 35% were at other nonprofits. The 194 M&L roles seemed likely to have substantial duties relating to the following areas:

- "Campaigns, corporate engagement, or volunteer management" (21% of all M&L roles, compared to 31% of all full-time, paid staff),
- "Operations, administration, and HR" (16% of M&L, 18% of all),
- "Marketing or communications" (12% of M&L, 16% of all),
- Fundraising (7% of M&L, 10% of all),
- Research (5% of M&L, 7% of all),
- "Government, policy, lobbying, or legal" (4% of M&L, 5% of all),
- "Other technical skills, e.g. web or software development" (4% of M&L, 7% of all),
- Natural sciences (3% of M&L, 2% of all),
- "Other" (2%).

However, these figures likely underestimate the relationship with these particular types of task and expertise. Categorisations were made primarily based on job titles. As a result, sometimes the requirements of a role beyond M&L responsibilities were unclear, and only 71% of identified M&L roles were categorised as requiring another focus or skillset.

¹² See the “Quantitative results” tab of the [“Management and leadership skills profile interview findings”](#) spreadsheet. For the 9 interviewees for whom we had estimates of both the number of people in their team and the proportion of time that they spent on management of their supervisees, there was a moderate correlation ($r = 0.3$) between these two numbers. For the 8 interviewees for whom we had estimates of both the number of people that they were the direct line manager of and the proportion of time spent on management of their supervisees, there was a similar correlation ($r = 0.32$).

Note that the estimates of the proportion of time that they spent on management of their supervisees — and hence the observed correlations that this has with team size and number of direct supervisees — are especially vulnerable to definitions of management. For example, Brian Alexander noted that his estimate of 70% of time spent on “management” was based on how he defined “management” during the call, which included working on projects that will facilitate the work of direct and indirect reports.

¹³ See table 1 on page 978 in [this article](#), which is the middle study in the table. Our interviews were with a range of managers and leaders, not just those in the top position at their organisation, unlike the 3 studies referred to in that article.

¹⁴ See the answers by Elaine, Erin, Vicky, and Brian. An additional anonymous interviewee made similar points.

¹⁵ See the answers by Paweł, Gabrielé, Elaine, Ricardo, Fernanda, Vicky, Catalina, and Brian.

¹⁶ See the answers by Gabrielé, Elaine, and Vicky.

¹⁷ See the answers by Paweł, Jens, Fernanda, Erin, and Vicky.

¹⁸ See the answers by Gabrielé, Jens, Ricardo, Catalina, and Brian.

¹⁹ See the answers by Gabrielé, Elaine, Fernanda, Catalina, and Brian.

²⁰ See the answers by Gabrielé, Jens, Catalina, and Brian.

²¹ See the answers by Elaine, Vicky, and Brian.

²² See the answers by Gabrielé, Vicky, and Brian.

²³ See the answers by Gabrielé and Jens.

²⁴ See the answers by Vicky and Brian.

²⁵ See the answers by Vicky and Brian. Vicky seemed to be speaking more in terms of organisational strategy, whereas Brian was speaking more about managerial systems, but the sentiment was similar.

²⁶ Paweł, Ricardo, and Erin.

²⁷ Another [meta-analysis](#) found that “ethical leadership” seemed to be more strongly positively correlated with each of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness and more strongly negatively correlated with neuroticism, though each was still only a “small” correlation, except for neuroticism.

²⁸ [This](#) meta-analysis is not focused exclusively on transformational leadership and also found positive correlations between emotional intelligence and “effective leadership.”

²⁹ The cited [meta-analysis](#) found anywhere correlations of varying strength (from “small” to “strong” effect sizes) for different study methodologies. This doesn’t seem like strong enough evidence to expect that strong emotional intelligence is a prerequisite for excellent leadership. Additionally, some research suggests that emotional intelligence [matters less](#) for overall job performance than some other traits and characteristics, such as raw cognitive ability.

³⁰ There are some difficulties in estimating this. For example, we didn’t specify whether individuals should count breaks during the day as part of this total or not. The figure of 7 as the lower end of this range was taken by roughly halving the number of hours that the respondent described as “thinking and contemplating” but not “at the desk” — depending on definitions, this estimate could be taken as either 5 or 8.5 hours. It is also possible that some interviewees were downplaying the number of hours that they worked.

³¹ See the answers by Gabrielé, Paweł, Elaine, and Catalina.

³² See the answers by Gabrielé, Paweł, Elaine, Erin, and Catalina.

³³ See the answers by Gabrielé and Brian.

³⁴ “Funding” was selected by 9 respondents. See the survey’s full results [here](#), the original form [here](#), and our write-up [here](#).

³⁵ For example, at an event that Jamie Harris ran in London, 16th May, 2019, in response to a question about whether The Humane League specifically or the effective animal advocacy community more widely was lacking specific skills, David Coman-Hidy (president of THL) suggested that “the biggest issue overall... is [that] the movement in general is very, very young.” Despite emphasising some positives of this, David noted that “it means a lack of experience working in a professional environment, a lack of management experience.” Andrea Gunn (vice president of THL) agreed that management experience is “one of the biggest challenges,” and noted that “we see a lot of organisations struggling... and it seems like the lack of management experience might be what runs them into the ground.”

³⁶ Interestingly, 10 out of 17 free text responses for the “other constraints noted by respondents” in response to a question asking specifically about funding constraints relative to talent constraints mentioned some form of constraint related to management or mentoring and onboarding.

³⁷ In the previous year’s [survey](#), “management” was joint-second. These surveys had similarly low numbers of respondents focusing on animal issues specifically.

³⁸ Contrary evidence includes:

- When we conducted a “[spot-check](#)” of current roles and advertised roles at 27 animal advocacy nonprofits, 24% of the 740 currently filled animal advocacy roles that we identified and 26% of the 72 advertised job opportunities that we identified appeared to have M&L responsibilities. Given that these two percentages are similar, this provides evidence that animal advocacy nonprofits are not struggling to hire for their roles that involve M&L responsibilities. As discussed in our blog post on the spot-check, however, this research provides only very weak evidence on the question of what the movement’s greatest bottlenecks are.
- When we conducted interviews for this profile, the average enthusiasm of participants that this was an important issue to focus on seemed slightly lower than the average enthusiasm of participants in our interviews on fundraising, growing the movement outside the English-speaking world, and government, policy, and lobbying. Although we asked few participants explicitly for their views on whether M&L expertise seemed to be a bottleneck, of the three that we did ask, only Gabrielé seemed to strongly agree that this seemed to be a bottleneck; Erin seemed ambivalent, Vicky disagreed. (See column U in the [interview findings spreadsheet](#).)

³⁹ These proportions are similar to the findings across role types of 39% based in the US, 9% based in other English-speaking countries, and the rest based elsewhere.

⁴⁰ Austria (1), Brazil (14), China (1), Denmark (5), Estonia (2), France (5), Germany (35), India (7), Israel (1), Italy (2), Lithuania (1), Mexico (4), Netherlands (4), Poland (7), Portugal (1), South Africa (1), Spain (4), Ukraine (2), United Kingdom (15), and the US (82). One role was marked as based in “Asia.”

⁴¹ This was Rethink Priorities’ “[Director of Operations](#)” role, which still expressed a preference for location in the US. Additionally, The Humane League’s role for “[Open Wing Alliance Coordinator, Asia](#)” was remote and flexible across countries within Asia.

⁴² See, for example, [this article](#) on UK companies, [this article](#) on US companies, and [this article](#) on US nonprofits. A meta-analysis by [Eagly and Karau](#) (1991) found that “men emerged as leaders to a greater extent than did women.”

⁴³ The baseline we should expect if all was fair and there was perfect equality of opportunity is not 50% female. Far more veg*ns are female than male (e.g. see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)). There is likely a similar gender balance among animal advocates. Given that these communities are the main source of candidates, we should probably expect that organisations that have minimal bias in their hiring procedures would have more female employees than male employees.

⁴⁴ The baseline we should expect if all was fair and there was perfect equality of opportunity is not 50% of roles to be held by females. Far more veg*ns are female than male and there may be a similar gender imbalance in the wider animal advocacy community. Women are slightly underrepresented in management and leadership roles in these findings compared to the number of employees.

⁴⁵ Professor [Alice Eagly](#) and other scholars have summarised the evidence from studies on leadership and gender through various meta-analyses:

- [Eagly, Karau, and Makhijani \(1995\)](#) found that, in aggregate, “male and female leaders were equally effective” but that “men were more effective than women in roles that were defined in more masculine terms, and women were more effective than men in roles that were defined in less masculine terms.”
- [Paustian-Underdahl, Walker, and Woehr \(2014\)](#) found that “when all leadership contexts are considered, men and women do not differ in perceived leadership effectiveness. Yet, when other-ratings only are examined, women are rated as significantly more effective than men. In contrast, when self-ratings only are examined, men rate themselves as significantly more effective than women rate themselves.”
- [Eagly and Johnson \(1990\)](#) found that “women tended to adopt a more democratic or participative style and a less autocratic or directive style than did men.”
- [Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen \(2003\)](#) found that “female leaders were more transformational than male leaders and also engaged in more of the contingent reward behaviors that are a component of transactional leadership. Male leaders were generally more likely to manifest the other aspects of transactional leadership (active and passive management by exception) and laissez-faire leadership. Although these differences between male and female leaders were small, the implications of these findings are encouraging for female leadership because other research has established that all of the aspects of leadership style on which women exceeded men relate positively to leaders’ effectiveness whereas all of the aspects on which men exceeded women have negative or null relations to effectiveness.”

We have not looked into these meta-analyses or the primary studies that they are based on in detail, so cannot testify to their methodological quality.

⁴⁶ In addition to the evidence in this section, there is also [evidence](#) of correlations between diversity and performance and there are wider moral arguments for ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion. See also Open Philanthropy Project’s [post](#) and an earlier EA Forum [post](#).

⁴⁷ For example, you might have spent less time developing research skills, web design skills, or just getting in more concrete practice of fundraising, campaigning, or whatever other role type you might have been doing.

⁴⁸ See the section on “Does this work help animals?”

⁴⁹ See the section below on “Should you seek to develop management and leadership expertise inside or outside of the animal advocacy movement,”

⁵⁰ 5 roles did not specify a set number of years of experience that were required. If these roles are excluded, then the average rises to 4.7 years

⁵¹ A lot depends on your personality and your existing skillset. Again, we’d strongly encourage you to read 80,000 Hours’ discussions of “career strategy,” if you haven’t done so already.

⁵² However, of these 5, only 1 respondent had mentioned “management,” “leadership,” or “senior” roles as being the roles that “are the hardest to fill.”

⁵³ Or, at least, they found it harder than expected to implement their values. [This](#) comment provides slightly more optimistic evidence than Joey Savoie’s original post.

⁵⁴ See also, the “[planning fallacy](#).”

⁵⁵ See the “Quantitative results” tab of the “[Management and leadership skills profile interview findings](#)” spreadsheet.

It is also worth noting that Paweł had commented that he didn’t used to “picture himself” in M&L roles but had fallen into it by virtue of being more willing to fill leadership gaps than others had been. If we were able to conduct analysis with a much larger number of participants, it seems plausible that we might find that individuals who got involved with animal advocacy when their country had a very small or new animal advocacy movement were much more likely to end up in M&L roles without having had previous M&L experience. In other words, where the movement is more established, M&L experience from outside the movement might be comparatively more important.

⁵⁶ See our hypothetical example in this doc on “[The intuitive importance of management and leadership](#)” for some exploration of this.

⁵⁷ For example, compare 80,000 Hours’ profile on [trading in quantitative hedge funds](#) to our suggestion below that you could consider roles at organisations that are unusually highly talent-constrained or have high staff turnover.

⁵⁸ The question asked was: "Imagine that you are leaving your current role and your organisation needs to find a replacement. Imagine that one candidate for the position has excellent experience and understanding of the [animal advocacy / animal-free food] community, but lacks management experience. Another candidate has excellent experience with management but lacks direct experience in [animal advocacy / animal-free food]. Which candidate do you think would be better at performing your role? (Assume that all other variables are equal, including their level of commitment to the cause.)"

⁵⁹ Several interviewees noted that the answer depended on the circumstances and the specific needs of the team. Several noted that the personal skills were important, and that these sets of experience were imperfect indicators of relevant skillsets. And this question asked interviewees to imagine that an individual's alignment with and dedication to the animal advocacy or animal-free food movements was equal in either case; this seems unlikely, since previous engagement through volunteering or donating seems likely to be an indicator of mission alignment.

⁶⁰ See the answers by Fernanda and Catalina.

⁶¹ See the section on "Will it help animals?" in our skills profile on fundraising.

⁶² We'd love to research this more systematically, but currently our impression is based on a few scattered conversations with personal connections (both hiring managers and job applicants).

⁶³ However, we'd guess that it's probably more important to prioritise developing M&L expertise while you work outside the animal advocacy space than to split your efforts between skill-building and contributing directly, at least until you start to get relatively close (say, 6 to 18 months) to the point at which you want to start applying directly for animal advocacy roles.

⁶⁴ This likely slightly underestimates their true size, since some organisations did not list their employees on their websites, and if you exclude research organisations then the average size increases to 43.

HSUS was excluded from both of these calculations because the results for HSUS' farm animal protection campaign could not be separated from the wider organisation.

⁶⁵ See the answers by Elaine and Erin.

⁶⁶ See the answers by Paweł, Gabrielė, and Elaine. There may even be some extra-curricular opportunities focused specifically on developing leaders; Gabrielė Vaitkevičiūtė commented that this seemed to be the case with political youth groups in Lithuania. Vicky also had substantial unpaid M&L experience through being "president of the student union, VP of the Vet society," "president of a club called Ecocentric that put on band nights in clubs every month in Liverpool," and managing "a part-time fundraiser while trustee for Animal Care in Europe."

⁶⁷ For example:

- One civil servant we asked believed that, on average, it took around 3 years for a graduate to gain a role with M&L responsibilities in the UK civil service. They commented that those trying hard to gain M&L responsibilities could probably achieve this more quickly and that they knew people with experience from outside the civil service whose first roles involved M&L responsibilities. On [this site](#), "Senior Executive Officers" (SEO) are the first group within the UK civil service described as having management responsibilities. 80,000 Hours [estimated](#) that it takes "~4 years" to reach Grade 7 roles, which is the rung above SEOs.
- In management consultancy, 80,000 Hours note that, "one consultant within a top tier firm reported" that a common path after "a 2-3 year stint as an analyst at a top strategy firm" was to "become an associate at the same company without doing an MBA. This would happen after 18 months to 3 years, depending on how well the person was doing. Roughly 10-20% do this." Then, associates "also often work for 2-3 years before moving on," often to project management positions.
- One of Animal Advocacy Careers' co-founders, who used to work for Euromonitor, estimated that if someone has commitment and domain expertise, it might take them an average of 2.5-3 years to progress from an entry-level role to a role with M&L responsibilities in a market research firm. She had low confidence in this estimate.
- An employee at a wealth management firm in the UK guessed that the average for the finance sector would be 5-10 years, but had low confidence in this estimate.
- An employee at a large insurance company commented that variation was high at companies similar to his. It had taken him 3 years to gain M&L responsibilities, but some grad schemes put people straight into management roles.

Note that the variation in each of these paths is probably quite high, with some people progressing much faster than average and some people progressing much slower. We also struggled to quickly identify research on this topic, but if you're aware of any, please [let us know!](#)

⁶⁸ For example:

- We would guess that entrepreneurship (for-profit or nonprofit) is a good way to quickly develop M&L responsibilities. However, in that context, you're less likely to have a supportive learning environment and learn good M&L practices from other experienced managers.
- Working in a rapidly growing startup could provide similar opportunities to entrepreneurship, but might provide better opportunities for mentorship from colleagues.
- Some organisations have schemes that are designed to launch new hires into M&L roles more quickly than average, such as the UK civil service's fast stream, Teach for America and Teach First, and the graduate schemes of many for-profit companies.
- If you find roles at organisations that are unusually highly talent-constrained or have high staff turnover (e.g. the organisation has low prestige, or the work is unpopular for some reason), this may present unusual opportunities for rapid promotion into roles with M&L responsibilities. However, you might pick up bad habits in these environments, especially if poor M&L is a key reason that the organisation is talent-constrained. Additionally, it might be harder to signal the value that you gained from these experiences to future employers.
- Some organisations might be more or less structured and hierarchical. Highly collaborative organisations with shared leadership may present earlier opportunities for leadership, but may present fewer opportunities for taking on roles more focused on M&L responsibilities.

⁶⁹ See our post on "[The Effectiveness of Management and Leadership Training.](#)"

However, the evidence that M&L expertise can be taught is not strong, given the reliance on correlations in much of the research (e.g. [see this comment](#)). Additionally, McCarthy et al., "Born to Lead? A Genetic Investigation of Leadership Style" (1998) found evidence that from 25% to 50% of the variance in self-rated scores on the "multifactor leadership questionnaire" (the most common measure of transformational leadership) was attributable to heredity, by comparing differences in scores between identical and fraternal twins.

⁷⁰ For example, Vicky Bond of The Humane League commented to us that "planning, and budgeting" are "intrinsic to being successful" in M&L roles but that "if you don't have those skills that's certainly something you can go away and learn." By comparison, it might take a longer time to build up the communication skills and "people skills" that many of our interviewees were vital to effective M&L.

⁷¹ Erin S. Pearson, "Goal setting as a health behavior change strategy in overweight and obese adults: A systematic literature review examining intervention components," *Patient Education and Counseling* 87, no. 1 (2012), 34 notes that "goal level specificity plays an important role in determining incentives for achievement and guidelines for performance. Goals that are specific have been shown consistently to lead to higher levels of performance than 'do your best goals' (i.e., urging people to do their best) which are more general and provide no external referent to determine progress. For goals that are defined explicitly, the type and amount of effort required for achievement is more pronounced, thus reducing the ambiguity of the task, rendering achievement of the goal more likely. Moreover, multiple studies have demonstrated that people perform better when goals are set higher and made more challenging. However, it is important to note that setting goals which are too complex can, in fact, impact self-efficacy negatively thus impairing subsequent task performance... The effectiveness of behavioral change intentions is related directly to how far into the future a goal is projected. Goals that are set proximally (i.e., short-term) are directive and serve as incentive for immediate action. Achievement of goals set in the short-term can enhance motivation to strive towards further action; making small changes provides individuals with successes on which to build. Alternatively, distal (i.e., long-term) goals are often too far removed in time and do not provide an adequate indication of progress, thereby enhancing the likelihood of procrastination or complete abandonment. Goal setting research has shown that individuals who set specific, proximal goals have a greater likelihood of success than those who set distal goals. Moreover, additional studies have supported the inclusion of goals that are set in both the short and long term, thus demonstrating that a combination of the two is more effective at enhancing performance than long-term goals set in isolation."

⁷² Spaced repetition came up quite a bit in our research into "[The Characteristics of Effective Training Programmes.](#)" You can ctrl+f for "spaced rep" in our "[Summary of findings](#)" spreadsheet for the evidence on this.

⁷³ See the answers by Paweł, Gabrielé, Elaine, Erin, Vicky, Catalina, and Brian.

⁷⁴ See the answers by Paweł, Gabrielé, and Jens.

⁷⁵ See the answers by Gabrielé, Jens, and Fernanda.

⁷⁶ See the answers by Gabrielé, Ricardo, and Brian.

⁷⁷ See the answers by Fernanda and Vicky.

⁷⁸ See the answers by Gabrielé and Elaine.