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QGS Group

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Quality Herald

The voice of excellence

INDIA'S C-SUITE POWERHOUSES

TRANSFORMING INDUSTRIES WORLDWIDE



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ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The **November 2025** edition of **Quality Herald** spotlights the theme “**India’s C-Suite Powerhouses**”, celebrating visionary Indian-origin leaders who are redefining industries across the globe. This edition delves into how these trailblazers are driving transformation through strategic foresight, cultural intelligence, and an unwavering commitment to innovation.

Through in-depth features, exclusive interviews, and data-backed analyses, this issue explores the leadership philosophies and global impact of Indian-origin CEOs who are steering some of the world’s most influential organizations. It highlights their journeys of resilience, their ability to blend Eastern values with Western business acumen, and how they’re shaping the future of global business through inclusivity, agility, and purpose-driven leadership.

By showcasing these remarkable leaders, the November edition provides readers with insights into the evolving dynamics of global leadership and what makes Indian-origin executives stand out in today’s interconnected world. It offers a compelling perspective on how India’s C-suite powerhouses are not only transforming industries but also inspiring a new generation of leaders to think globally, act ethically, and lead with impact.

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| Aims | The magazine intends to be leading platform for sharing practical insights, innovative ideas and thought leadership in the field of Quality, Sustainability, Operations and Business Excellence. It seeks to inspire professionals, academicians and organisations to adopt and implement the quality driven approaches that leads continuous improvement and societal value. |
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“India’s C-Suite Powerhouses”

India’s corporate landscape is witnessing a defining era, one where leadership is not measured by titles or corner offices, but by the ability to steer organizations through transformation, turbulence, and technological change. This edition of Quality Herald - The Voice of Excellence is a tribute to those visionaries who sit at the helm of Indian enterprises and drive excellence with purpose, passion, and perseverance.

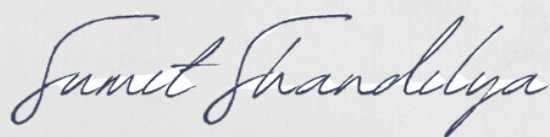
Our C-Suite powerhouses are not just decision-makers; they are architects of resilience, culture, and innovation. From manufacturing and infrastructure to services and technology, India’s leaders are rewriting what it means to build organizations that are agile, responsible, and globally competitive. They are uniting quality with sustainability, governance with empathy, and profitability with purpose, a blend that defines the new era of Indian enterprise leadership.

As we look at boardrooms across the country, one truth stands clear: the future belongs to leaders who are learners. The finest executives today are those who listen deeply, adapt quickly, and lead inclusively. They are the catalysts who transform systems and mindsets, ensuring that excellence is not a function, but a philosophy embedded in every process and person.

This issue celebrates such leadership stories and thought perspectives, voices that inspire organizations to pursue excellence beyond compliance. It also invites reflection on how India’s leadership fabric is evolving, from hierarchical to human-centred, from control to collaboration, and from competition to co-creation.

We welcome our readers, professionals, and thought leaders to contribute your own reflections, case studies, or opinion pieces for upcoming issues. Quality Herald continues to be a collective voice of those who believe in making quality a way of life, within organizations and beyond.

Together, let’s keep raising the bar for leadership and excellence in India and across the world.



Chief Editor

Quality Herald – The Voice of Excellence



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India's C-Suite Titans: Shaping the Future of Global Leadership

Article from the Editor's Desk - Surajit Mukhopadhyay



India, with its dynamic economy, growing influence in global markets, and rapidly evolving industries, has witnessed the rise of a formidable C-suite leadership landscape. The nation's corporate world has transformed significantly over the last few decades, with Indian CEOs, CFOs, COOs, and other top executives driving both national and international growth. The C-suite in India is more diverse, global-minded, and agile than ever before, adapting to the changing demands of a fast-paced, technology-driven world.

But what makes India's C-suite truly a powerhouse? Let's take a closer look at the key factors that are driving this evolution and how Indian business leaders are becoming some of the most powerful influencers in the global economy.

A Surge of Indian-Origin Leaders on the Global Stage

One of the most striking features of India's C-suite evolution is the growing number of Indian-origin leaders at the helm of global corporations. From the tech giants of Silicon Valley to leading multinational companies, Indian executives are making an indelible mark. Figures like Sundar Pichai (CEO of Alphabet and Google), Satya Nadella (CEO of Microsoft), and Arvind Krishna (CEO of IBM) have set a high benchmark for leadership. Their rise to the top is a testament to India's burgeoning talent pool and the global recognition of Indian business acumen.

Back home, Indian leaders are demonstrating the same blend of vision, risk-taking, and innovative strategies that have garnered them international acclaim. The global success of leaders with Indian roots has not only raised India's profile but has also opened up new avenues for collaboration between Indian businesses and international corporations.

Diversity and Inclusivity at the Helm

Historically, the C-suite in India, like elsewhere in the world, has been predominantly male and dominated by individuals from select educational backgrounds. However, over the years, this has begun to change. As diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiatives gain traction, the Indian corporate world has seen a significant increase in female representation in leadership roles. Prominent leaders such as Indra Nooyi (former CEO of PepsiCo), Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (Chairperson of Biocon), and Naina Lal Kidwai (former HSBC India CEO) have paved the way for a more inclusive corporate culture.

In addition to gender diversity, India's C-suite is also becoming more diverse in terms of regional representation and professional backgrounds. Executives now come from different parts of India, and the rise of specialized, forward-thinking roles such as Chief Data Officers, Chief Sustainability Officers, and Chief Innovation Officers reflects the increasing specialization and adaptability needed in today's business world.

The Role of Technology in Shaping Leadership

The rise of digital transformation has fundamentally changed how businesses operate, and this is especially true for India's corporate leadership. India's C-suite executives have recognized the importance of embracing new technologies to stay competitive and relevant in the global market. The integration of AI, machine learning, blockchain, and big data analytics into business operations has become a core focus for top leaders.

Take, for example, the leadership at tech giants like Infosys, Wipro, and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). These companies have been led by visionaries who have not only capitalized on India's IT expertise but also innovated their business models to include cutting-edge technology solutions. The ability to harness technology while maintaining a human-centric approach has become the hallmark of many top leaders.

Moreover, the pandemic underscored the need for strong digital leadership. Indian C-suite leaders, especially in sectors like finance, healthcare, and e-commerce, demonstrated remarkable agility in pivoting business models to adapt to the new normal. Whether it was enabling remote work, reimagining customer experiences, or pivoting to online sales channels, Indian corporate leaders proved themselves adept at navigating uncertainty.

Strategic Vision in a Globalized World

The C-suite in India today is characterized by leaders who possess an astute global outlook while being deeply rooted in the local context. Indian executives have been instrumental in leading businesses through the challenges and opportunities of globalization. India's rapidly expanding domestic market, coupled with its deepening global ties, requires leaders who can strike a balance between local and international strategies.

For instance, companies like Reliance Industries, Mahindra Group, and the Aditya Birla Group have expanded their operations across continents, adapting to diverse markets while retaining the core principles that make them successful. The ability to operate seamlessly in multiple geographies is a skill that many Indian C-suite executives have mastered. These leaders are increasingly seen as global thought leaders, adept at managing cross-border collaborations, mergers, and acquisitions.

The Spirit of Innovation and Risk-Taking

India's corporate leaders have shown an exceptional capacity for innovation. In a nation where entrepreneurship is celebrated, many C-suite executives come from backgrounds steeped in startups, giving them a keen understanding of risk-taking and disruption.

Leaders like Ratan Tata, Mukesh Ambani, and Narayana Murthy have led some of the largest Indian companies to the forefront of global innovation. Ambani's vision for Jio, which revolutionized India's telecom sector, is a prime example of how bold moves in the C-suite can reshape industries. India's leadership is not just about scaling businesses, but about rethinking traditional models and creating entirely new ecosystems.

In addition to fostering innovation in traditional sectors, India's C-suite is also leading the charge in new-age industries such as electric vehicles, renewable energy, and space exploration. Companies like Ola Electric, BYJU's, and SpaceX India (under the leadership of former ISRO engineers) are pushing the boundaries of what Indian corporations can achieve.

Leading with Resilience and Adaptability

In recent years, India's C-suite executives have exhibited an extraordinary level of resilience in the face of numerous challenges—from navigating the complexities of India's regulatory environment to dealing with global market volatility and the disruptions brought about by the pandemic.

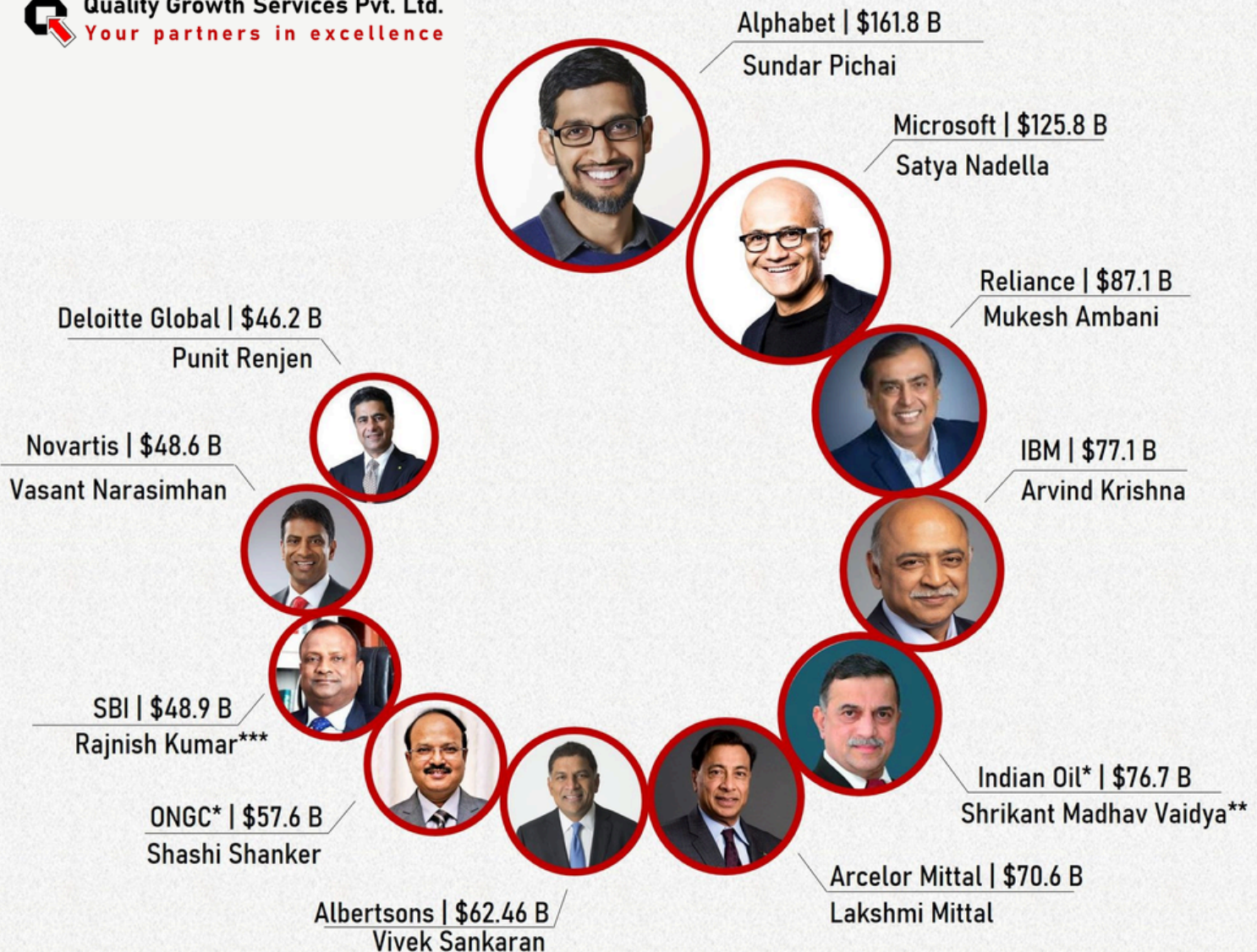
The ability to pivot quickly and remain flexible has been a defining feature of Indian corporate leadership. C-suite leaders in India are accustomed to working in an environment of constant change, and they have honed their skills in crisis management. Their ability to lead with calm and confidence during uncertain times has earned them respect both at home and abroad.

A C-Suite Ready for the Future

India's C-suite powerhouse is more than just a collection of influential leaders—it is a reflection of the country's progress as a global economic force. Indian leaders have proven that they are not only capable of leading businesses in the face of unprecedented challenges, but also able to drive sustainable growth and innovation in an increasingly complex world.

As India continues to emerge as a major player in the global economy, its corporate leaders will undoubtedly continue to inspire, innovate, and lead. The future of India's C-suite is bright, and the next generation of executives will likely build on the strong foundations laid by their predecessors, ushering in a new era of leadership that is both globally minded and locally grounded.

Indian origin CEOs and revenues of companies they head



*Government PSUs/ PSEs

**Chairman of Indian Oil

***Chairman of SBI

Source: Press Trust of India, Annual Reports
Revenues for the latest financial year

QGS salutes the vision, resilience, and success of India's C-Suite powerhouses.



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C-Suite Trailblazers of India: Steering a New Era of Corporate Growth



N Jithin Kumar - Business Partner, Rrayze business solutions

Over the last twenty years, the corporate environment in India has been turning radically. It has evolved to become a dynamic ecosystem based on innovation, inclusiveness, and international aspiration, what used to be described as the traditional family run business, and conservative boardrooms. The core of this transformation is the C-Suite executives of India the CEOs, CFOs, CHROs, and COOs driving transformations in leadership paradigms, industry outlooks, and leading the country to a stable and sustainable future.

The Emergence of the Modern Indian Executive.

The C-Suite leaders in India today are vastly different as compared to the past leaders. They are world versed, technologically savvy and strategically nimble. The new executive cadre is a synthesis of the best practices worldwide and the in-depth knowledge of Indian socio-economic construct. They represent a proactive, versatile, and progressive style of leadership, whether in major multinational companies or startups that have been scaled and turned into unicorns.

This is the new generation of leaders who have not been resistant to disruption. It could be the use of data analytics to drive business intelligence, the incorporation of the ESG principle into the business strategy, or even the integration of diversity into the business culture, with the executives at India, they have shifted their role of being operational custodians to strategic visionaries.

Turning Local Giants into Global leaders.

The last ten years have seen more and more Indian leaders take up global boardrooms. The legacies of Sundar Pichai at Google, Satya Nadella at Microsoft and the PepsiCo of Indra Nooyi have made India a talent hub in the world. Their success stories are the image of intellectual and leadership capital of India, developed in a complex market, and able to succeed in the most competitive markets around the world.

In the domestic market, N. Chandrasekaran (Tata Sons), Sanjiv Mehta (HUL), and Salil Parekh (Infosys) have led the way to show how Indian companies can be both large and sustainable. The Indian conglomerates during their stewardship have not only been recording unprecedented profitability but also adopting responsible business conducts that are in line with the international governance standards.

The Strategic Change: Growth to Sustainability.

The shift in approach of short-term growth to long-term sustainability is one of the characteristics of the C-Suite of Indian today. Companies are moving towards integrating ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) into their strategic planning, which is what CEOs are doing. The change is indicative of the expectations of the investors and the requirement of the society to have responsible capitalism.

As an example, incorporation of renewable energy, sustainable supply chains and minimization of wasted resources has shifted out of the fringe CSR activities to mainstream boardrooms. Indian leaders are not only reacting to the global sustainability requirements but are also designing native models of inclusive development. C-Suite nowadays has understood that purpose and profit are no longer parallel tracks, they need to come together to achieve long-term success.



Technology: The New Foundational Rock of Leadership.

Digital transformation has changed the meaning of being a leader in the corporate world in India. The post-pandemic changes propelled the use of automation, artificial intelligence, and cloud-based services, compelling leaders to change rapidly. The CFOs have become data strategists, the CHROs are the digital architects of employee experience, and the CEOs are technology evangelists bringing the organization through the digital reinvention process.

Examples of such transformation in leaders, who think of the future, include Rajesh Gopinathan (TCS) and Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (Biocon) who have strategic vision that is coupled with technological flexibility. The new C-Suite executive should not only have experience in the domain, but digital savvy, and be able to transform data into competitive advantage.

Steering through the New Economic Landscape.

The C-Suite players in India work in a highly vibrant economic environment in the world. The combination of a fast rate of digitization, regulatory change, and geopolitical unpredictability all demand the continual re-tune of strategy. Today leaders are supposed to be geopolitical analysts, digital futurists, social architects, all in one person.

In the worldwide supply chain restructuring and internal policy changes, flexibility has been the defining feature of effective Indian managers. Their leadership philosophy has focused on agility, not as a buzzword, but a necessity of operations. Change management, uncertainty, and innovation are the qualities that make the most successful C-Suite leaders in the present-day India Inc. so special.

Leadership Out of the Boardroom.

The emerging generation of executives realizes that leadership is not about business measures. The role of many C-Suite leaders in the society and the environment is becoming prolific, as they define the developmental story of India. The approach of anand Mahindra to social entrepreneurship or the promotion of digital inclusion by Natarajan Chandrasekaran has a moral aspect today in the leadership of corporations.

Boards and CEOes are becoming increasingly responsible not just on shareholder returns but also on society. The new C-Suite, accordingly, should be able to look at profitability and purpose as something having to be balanced, in order to show that business can be commercially successful and at the same time, socially responsible.

The Road Ahead: Leadership 2030

As India strives to become the fastest-growing major economy in the world, its corporate leadership will have a more significant role to play in determining the global performance of the country. A cross-functional agility, technological savvy, and moral vision will characterize the future C-Suite.

Leadership 2030 is not going to be about the titles; it is going to be transformation, leading with empathy, using technology in a responsible manner and leading growth that will make communities happier than balance sheets. The Indian leaders are in a unique position to shape this new epoch of global corporate governance with traditional wisdom coupled with the modern innovation.

Conclusion

The C-Suite leaders in India are a representation of a new leadership philosophy, which is dynamic, participative, and global. They are not simply coping with change but they are in fact creating it. Since boardrooms are becoming the hub of purpose-driven innovation, the executives of India are establishing the standards of excellence in leadership that go well beyond the borders of the country.

The role of the Indian corporate visionaries is bound to increase in the next decade, not only in the direction they give to businesses, but also to the plot of India economic fate. The period of C-Suite giants in India has just become a reality and the leadership will mark how India Inc. becomes the global leader in the area of resilience, responsibility and reinvention.



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The C-Suite Vanguard: India's New Architects of Enterprise Excellence



Harish Goday- Product Development Engineer at Digitate, TCS

I have been tracking the change in the leadership of the corporate world in India, and it is apparent that the C-suite is not merely copying international models - it is making its own models. Any large Indian firm has a team of executives, that is, CEOs, CFOs, COOs, CTOs, CHROs, etc., who not only promote shareholder value but also the economic orientation of the nation. These are leaders who possess diverse backgrounds and integrate traditional business savvy with new innovation, agility and global thinking. To some extent, the Indian C-suite is an interim between the old systems and the transformative change and future preparedness and that process is certainly worth capturing.

Transformational Role of Indian C-suite.

Only a decade ago, all Indian C-suite positions were cost-cutting and profit-maximization efforts. The scope has now inflated as we have seen in 2025. Currently, C-suite leaders are in the heart of the digital transformation, sustainability, global expansion, crisis management and worker up-skilling.

I believe that the most significant change that the CEOs will deal with is that no longer should they be merely a decision-maker, but a genuine and nimble leader who can weigh the interests of the staff, consumers, investors, regulators, and society. COOs can no longer get by on day-to-day operations; they are now supposed to keep their supply chains resistant, business continuity, and tech into the mix. CFOs have become value architects today- dealing with risk management analytics and digital tools that do not merely report numbers but manage to do so. CTOs or CDOs are the force behind innovation pipelines and help in the formulation of an AI, IoT and data-driven decision making culture. And CHROs are the custodians of the company culture, aiming at attracting, reskilling, and retaining talent in this digital age.

C-Suite Leaders: Leadership Profiles.

India is full of the inspiring stories of the corporate world. Numerous executives have assisted regional companies to enter international market:

Sundar Pichai (CEO, Alphabet, Inc.): He used to be an IIT Kharagpur engineering student, and his ascendancy demonstrates how Indian tenacity, flexibility, and modesty can be applied by leading a world-renowned technological company. Although he was working out of the US, his mentality certainly mirrored that of India.

Natarajan Chandrasekaran (Chairman, Tata Sons): Nick Chandrasekaran (Chandra) was the former CEO of TCS and showed that legacy conglomerates can be transformed with proper industry knowledge, people-focused leadership, and execution. His technological, health, and sustainability drive changed the way Tata operates.

Indra Nooyi (previously CEO, PepsiCo): Nooyi has shattered glass ceilings more than any other female CEO in the world. Her people-first, inclusive, overarching style continues to give many C-suite aspirants in India the motivation.

Suresh Narayanan (Chairman & MD, Nestle India): Narayanan had demonstrated that C-suite executives should speak honestly and act resolutely, building failure into stepping stones, and this is what he did after he had to overcome the Maggi ban issue.

These are just but a few examples. In manufacturing, tech, FMCG, banking, and start-ups, there will be leaders who oversee profit and loss and advocate sustainability, gender equity, ethical leadership, and digital transformation.

The Evolving Indian C-Suite Leaders.

I have observed a distinct change in the Indian C-suite, which is a generational and gender change. Although experience remains important, there is a tendency towards younger, digital-native executives in boardrooms, people who introduce diversity in gender and background.

Women on the top: Women are steadily gaining ground in banks (think Arundhati Bhattacharya), technology (Debjani Ghosh at NASSCOM), and start-ups, although at a very low percentage. They are breaking the glass ceiling of the past and are being applauded because of their understanding leadership and their ability to create inclusive work places.

Younger minds, new thinking: Tech unicorns and new generation companies are taking junior professionals into C-suite positions. They are rewriting the ancient decision-making playbook by leveraging the forces of analytics, digital marketing and streamlined processes.

C-suite Evolution in India Drivers.

What is the reason why Indian C-suites have risen so fast? A few key forces:

Digital disruption - tech is the universal component. To automate and refine insights, C -suites are implementing automation, ERP modernizations, AI analytics, and cloud computing.

International desires - companies are driving cross-border M&As, exporting human resources, and setting the bar on the best in the world, courtesy of the visionary executives.

Pay attention to sustainability and ESG - Stakeholder capitalism has moved the leadership ahead of unambiguous profitability to the environmental, social, and governance indicators.

People-centric leadership - the pandemic emphasized the importance of resilient, empathetic leadership, thus the leaders are focusing on internal communication, work-life balance, and mental health.

Strategic risk management - geopolitical changes, supply chain hiccups, and regulatory changes imply risk assessment and resilience are number-one priorities.

Future problems facing the C-Suite of India.

There is no success story that is devoid of challenges. The big hurdles include:

Talent war and skills deficit- it is a daily challenge to ensure that the workforce is up to date with AI, cybersecurity and digital applications.

Labyrinth of regulations - dealing with the complicated regulations in India whilst remaining in line with the global regulations is a challenge on leadership teams.

Societal expectations - firms and their executives are supposed to contribute larger nation-building functions through CSR, DEI programmes and sustainable frameworks.

Striking the balance between local and global - balancing the culture specifics to India with those of the global best practices requires a degree of flexibility that is hardly learned.

Developing the Next Generation of C-suite Leaders.

The learning curve is high, yet achievable, as is the case with us MBA students and future executive. The development of growth mentality, improved digital literacy, improved people-management skills, and experience in cross-functional work are the keys. Managers will be distanced to the true managers because of exposure to industry details, flexibility, and the ethical decision-making process.

As a systems engineer working at TCS, my personal experience taught me of the importance of stakeholder interaction, project management, and the importance of operational excellence. The difference between the new-age C-suite, however, is that they are talents in leading change, rather than status quo.

Conclusion: The Future is Now

The C-suite of India is also redefining the playbook by embracing visionary strategy, ethical leadership, agility, and inclusiveness in an attempt to achieve corporate success. The globalization of Indian companies will have a ripple effect on the world with the impact of world-quality leadership being felt by all industries and societies. To anyone who wants to make that jump the magnitude of the challenge is immense, but so is the opportunity to be one of the architects of the India growth story.



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India's Corporate Titans: Driving the Nation's Business Revival



Aditya Parmar - Sales and Retail Marketing Intern, Carrier Midea

India is at an epicenter of crossroads that combine visionary leadership and the world opportunity. The business elite of the nation its C-suite talent depicts India competition in the global arena. These executives, both longtime conglomerate executives and deft tech founders, decide not just the direction of their companies but of Indian business in a century of innovation, stamina and intent.

The secret of every significant milestone in the history of the Indian economy is the leader who changed the conventions of doing business. Starting with the application of native advantages to take over international markets, the new generation of Indian CXOs has always defied conventional management to create eco systems that shape industries around the globe.

Evolution Of Indian Leadership the Evolution.

Indian C-suite has developed phenomenally in the last 30 years. The liberalization of the economy in 1991 initiated the transition to entrepreneurial leadership in place of the bureaucratic form of leadership. During its initial years, Indian executives concentrated on cost effectiveness, export competitiveness and process maximization. This slowly changed to become more farsighted one that would balance profit motive with innovation, inclusion and sustainability.

In the present day the Indian CEOs are not just corporate chiefs, but they are the transformers. They lead in change by moving in and out of volatile markets, leveraging digital technologies, and bringing the principles of ESG to big organizations, taking them into an untenable position. Their leadership ideology is a mixture of the ancient Indian ideals and the new managerial polish in the world.

Innovation Tycoons and World Impact.

The technology sector is where India has its corporate blood, more than any other place. This is evidenced by the emergence of Satya Nadella at Microsoft, Sundar Pichai at Google and Arvind Krishna at IBM as Indian birth leaders are redefining the principles of international business governance. Their leadership approach is subdued and shows the qualities of humility, empathy and intellectual rigour that have been strongly enshrined in the Indian managerial culture.

There are leaders in India, such as N. Chandrasekaran with Tata Group or Salil Parekh with Infosys, that embodies strategic forbearance with purpose. Tata has been transformed into a conglomerate with a future under the leadership of Chandrasekaran, with large investment in EVs, digital platforms and renewable energy. On his part, Parekh has made sure that AI, automation, and cloud transformation is central to the business of Infosys throughout its efforts to remain relevant in an incredibly competitive space in the information technology services sector. These instances point to a typical characteristic of the Indian leadership style of maintaining balance between continuity and change.

The Diversification Advantage.

One peculiarity of Indian C-suite powerhouses is that they can work and act in diversified business ecosystems. Most of Indian conglomerates Reliance industries, Mahindra Group, Adani Group and Tata have portfolios covering energy, retail, technology and manufacturing. To be in charge of such entities requires a supernormal combination of analytical shrewdness, cultural leanings, and operating skill.

Take the case of strategic reinventing of Reliance Industries by Mukesh Ambani. He changed a petrochemical giant into a consumer technologies and digital services juggernaut with Reliance Jio and Retail. This is a classic Indian leadership ability the strength of taking a decisive turn in case of future trends appearing.

Women on the C-Suite Revolution.

Corporate powerhouses in India cannot be given their full narration without mentioning the upcoming wave of women executives. Breaking glass ceiling, such leaders as Nivruti Rai of Invest India, Roshni Nadar Malhotra of HCLTech, or Soma Mondal of SAIL show how the sense of resilience is a key to competence.

Arundhati Bhattacharya and Shanti Ekambaram are names in banking and finance, who have both left lasting blueprints of the inclusive growth and risk-conscious leadership. Their achievement is a strong signal since India has ceased to be gendered as a corporate entity and instead is being propelled by merit, intellect, cross-disciplinary excellence.

The strategic agility mindset.

Contemporary Indian executives are renowned because of their capacity to lead a disruptive environment. They are well adapted to ambiguity and are strategically focused. Indian CXOs show agility based on complex environment whether it is global supply chain shock, technology revolution.

This agility is embodied by such leaders as Sanjiv Mehta who guided the transformation of Hindustan Unilever. He reacknowledged organization culture to focus on purpose-based business that focus on sustainability, rural engagement, and growth that is based on innovation. Likewise, S. N. Subrahmanyam at Larsen and Toubro show operational perfection in implementing big intricate engineering projects worldwide and also directing the process of digitalization of the business divisions.



Beyond Borders Indian Leadership.

The influence of the C-suite in India is far-reaching outside of the country. The fraction of the largest corporations in the world run by Indian-origin executives reaches more than 10 percent and indicates the change in the global leadership demographics. Leena Nair of Chanel and Laxman Narasimhan of Starbucks represent a different model of management by empathy based on a community philosophy and intellectual deference.

The Future of India's C-Suite

The corporate custodians in India will be a major one as the country seeks to achieve an estimated 10 trillion economy in the forthcoming decades. The second stage of leadership will entail learning how to master the scene of automation, data intelligence and green transition. The future C-suite has to orchestrate technology not only to make a profit, but to drive a fair progress - growth without at the expense of the planet and human well-being.

Byju Raveendran, Deepinder Goyal and Falguni Nayar are some of the new generation leaders that are leading with entrepreneurship. They are analytically rigorous and customer obsessed and risk-takers in a creative manner. Their businesses- BYJU'S, Zomato and Nykaa, fall under their business segment that no business terminology in India had in 20 years ago. However, the strategic articulateness and digital savvy of their respective CEOs indicate that leadership in the new millennium is no longer about age or position but about outlook and agility.



Veterans Day

HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED

Our flag flies high not because the wind moves it,
but because of the breath of every soldier who
stood to defend it.

India's C-Suite Powerhouses: Drivers of Corporate Transformation

Singam Mohit Reddy - Analyst, Capgemini



Over the past few years, the business environment in India has undergone the change in the way the top leadership position, the C-suite, is being defined. In addition to title, the current C-Suite executive in India has to be strategist, change-agent, culture champion, and trustee of stakeholder faith. Within this dynamic scenario are some shining lights of leadership in India that demonstrate how Indian corporate leadership is transforming as a factor in performance, a pattern of governance and a transition between old enterprises and new era aspirations.

The Evolving Role of the Indian C-Suite

In India, traditionally, businesses were passed down through the CEOs and other top executives or they had designated limits. Their role today is broad indeed: disruption of the digital, ESG requirements, global competitiveness, regulatory scrutiny and talent diversity are all on the table of the C-Suite.

Studies indicate that the main characteristics of successful Indian CEOs and top managers are:

- Existence of high emphasis on capital investment and payback on capital invested (ROCE). According to one study, the top CEOs in the industry had in common the fact that they had excellent returns ratios.
- Mounting pressures. Indicatively, a survey established that 73 percent of Indian CEOs have been faced with imposter syndrome or feeling stretched to far beyond their ability due to escalating pressure on performance, transformation and accountability.
- Succession and continuity in the leadership has become a strategic requirement. Grooming successors and institutionalising leadership pipelines are also some of the areas that Indian boards are giving more attention.

To put it simply, the Indian C-Suite in the present day is not just operating anything, it is shaping transformation. They are major companies under structural transformation, digitisation, globalisation, and the changing stakeholder demands.

Why Indian C-Suite Matters Globally

The talent of C-Suite in India is also becoming more and more known to the world, not only due to the number of Indian executives in global companies (including some multinational technology companies), but due to the size and complexity of Indian companies, which is a proving-ground. Leaders become skilled in areas that are not common; this is because of their exposure to high growth, complexity in regulations, big population sizes and informal markets. All these attributes are becoming desirable in the boardrooms across the world.

Case Study: Aditya Puri and HDFC Bank

To explain the case of an Indian C-suite powerhouse that implements this leadership paradigm, we resort to the example of Aditya Puri who has been the long time managing director of HDFC Bank. His life and his work are very instructive.

Background and context

Puri started working in HDFC Bank in 1994 when private banking in India was still in its infancy. His educational history: degree in commerce at Punjab University and he was a Chartered Accountant. During his 26 years tenure, he has turned HDFC bank into the most-valuable privately owned banking institution in India and a world leader in banking.



Strategic approach

- Customer-focused and technologically driven: Puri focused on simplicity, technology and customer-first philosophy. Minimizing was another common motif.
- Risk discipline and quality of the assets: although the growth was fast, he upheld conservative underwriting and high risk standards, a hall mark in a world where vigorous scaling usually compromises quality.
- Institution-building attitude: Puri was not merely the CEO, but called himself the first among equals, which creates a meritocracy, process and empowerment culture.
- Rural and semi-urban growth: He realised the under-banked markets in India and drove the bank out of the metros. As an example, extensive branch network and operations were made in the semi-urban and rural regions.
- Open governance and sustainability: His leadership inculcated good governance practices, as well as the emphasis on long-term development, but not on immediate profit.

Outcomes and impact

HDFC Bank performed superbly under the leadership of Puri. An analysis conducted by McKinsey revealed that the total shareholder returns of HDFC Bank as compared to domestic and global banking were very high during the period. The bank realized a sustained increase in revenues, good returns on equity and established one of the most enviable banking brands in India, and the quality of the assets.

Leadership lessons

Based on the case of Puri, the following leadership lessons can be deduced by C-Suite executives in India and other places:

- Value based vision: Sustainable growth only comes through being founded upon clear principles, rather than opportunistic growth.
- Culture and not charisma: Institutionalisation systems, culture and team-based leadership are better than one-man show.
- Balance of growth and prudence: Being aggressive in opportunities (e.g. rural outreach, digital) but conservative in risks is what makes the difference between good and great.
- Simplicity in operations: The complexity is a death sentence to the execution process. Agility may be unlocked by simplicity in models and processes.
- Succession planning in leadership: Puri himself had succession plans in place; it is important to institutionalise leadership pipelines.

Conclusion

The C-Suite leaders of India are transforming the executive leadership rulebook. They have a mandate of growth, transformation, sustainability and stakeholder value. It can be demonstrated based on the example of Aditya Puri at HDFC Bank as an Indian-based leader who can transform the vision into institutional results, uniting technology, culture, risk discipline and customer focus. The C-Suite executives of India will become more and more influential whether in determining national performance- or global corporate stories as India moves to greater business prominence in the world.

To companies that are in need of the ability to scale in complexity and deliver in dynamism, C-Suite in India is abundant in role-models and transferability. The difficulty is to create leadership channels that instill the characteristics and carry them through the next generation.





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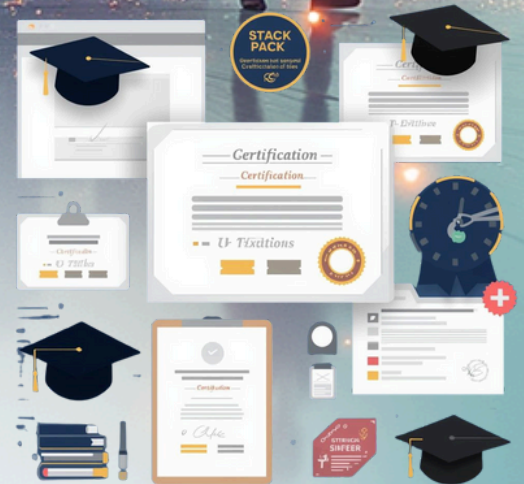
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NEWS

More big four pros landing at C-suite spot as firms become leadership pipeline

The Big Four are fast emerging as a powerful pipeline of C-suite talent, with their breadth of exposure, sector expertise, commercial acumen and ability to drive change now valued well beyond their finance and tax roots. Industry experts say around 30 to 50 leaders make the leap each year from professional services into corporate boardrooms, part of a two-way exchange that is gaining ground as the Big Four firms themselves increasingly draw senior talent from the industry.

While management consulting firms like McKinsey have long been seen as a leadership pipeline, the roster of Big Four alumni moving into C-suites is now steadily expanding.

From EY, Sandeep Ghosh now serves as group country manager for India and South Asia at Visa, Arindam Bannerji leads State Street in India and Shiney Prasad heads Guardian Life.

PwC has produced industry leaders such as Sudhir Kesavan, COO of CitiusTech; Jane Sequeira Kumar, who heads pharma and healthcare investment banking at ICICI Direct; and Kartik Rishi, now global head of consulting and digital business services at HSBC.

KPMG alumni include Arjun Vaidyanathan, COO at One97 Communications, and Harsha Razdan, CEO for South Asia at Dentsu, while Deloitte counts Sanjeev Rastogi, CEO of Adani Group's global capability centre, and Shekhar Tiwari, global head of managed services at GEP Worldwide, among its senior alumni.



Corner Office Chiefs

Some **30-50 Big Four senior leaders** move to industry each year

TWO-WAY hiring trend between firms and industry strengthening

BIG FOUR LEADERS ARE VALUED FOR

- Practical approach, commercial acumen, transformation experience, governance expertise and boardroom credibility

SOME RISKS

- Transition:** shifting to line management is not always smooth
- Perception:** some seen as "too theoretical"
- Cultural fit:** adapting to politically complex corporates is tricky



GLIMPSES



An in-depth IATF 16949 Internal Quality Auditor Training was organized for professionals from a reputed automotive company. The program equipped participants with the skills and understanding required to perform effective internal audits, interpret IATF requirements, and drive quality improvements within their organizations. The session emphasized process-based auditing, risk management, and continual enhancement of quality systems.

A detailed Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) Internal Audit was conducted at a leading automotive ancillary firm in Gurgaon. The initiative focused on assessing compliance with statutory requirements, identifying potential risks, and strengthening the organization's EHS management systems. The audit aimed to foster a culture of safety, sustainability, and continuous improvement across operational processes.



A comprehensive leadership development programme was designed and delivered for Heads of Departments and senior leaders at India's largest two-wheeler manufacturing company. The session centered on nurturing a quality-first mindset, reinforcing accountability, and aligning leadership behavior with organizational excellence goals. Through interactive modules and case-based discussions, participants explored strategies to embed quality thinking into decision-making and day-to-day leadership practices.

An extensive IATF 16949 programme was conducted for a premier automotive manufacturer to strengthen their understanding of international quality standards. The training aimed at enhancing participants' knowledge of quality management principles, process control, and audit preparedness. The session also highlighted best practices for sustaining compliance and driving performance excellence across production and supply chain functions.



NEWS

Vertex Group appoints Krishna Gautam as Associate Managing Director



New Delhi – New York-headquartered business-process-management firm Vertex Group on Thursday announced the strategic appointment of industry veteran Krishna Gautam as Associate Managing Director. He will look after the India operations of Vertex Global Services, the BPM wing of Vertex Group, the company statement said. Gautam brings with him over 18 years of distinguished experience in customer support, operational leadership, and digital transformation, the statement said. Under Gautam's leadership, Vertex Group aims to set new benchmarks in digital innovation and operational excellence, strengthening its roadmap for becoming a Rs 1,000-crore global powerhouse that remains firmly rooted in a human-centric ethos, it added

“Vertex 2.0 is a transformative reinvention which intends to bring together advanced digital technologies and unmatched human expertise to redefine how businesses operate, innovate, and interact in the digital and AI-driven era.”

Gagan Arora, Founder and President of Vertex Group, said, “Krishna Gautam brings an exceptional track record in operational excellence, cutting-edge technology, and elevating customer-experience qualities that perfectly align with our mission for Vertex 2.0.”

Prior to this appointment, Gautam served as Vice President of Customer Experience at Urbanic, where he played a pivotal role in shaping the company's technology-enabled customer-experience strategy and elevating customer satisfaction across all channels.

Gautam said, “I look forward to collaborating with the talented teams at Vertex to drive the Vertex 2.0 transformation and deliver exceptional value for our clients worldwide.”

Vertex Group, one of the global leaders in providing intelligent-enterprise solutions, is accelerating its tech-driven expansion across key markets, including the USA, UK, Philippines, UAE, Nepal, India, and Africa



Important Dates in November 2025

5 November - Guru Nanak Jayanti

Celebrates the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism. Devotees participate in processions, kirtans, and langar (community feasts) at gurdwaras.



5 November - Dev Deepavali (Varanasi)

On this full moon day, ghats of the Ganges are lit with thousands of diyas. It marks the divine descent of gods and is a sight of spiritual grandeur.

10 November - World Science Day for Peace

Celebrated by UNESCO to highlight the importance of science in fostering peace, sustainable development, and innovation.



26 November - Constitution Day

Commemorates the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1949. Schools and institutions conduct activities to promote constitutional values and civic responsibility.

NEWS

Indian CEOs' Confidence In Company Growth Rises, Even As World Worries

Confidence among chief executive officers (CEOs) in India in their own companies' growth prospects has climbed to 83 per cent, up from 68 per cent in 2024, a significant leap that outpaces CEOs globally, which increased from 76 per cent in 2024 to 79 per cent in 2025, according to a report released on Wednesday.

Despite a decline in global economic confidence, from 80 per cent in 2024 to 63 per cent in 2025, Indian CEOs remain focused on innovation, resilience, and long-term growth strategies. Rather than retreating, they are prioritising strategic investments in technology and talent to drive transformation.

"CEOs in India are demonstrating renewed confidence in their organisations' growth prospects, reflecting strong resilience and strategic clarity," KPMG India said in its report.

Meanwhile, AI remains a top investment priority, with 57 per cent of Indian CEOs planning to allocate 10-20 per cent of their budgets to AI over the next 12 months. A majority (73 per cent) expect returns on AI investments within one to three years.

As much as 86 per cent believe their boards are well-equipped to navigate advanced technology adoption, including leveraging data and AI for sustainable growth, the report noted.

"In an era of global uncertainty, CEOs in India are demonstrating remarkable resilience and a future-focused mindset. By embracing emerging technologies like AI, prioritising cybersecurity, and advancing ESG goals, they are confident of navigating complexity," KPMG in India CEO Yezdi Nagporewalla said.

At the same time, a renewed focus on talent strategy, redesigning roles, embedding innovation, and fostering continuous learning is helping organisations stay competitive and ready for what lies ahead, he added.

Integration of AI into organisational processes is cited as the most pressing challenge shaping short-term decision-making.

Technology-related factors such as cybercrime, AI workforce readiness, and successful AI integration consistently rank among the top factors impacting three-year growth, the report highlighted.

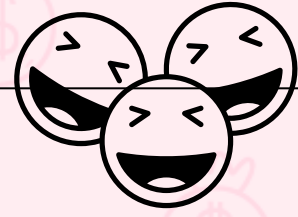
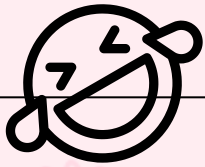
Additionally, 91 per cent of Indian CEOs advocate for investing in skill development and lifelong learning to safeguard future talent.

"74 per cent recognise that AI workforce readiness will significantly influence organisational prosperity over the next three years," the report stated.

The report was prepared on inputs from 125 business leaders across industries and sectors.

QUALITY CONTROL(LED) HUMOR

When Work Gets Too Serious



1. THE GLOBAL BOARD MEETING 🌐

CEO (Indian-origin): "Let's start on time, please."

Team (US): logs in 5 minutes early.

Team (India): "On the way..." while still brushing teeth.

CEO: "Global synchronization - achieved!"



2. CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE 🇮🇳

CEO: "We celebrate diversity in every way."

Employee: "So, can we take a break for Diwali?"

CEO: "Only if the lights are LED - sustainability, you know."

3. JUGAAD STRATEGY 💡

Consultant: "We need a cost-effective innovation model."

Indian-origin CEO: "Already done - it's called jugaad."

Consultant: "Impressive! Is there a framework?"

CEO: "Yes - common sense and duct tape."



4. WORK-LIFE BALANCE 🇮🇳

Reporter: "How do you balance global leadership with Indian values?"

CEO: "Simple. I lead with empathy, strategy... and WhatsApp forwards at 6 AM."

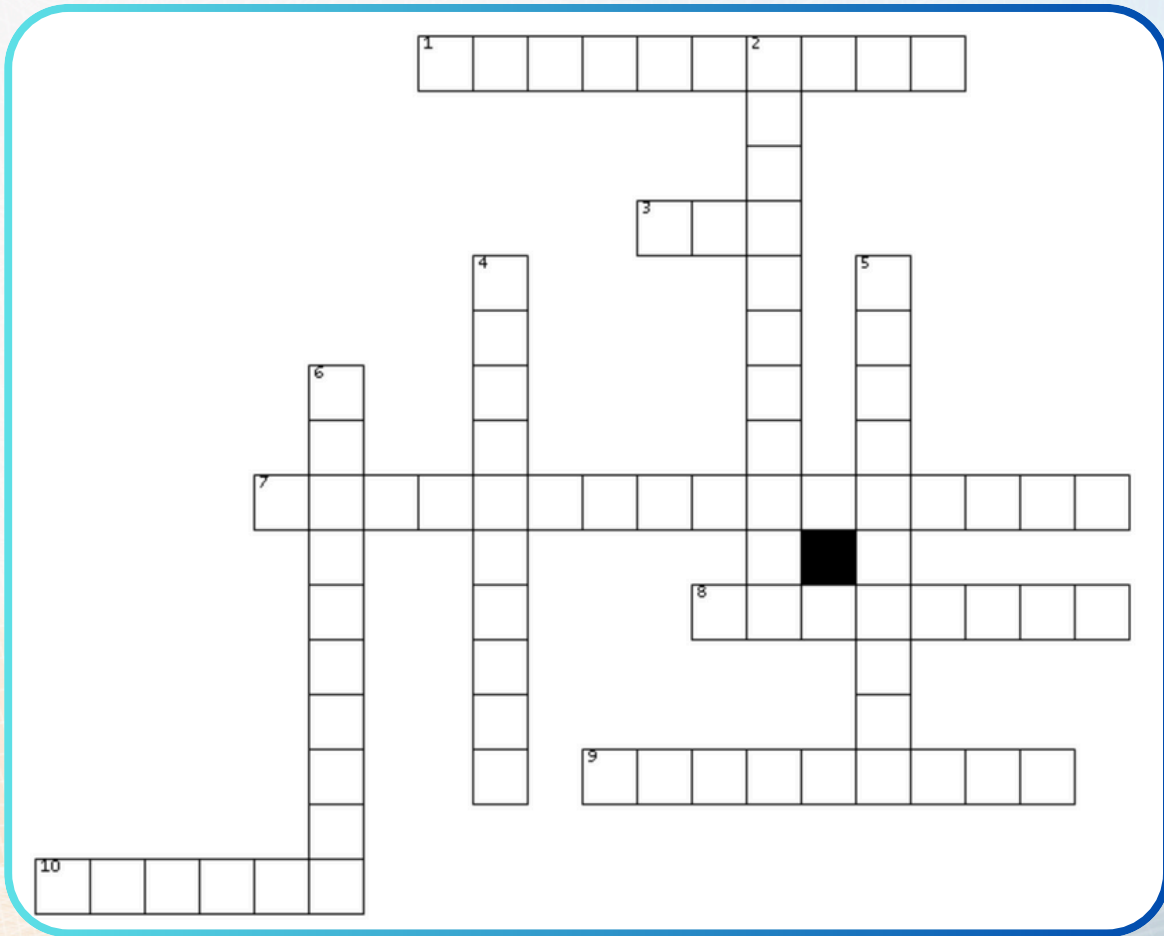
5. SUCCESS FORMULA 🏆

Investor: "What's the secret behind your company's exponential growth?"

CEO: "Two things — chai breaks and emotional intelligence."



PEOPLE, CULTURE & LEARNING: THE CROSSWORD OF GROWTH



ACROSS

1. The strength to recover from challenges and market disruptions.
3. The highest-ranking executive responsible for overall management.
7. The spirit driving new ventures and bold business moves.
8. Long-term plan crafted by corporate leaders for sustainable growth.
9. The power to inspire people and shape business outcomes.
10. A leader's foresight that defines the direction of the company.

DOWN

2. Enabling teams to take ownership and perform their best.
4. The ability to guide organizations toward vision and success.
5. Framework ensuring accountability and ethical decision-making.
6. The key to staying ahead in competitive industries.



Answers of the Previous edition

Across: Communication, Diversity, Knowledge

Down: Teamwork, Learning, Culture, Innovation, Mentorship, People, Growth



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2. LSSBB:

Starting from Nov.16, 2025 (Weekend)

3. ISO 50001:2018

***Lead Auditor Training Course
from Nov. 18-22, 2025***

4. ISO 9001:2015

***Lead Auditor Training Course
from Nov. 26-30, 2025***



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