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TRADEFLOCK

SPOTLIGHT

THE CEO AS CYBER CHIEF

Leading the Charge in Corporate Cyber Defense

FROM FIXED TO FLEXIBLE

Adopting a Growth Mindset in the Workplace

GREGG FLORENTIN

Chief Executive Officer

Tri-City Cardiology

ARE AI-LED OPERATIONS WORTH THE RISK?

Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA 2024


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EDITOR NOTE

LEADERS OF TODAY, ARCHITECTS OF TOMORROW

Let's be honest—being a CEO today isn't what it used to be. It's not just about steering a company toward growth or keeping shareholders happy anymore. The world has changed, and so has the role of a CEO. From navigating the uncertainties of a global pandemic to taking a stand on social issues, today's leaders have to do much more than balance the books.

In this edition of TradeFlock, we're shining a light on some of the most inspirational CEOs in the USA—leaders who are boldly redefining what it means to lead in the 21st century. They're embracing technological change, championing sustainability, and pushing the boundaries of what their businesses can achieve. But more importantly, they're doing it with purpose, conviction, and a clear vision for the future.

What sets these CEOs apart isn't just their ability to drive profits—it's their understanding that a company's strength is built on its people, values, and impact. We're living in an era where the 'why' behind a business is just as important as the 'how.' This new generation of leaders understands that, and they're using their influence to make a difference, whether it's tackling climate change or creating more inclusive workplaces.

So, as you dive into this edition, I invite you to think about your own leadership journey. How are you shaping the future of your industry? What values are guiding your decisions? The stories you'll read in this issue will not only inspire you but challenge you to think bigger, bolder, and beyond the bottom line.

These CEOs aren't just leading—they're shaping the future of American business. And that's something worth celebrating.

Vipin Kumar
Editor, Tradeflock

vipin@tradeflock.com

TRADEFLOCK'S

UPCOMING EDITIONS

USA's Most Influential COOs 2024

Most Empowering Women Leaders From USA 2024

Most Inspiring Leaders In Finance USA 2024

Most Inspiring Business Leaders In USA 2024

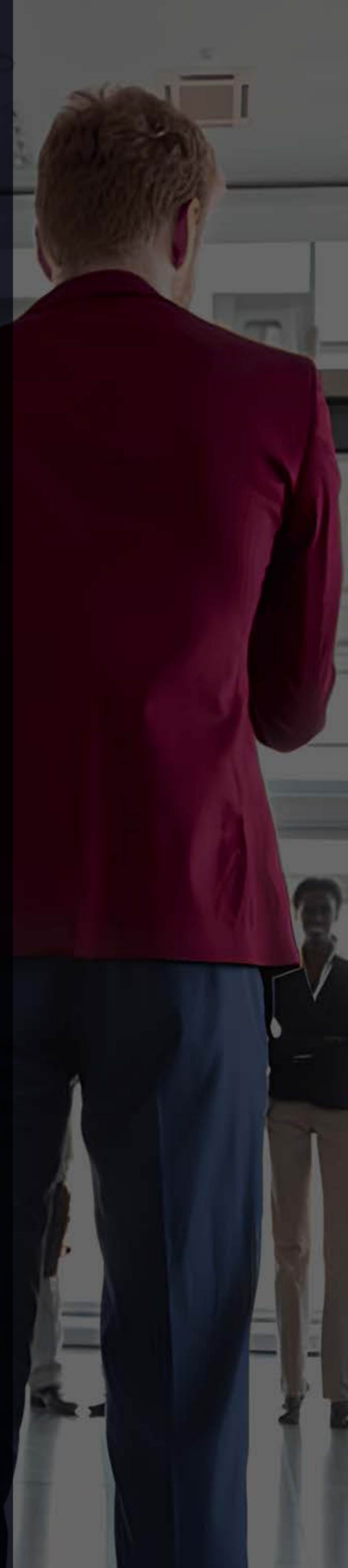
TRADEFLOCK
JOURNEY OF LEADERS

VOL 08 • ISSUE 01 • SEPTEMBER 2024

TOP 10

INSPIRATIONAL CEOS USA 2024

NAME	DESIGNATION	COMPANY
Aleina Almeida	Chief Executive Officer	Meridian International Sourcing Group
Arlo Gilbert	Chief Executive Officer	Osano
Avnish (Avi) Gulati	Chief Executive Officer	TekCapitol, Inc.
Chelsea M.R. Hirschhorn	Founder & CEO	Frida
David Barrett	Founder & CEO	Expensify
Drew Uher	Founder & CEO	HomeLight
Gregg Florentin	Chief Executive Officer	Tri-City Cardiology
Maleka Momand	Co-Founder & CEO	Esper
Melanie Perkins	Co-Founder & CEO	Canva
Tadeu Carneiro	Chief Executive Officer	Boston Metal



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By **Dr. Elliott Q. Gomez, Major, USA, Retired, LSSBB, CDEI**

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Co-Founder & CEO,
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Chief Executive Officer,
Canva

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Top 10
Inspirational CEOs USA

An Opportunistic Visionary Transforming Healthcare Systems with Strategic Leadership

GREGG FLORENTIN

Chief Executive Officer,
Tri-City Cardiology

A LEADER'S GREATEST POWER LIES IN THEIR ABILITY TO INSPIRE OTHERS TO BELIEVE IN SOMETHING BIGGER THAN THEMSELVES

This sentiment captures the essence of Gregg Florentin's journey as CEO of Tri-City Cardiology. With over three decades of experience, Gregg has been a transformative force in healthcare, blending cutting-edge innovation with a deep commitment to the human aspect of care. At a time when cardiovascular disease claims nearly 700,000 lives each year in the U.S., Gregg's leadership is more crucial than ever.

What truly sets Gregg apart is his unwavering dedication to integrating advanced technologies like AI and predictive analytics with compassionate care. Under his leadership, patient outcomes have soared, and he has fostered a workplace where employees feel both empowered and valued. Before his role at Tri-City Cardiology, Gregg held global leadership positions, including his pivotal tenure at Ahart Healthcare Solutions. There, he led the company to significant growth, expanding to over 500 employees across multiple countries and forging

groundbreaking healthcare initiatives that gained international acclaim.

Recognized as one of the "Top 10 Inspirational CEOs in the USA," Gregg believes, 'To lead effectively, you must be visible, approachable, and genuinely invested in the people around you.' In TradeFlock's exclusive interview, Gregg shares insights on his leadership philosophy, the future of cardiovascular healthcare, and how he's continuing to inspire those around him.

> "NAVIGATING CHANGE IS A LEADER'S CONSTANT CHALLENGE — SUCCESS COMES FROM PATIENCE, FLEXIBILITY, AND THE ABILITY TO PIVOT WHEN NEEDED"

Q What initially motivated you to pursue a career in healthcare administration?

From an early age, I was captivated by the healthcare field, with aspirations of becoming a doctor, EMS professional, or educator. Over time, my passion evolved into a desire to make a broader impact. Healthcare administration offered me the perfect platform to enhance patient care and optimize systems at scale. I was drawn to the opportunity to lead teams, shape policy, and drive innovation in a field that is both dynamic and essential. This path allows me to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare organizations, ultimately benefiting communities and individuals alike.

Q What are your biggest barriers, and how has your global experience helped in your current role?

One of the biggest challenges I face today is navigating the rapid shifts in staff culture and expectations. My experience with Ahart Healthcare Solutions, particularly leading a hospital and medical group in the UAE, where I worked with teams from over 75 countries, has been invaluable. Managing such a diverse workforce taught me how to overcome cultural barriers, adapt quickly, and foster strong relationships. It also reinforced the importance of patience, flexibility, and the ability to pivot as a leader in evolving situations. This global perspective has helped me develop strategies to improve efficiency, address staffing shortages, and lead effectively amidst constant change.

Gregg's global experience has taught him that adapting quickly to evolving situations is key to overcoming barriers.

Q What is the most critical issue facing U.S. healthcare, and how can organizations like Tri-City Cardiology address it?

The U.S. healthcare system is facing rising costs, a shrinking physician workforce, regulatory complexities, and shifting expectations post-COVID. To address these challenges, organizations like Tri-City Cardiology must advocate for policy reform to lower costs and improve access while investing in workforce development to fill critical staffing gaps. Embracing technology like telemedicine and focusing on preventive care will enhance patient outcomes and efficiency. Additionally, addressing health disparities through targeted outreach and culturally competent care is key to delivering equitable healthcare in today's environment. A balanced, innovative approach is crucial to overcoming these barriers.

Q How do you see AI shaping the future of U.S. healthcare?

AI will revolutionize U.S. healthcare by enabling earlier disease detection, personalized treatments, and more efficient care. By analyzing large data sets, AI can predict health risks and tailor interventions, reducing chronic diseases. It will also improve diagnostic accuracy and streamline administrative tasks, allowing healthcare professionals to focus more on patient care. Ultimately, AI will create a more proactive, personalized, and efficient healthcare system, improving outcomes and lowering costs.

Q What are the key lessons you've learned, and what advice would you give aspiring healthcare CEOs?

The most important lesson I've learned is that —

DIRECTION MATTERS MORE THAN SPEED—MOVING QUICKLY IN THE WRONG DIRECTION IS A WASTE OF TIME.

Transparency is key to keeping your team focused and calm, while holding everyone accountable ensures high performance. Building personal connections with your team by being visible and approachable fosters trust and collaboration. Don't underestimate the power of a simple "thank you"—it can have a big impact. Rely on accurate data to guide your decisions, and always be ready to pivot when necessary. Lastly, knowing your business inside and out—understanding all aspects, from finances to operations, will make you a stronger, more connected leader.

Q What's next for you and Tri-City Cardiology? Are there any new service lines or partnerships you're excited about?

"Our service area, particularly in the East Valley of Arizona, is experiencing rapid population growth, with over 450 new residents joining us weekly. Many of these are young families, which gives Tri-City Cardiology a critical role in delivering essential services to meet the growing healthcare needs."

Looking ahead, we have exciting developments planned for the next two to three years. Our primary focus includes expanding our Ambulatory Surgery Center to accommodate more patients and services, recruiting top-notch physicians, merging with other cardiology practices, and exploring medical tourism as a new venture. We're also keen on harnessing AI to enhance staffing resources and offer more preventive services to improve patient outcomes.

To achieve these goals, we will continue building on our existing partnerships with specialized healthcare groups, hospital systems, and community outreach programs. This will include educating the public on lifestyle choices and early interventions to manage cardiovascular risk factors, like high blood pressure and obesity, through the use of AI advancements. The ultimate goal is to improve patient outcomes and efficiency while maintaining our high standards of care.

Q Looking back, what do you see as the most visionary decision you've made in your career as a healthcare leader?

One of the most impactful decisions I've made in my career

is having a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and implementing these principles to identify inefficiencies and promote collaboration across departments.

My goal has always been to eliminate unproductive time and replace it with processes that drive efficiency and productivity. When issues arise due to interdepartmental challenges, I bring all relevant teams together to find solutions, avoiding finger-pointing and fostering teamwork. This collaborative approach helps employees understand the entire patient care and operational process, building stronger team dynamics and a resilient workforce.

I make it a priority to be highly involved in every SWOT analysis, and my visibility as CEO resonates with employees. They are often amazed to see leadership directly engaging with their concerns, but more importantly, they see action being taken. This engagement builds trust, ensures problems are addressed, and creates buy-in from employees, who feel heard, valued, and motivated to align with the organization's strategic direction.

> **“ONE OF MY CORE LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES IS THAT IF SOMETHING HAS ALWAYS BEEN DONE A CERTAIN WAY, IT'S NOT A STRATEGIC PLAN—IT'S A STRATEGIC FAILURE”**

Q Over your career, how have you seen the culture of healthcare change? How did your leadership adapt to align with or influence those cultural shifts?

The culture of healthcare has evolved dramatically over the years, and as a leader, adapting quickly to these shifts has been essential.

One of the most notable changes is the shift toward Patient-Centered Care. This approach prioritizes treating patients as active partners in their healthcare, resulting in more personalized treatment plans and improved communication between providers and patients. Another major transformation is Technology Integration, including the widespread use of electronic health records (EHRs), telemedicine, and AI-driven diagnostics. These technologies are making healthcare more efficient, accessible, and precise, and I've been a strong advocate for their implementation within our systems.

Additionally, the rise of Interdisciplinary Collaboration is helping healthcare teams work across departments and specialties to provide more comprehensive care for complex health issues. The increasing focus on Mental Health is also a critical shift, integrating mental health services within primary care settings to address the well-being of the whole patient.

Furthermore, the healthcare industry is transitioning from a Fee-For-Service model to Value-Based Care, which emphasizes quality over quantity. This shift encourages providers to focus on patient outcomes and overall care quality. Lastly, there is a growing emphasis on Workplace Well-being, recognizing that the health and happiness of healthcare workers are directly tied to the quality of patient care. As a leader, I've worked to support these cultural shifts by creating a supportive, adaptive workplace that encourages collaboration and innovation, aligning with the future of healthcare.


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HOW CAN CEOs INCREASE THROUGHPUT OF INNOVATION AND R&D?

With the rapid pace of technological evolution, companies that invest in research and development (R&D) are better positioned to develop new and innovative products, improve processes, and enter new markets. Recent data on the USA's R&D shows that the White House hopes to fund $208 billion for R&D in FY 2024, a 5% increase over the FY 2023 levels. This investment is not just about spending money; it's about creating a culture that values and encourages innovation.

Correlation Between R&D Investments and Business Growth

Investing in R&D is not just a cost; it's an investment in the future. Studies have shown that for American companies, every dollar spent on R&D can increase the company's revenue by 22%. This significant correlation between R&D investments and business performance underscores the importance of R&D and provides a solid financial rationale for such investments, giving CEOs the confidence that their decisions will pay off in the long run.

CEOs can increase the throughput of innovation by understanding the role of R&D and engaging with R&D leaders. They should provide guidance, encourage risk-taking, and offer growth opportunities. By doing so, CEOs can ensure that R&D remains at the heart of their company's business model, which is crucial for staying competitive.

Strategic Decision-Making & Collaboration

CEOs play a vital role in strategic decision-making. They must identify and prioritize areas of research that align with their organization's strategic goals and market demands. Strategic investments in R&D can develop a culture of innovation, enhance the organization's competitive advantage, and create long-term value. A CEO's ability to empower their teams and foster collaboration is essential for innovation. By leveraging diverse expertise and forming partnerships, CEOs can tap into external knowledge and resources, which is vital for R&D-led innovation.

The CEO's role in increasing the throughput of innovation and R&D is more critical than ever. By investing in R&D, engaging with R&D leaders, making strategic decisions, and empowering teams, CEOs can drive their companies to new heights of innovation and secure long-term business growth. As the corporate world continues to evolve, the CEOs who embrace their role as champions of R&D will be the ones leading their companies into a prosperous future.

Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA

> LEADERSHIP IS NOT A MATTER OF GENDER BUT OF EXCELLENCE, IMPACT AND CHARACTER

ALEINA ALMEIDA

Chief Executive Officer,
Meridian International Sourcing Group

Leading with Purpose, Empowering with Action

Procurement, traditionally a male-dominated field, is currently undergoing a transformative shift as more women ascend to leadership roles. According to the Global Women Procurement Professionals (GWPP), women now hold 38% of roles in the procurement industry, with 25% achieving leadership status. This evolving landscape reminds us that "Leadership is not a matter of gender but of excellence, impact and character" – a belief strongly embodied by Aleina Almeida, CEO of Meridian International Sourcing Group.

Recognized as one of our **"Top 10 Inspirational CEOs in the USA,"** Aleina has been a major driving force at the forefront of the procurement industry during the hard times of geopolitical tension, economic inflation and environmental challenges. Under her strategic leadership, Meridian International Sourcing Group, a $12 million company, has pioneered sustainable procurement practices, redefined industry standards and demonstrated that market demands can lead to innovative ecological solutions.

Aleina's journey showcases resilience and a visionary approach to turning challenges into opportunities for innovation and leadership. Her story exemplifies strategic foresight and unwavering commitment to sustainability. TradeFlock interviewed Aleina to get into the insights and strategies that set her as one of the most forward-thinking CEOs in today's evolving procurement industry.

Q How have global sourcing strategies in the Petroleum and Mining industries evolved over the past decade?

In the last ten years, global sourcing in industries like Petroleum and Mining has seen significant changes, mainly due to the increasing number of suppliers, distributors, wholesalers, and intermediaries. This crowded market has made it essential for businesses to perform thorough due diligence before finalizing transactions. At Meridian, we've implemented a Supplier Qualification program to address these challenges. This program involves rigorous due diligence and onsite visits to potential suppliers. By doing so, we minimize the risks of wasted time and financial loss, ensuring that our transactions are both safe and successful.

Q What were your biggest professional obstacles and the lessons learned from them?

The most significant hurdles in my career as a Business Owner and Entrepreneur involved navigating substantial setbacks and delays. These experiences taught me the importance of resilience—I learned to 'ride the wave' of challenges. I discovered that while the road isn't always smooth, you must remain positive and get back up when knocked down. Optimism, patience, and motivation have been my anchors during tough times. Moreover, these challenges highlighted the value of loyalty and the importance of having a dedicated team. The right team members are those who stand by you, especially when times get tough.

Q Can you share strategies used to distinguish your company in the commodity sourcing market?

One of the key strategies that set our company apart in the commodities market is our commitment to personal and in-depth engagement. As part of our rigorous Supplier Qualification Program, we not only conduct comprehensive due diligence but also perform site visits and inspections to ensure our suppliers meet our high standards and can reliably deliver. Additionally, we prioritize in-person meetings with our customers before formally beginning any business relationship. This personalized approach ensures we build strong, trustworthy, and effective partnerships.

Can you share a lesser-known critical success factor for CEOs in your industry?

A critical but often overlooked aspect of success in our industry is the value of face-to-face interactions with customers and vendors. Despite the digital shift reducing physical meetings in many companies, I believe that in-person engagements are crucial. The trust and synergy created in face-to-face meetings cannot be replicated digitally, and it is the most effective way to conduct business.

Q How are you integrating sustainable practices into your business model?

Our commitment to sustainability is reflected in our core product offerings. We specialize in selling solar panels, organic fertilizers, recyclables and raw materials, which are integral to promoting clean energy and environmentally friendly agricultural practices. By introducing customers to these sustainable technologies and products, we aim to replace traditional solutions that are harmful to both our health and the environment.

Q How do you plan the growth of your organization?

My strategy for growing Meridian involves a steadfast commitment to expanding our range of environmentally friendly products and technologies. We aim to penetrate new markets, secure more government contracts, and forge mutually beneficial partnerships. This approach will not only diversify our reach but also solidify our presence in the sustainable products sector.

Q What are your strengths and weaknesses?

While my hands-on approach is one of my greatest strengths and allows me to engage with all aspects of our operations deeply, it can sometimes lead to burnout. I am continuing to work on enhancing my leadership by prioritizing strategic oversight and empowering my team to take on more responsibilities. This continued delegation of responsibilities ensures sustainable operations at Meridian while preventing fatigue.

Q How are you giving back to society?

I have always believed that life isn't just about making money or being successful; it's about having a purpose and using it to positively impact others.

I like to give back by helping businesses in underserved countries through the Economic Development Investment Program (EDIP) I developed. The program provides entrepreneur training, workforce development, business matchmaking, and job skills training. EDIP also brings investors to underserved countries to create jobs and help create a more vibrant economy.

Q Reflecting on your journey, what advice would you give your younger self at the start of your career?

I was very tenacious and ambitious. While I really admire the fearlessness and ambition of my younger self, I would advise her to temper her enthusiasm with strategic thinking. It's important to be discerning and not rush into every opportunity. I'd tell her to be ambitious and bold but also calculated, recognizing that not every opportunity is worth pursuing.

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Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA

Building a Privacy-First Future

ARLO GILBERT

Chief Executive Officer,,
Osano

In a world where data is the new oil and privacy is the currency of trust, Arlo Gilbert stands as a beacon of visionary leadership. As the CEO and co-founder of Osano, Gilbert has not just built a company; he's architected a movement towards a safer, more transparent digital future. From humble beginnings in Austin, Texas, to leading one of the fastest-growing data privacy companies globally, Gilbert's journey is a masterclass in resilience, innovation, and ethical entrepreneurship. His story is one of audacious goals, relentless pursuit, and a deep-seated belief that privacy is not just a feature but a fundamental human right.

TODAY, OSANO SERVES OVER 750,000 COMPANIES WORLDWIDE, MANAGING MORE THAN 2.5 BILLION COOKIE POP UPS EACH MONTH— A TESTAMENT TO THE TRUST AND RELIANCE THAT BUSINESSES PLACE IN OSANO'S SOLUTIONS.

> **WE'RE NOT JUST BUILDING A COMPANY; WE'RE BUILDING A FUTURE WHERE PRIVACY IS RESPECTED AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT. AND THAT'S SOMETHING WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

A Humble Beginning with a Bold Vision

Arlo Gilbert's story is deeply rooted in his hometown of Austin, Texas, where he grew up and began his journey in the tech world. With over 25 years of experience in building software companies, Gilbert's portfolio includes ventures in diverse industries, from telecom to compliance. His most significant contribution to the tech world came in 2005 when he invented voice commerce, a breakthrough that would set the stage for his future endeavors. Despite the challenges of navigating uncharted territories, Gilbert's innovative spirit never wavered.

His entrepreneurial journey is marked by his ability to foresee the future needs of the market. Osano, the company he co-founded in 2018, was born out of a simple yet profound idea: to make data privacy compliance accessible and straightforward for businesses of all sizes. Today, Osano serves over 750,000 companies worldwide, managing more than 2.5 billion cookie pop ups each month—a testament to the trust and reliance that businesses place in Osano's solutions.

Championing Data Privacy: The Osano Journey

Under Gilbert's leadership, Osano has not only grown in terms of revenue but has also become a beacon of trust and integrity in the industry. The company's ethos is centered on transparency and the belief that privacy is a fundamental human right. Gilbert's vision for Osano was clear from the start: to build the most intuitively integrated, easy-to-use data privacy platform in the industry. This vision has guided every decision at Osano, from product development to company culture.

One of the most notable achievements under Gilbert's leadership is Osano's certification as a B-Corporation, which underscores the company's commitment to public good through improved data transparency and privacy. This certification is a rare feat in the tech industry, highlighting Gilbert's dedication to creating a company that not only leads in innovation but also stands as a model of ethical business practices.

Resilience in the Face of Challenges

Arlo Gilbert's journey has not been without its challenges. From bootstrapping Osano from $0 to $50 million in annual recurring revenue to fighting legal battles that shaped the future of technology, his path is paved with resilience. One of his most significant victories was his fight against Apple to keep jailbreaking legal— a battle that he won, ensuring that users retained control over their devices. This win is a reflection of Gilbert's broader philosophy: the belief that individuals should have control over their personal data and digital experiences.

Gilbert's approach to business is deeply human. He is a proud father and husband, and his family plays a crucial role in his life. He often credits his children and wife with teaching him how to be a better person every day. This personal touch is evident in the culture he has fostered at Osano, where employees are encouraged to bring their authentic selves to work.

A Future-Focused Leader

Looking ahead, Arlo Gilbert remains focused on the future. The recent acquisition of WireWheel, a leading provider of enterprise data privacy solutions, marks a new milestone for Osano, positioning it as an even more formidable force in the industry. Gilbert sees this as just the beginning, with many more innovations on the horizon that will continue to shape the landscape of data privacy.

In Gilbert's own words, "We're not just building a company; we're building a future where privacy is respected as a fundamental right. And that's something worth fighting for." This quote encapsulates his unwavering commitment to his mission—a mission that continues to inspire entrepreneurs and leaders across the globe.

Arlo Gilbert's story is one of innovation, integrity, and an unyielding commitment to making the world a better place, one step at a time. His leadership at Osano is not just about business success; it's about setting an example of how technology can be harnessed for the greater good.

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JOURNEY OF LEADERS

THE CEO AS CYBER CHIEF

Leading the Charge in Corporate Cyber Defense

Cybersecurity is not just a technical issue but a business imperative as well. The rapid increase in cyber threats has placed enormous pressure on organizations to protect their data and systems. PwC's 27th Global CEO Survey revealed that 42% of executives feel strongly threatened by cyber risks in the next 12 months. Nearly 70% of CEOs in the USA said they are "extremely concerned" about cyberattacks. These statistics underscore the urgency for businesses to prioritize cybersecurity.

As cyber security concerns are at an all-time high, this responsibility increasingly falls on the shoulders of those in the C-suite, particularly the CEO. The modern CEO must be a tech CEO, understanding the distinction of cybersecurity to lead the company effectively. The role of the CEO has evolved, and CEOs can no longer afford to delegate technology and cybersecurity to IT departments. CEOs need to understand the technology that powers their companies and the potential vulnerabilities that come with it.

Cybersecurity as a Business Strategy

As per Trellix's latest data, the global cost of cybercrime is to exceed $1 trillion. For CEOs, this means that cybersecurity is not just a technical issue but a significant financial concern. They must understand the economic implications of cyber threats and the importance of investing in robust cybersecurity measures. Another thing they must understand is cybersecurity is not just about risk management; it's a strategic business driver. A cyber attack can have devastating effects on a company's finances, reputation and customer trust. CEOs must ensure that cybersecurity strategies align with the company's overall business goals and objectives.

A CEO's Role in Cybersecurity

CEOs must lead by example, developing a culture of cybersecurity awareness throughout the organization. They should work closely with Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) to develop comprehensive cybersecurity strategies. This includes determining the company's risk tolerance and allocating the appropriate resources to safeguard assets. The nature of cyber threats is frequently changing since the technological landscape is constantly evolving.

CEOs must engage in continuous learning to stay ahead of the latest developments in technology and cybersecurity. This will enable them to make informed decisions and implement effective cybersecurity strategies. Cybersecurity breaches can lead to legal liabilities and reputational damage. CEOs must be aware of the legal requirements related to cybersecurity and the potential impact of a breach on the company's reputation.

42% OF EXECUTIVES FEEL STRONGLY THREATENED BY CYBER RISKS IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

~PwC's 27th Global CEO Survey

Cybersecurity and Innovation

Innovation is key to staying competitive but also introduces new cybersecurity challenges. CEOs must balance the drive for innovation with the need for security. They should encourage a culture of experimentation while ensuring that new technologies are evaluated for potential risks. However, innovation serves as both a shield and a sword. As we navigate through 2024, the cybersecurity landscape is being reshaped by Generative AI, which presents a dual-edged reality of challenges and opportunities. While GenAI's rapid evolution sparks concerns among security leaders, it also offers a chance to enhance security measures operationally In fact, cybersecurity trends suggest a shift from defending against attacks to embracing ongoing cyber risk with a focus on resilience and recovery.

CEOs must responsibly harness GenAI's potential, balancing the promise of productivity gains against the risks of prompt fatigue and security breaches. The future of cybersecurity is not just about protecting data; it's about safeguarding the integrity and provenance of information in an era when distinguishing between human and machine interactions becomes increasingly challenging.

Tech-savvy CEOs: A Dire Need of Today's Businesses

The necessity for CEOs to be tech-savvy leaders has never been greater. Cybersecurity is a critical aspect of modern business that requires the attention and understanding of every CEO. By embracing their role as tech CEOs, they can ensure their companies are secure, resilient, and prepared for the challenges of the digital world. The cybersecurity landscape demands that CEOs take an active role in their companies' technological aspects. By becoming tech CEOs, they can lead their organizations to navigate the complex world of cyber threats, ensuring the security and success of their businesses in the digital era.

Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA

AVNISH GULATI

Chief Executive Officer,
TekCapitol, Inc.

Leading Sustainable Technological Innovation with Purpose

Avnish (Avi) Gulati, the CEO and Managing Partner of TekCapitol, Inc., is a visionary leader whose approach to product engineering and technology transformation is reshaping how businesses solve their most complex challenges. With over two decades of experience in industries ranging from telecom and banking to healthcare, Avi has made it his mission to deliver practical, forward-thinking solutions that drive efficiency, agility, and customer satisfaction.

A graduate in electronics engineering from Amravati University, Avi's career trajectory was shaped by his passion for solving real-world problems through innovative technologies. His diverse experience across the IT landscape has allowed him to bring fresh perspectives to every project he oversees. Under his leadership, TekCapitol has grown into a respected global player in product engineering, with operations in Silicon Valley and Pune, India.

The TekCapitol Vision: Turning Complexity into Simplicity

One of Avi's core beliefs is that technology should simplify the complexities businesses face today.

"An ideal software engineering partner isn't just a service provider—they must offer solutions that simplify real-world problems in an unpredictable business environment,"

Avi often says. This philosophy is at the heart of TekCapitol's strategy. The company's proprietary **FAST** (Full-stack, Agile, Secure, Transformative) methodology is designed to address the full spectrum of client needs, whether modernizing legacy systems or building cloud-native solutions from the ground up.

TekCapitol's **FAST** methodology focuses on driving transformation through cutting-edge technologies like **AI, Machine Learning,** and **DevOps automation**. These tools enable the company to create flexible and scalable solutions for businesses across sectors, ensuring they remain competitive in an ever-changing digital landscape.

"We don't just want to meet the current demands of our clients; we want to give them the tools to stay ahead of the curve," Avi explains.

Client-Centric Innovation: Building the Future

At the core of TekCapitol's success is its unwavering commitment to client satisfaction. Avi believes that the best way to foster innovation is by understanding and anticipating the needs of clients. **"Technology should work for businesses, not the other way around,"** he asserts. "**That's why every solution we build is designed with the user experience in mind—from seamless security integrations to intuitive, persona-based interfaces.**"

This client-centric approach has led to the development of highly effective, secure solutions across various industries. TekCapitol's clients benefit from custom-built software that not only solves immediate business challenges but also positions them for future growth. Avi's vision of integrating **AI-enabled self-service** and secure-by-design infrastructure has allowed businesses to scale with confidence. TekCapitol's offerings in **product engineering, cloud modernization, and digital experience transformation** have made the company a trusted partner in a rapidly evolving technological environment.

Leading with a Global Perspective

Avi's global outlook has been pivotal in shaping TekCapitol's success. With offices in both the United States and India, TekCapitol blends the expertise of a diverse, talented workforce to deliver solutions that are both creative and robust. This global presence has allowed the company to develop unique insights into various industries and regions, giving TekCapitol an edge when it comes to delivering tailored solutions to its clients.

Avi's leadership style is rooted in collaboration. He fosters a work environment where his team feels empowered to take ownership of projects and drive innovation forward.

"We are a team of professionals, ready to do whatever it takes to grow your business," Avi frequently tells his team, emphasizing the importance of partnership, both internally and externally.

The Road Ahead: Innovation and Growth

Under Avi's leadership, TekCapitol continues to push boundaries in the technology space. The company is poised for further expansion, driven by its dedication to providing clients with transformative solutions that are agile, secure, and future-ready. Avi's commitment to innovation, client satisfaction, and operational excellence is ensuring that TekCapitol remains at the forefront of the industry for years to come.

Avi Gulati's vision is clear: to continue transforming businesses by delivering technological solutions that meet today's needs and prepare them for the future.

"At the end of the day, it's about creating real value—solving problems that matter," he concludes.

Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA

Founder & CEO,
Frida

Transforming Parenthood with Purpose and Passion

CHELSEA M.R. HIRSCHHORN

When Chelsea Hirschhorn became a mother, she quickly realized that the world of parenting products was full of gaps—important needs that were simply not being met. Rather than accepting the frustrations that came with this realization, she turned them into a mission to revolutionize the baby care industry. As the Founder and CEO of Frida, Chelsea didn't just create a brand; she sparked a movement that empowers parents with practical, innovative solutions for the me unpredictable realities of raising childrer With a relentless focus on empathy and authenticity, she has transformed Frida i a global ally for millions of parents, maki the journey of parenthood just a little bi easier—and a lot more honest.

THERE ARE SO MANY INTIMIDATING REALITIES TO PARENTHOOD THAT DON'T GET THE SPOTLIGHT

Turning Frustration into Innovation: The Birth of Frida

Hirschhorn's story is one of turning persc challenges into a powerful business visic As a mother of four, she encountered the same daily struggles that millions of parents face—messy, exhausting, and

FRIDABABY'S ROLE IS STEPPING IN ON THE DETAILS YOUR BEST FRIEND (VERY INNOCENTLY) LEFT OUT

often overwhelming moments that traditional products didn't address. Instead of accepting these frustrations, she channeled them into creating Frida. "There are so many intimidating realities to parenthood that don't get the spotlight," she shares. "I wanted to create tools that tackle those realities head-on." This philosophy became the foundation of Frida, a company dedicated to providing practical, effective solutions that make parenting just a little bit easier.

Revolutionizing Baby Care with Empathy and Expertise

From the now-iconic NoseFrida to an extensive range of postpartum care products, Frida's offerings are designed to solve real problems with simple, innovative solutions. Hirschhorn's approach is rooted in understanding what parents truly need, often informed by her own experiences. "Fridababy's role is stepping in on the details your best friend (very innocently) left out," she explains. This commitment to addressing the less glamorous aspects of parenting has struck a chord with families around the world, propelling Frida to become a trusted name in baby care.

I'VE BECOME AN EXPERT 'PRIORITIZER

Leading with Heart: Hirschhorn's Approach to Growth

Under Hirschhorn's leadership, Frida has grown from a startup to a brand that's available in over 30,000 stores globally. But for her, it's about more than just business success. Hirschhorn leads with a unique blend of empathy and efficiency, qualities she honed while balancing the demands of motherhood with the responsibilities of running a fast-growing company. "I've become an expert 'prioritizer,'" she says, reflecting on how motherhood has shaped her approach to leadership. This ability to prioritize what truly matters has been key to her success, both at home and in the boardroom.

Empowering Parents Worldwide: The Frida Impact

Frida's impact goes beyond products—it's about changing the conversation around parenthood. Hirschhorn has made it her mission to demystify the often challenging and unspoken aspects of raising children. Under her guidance, Frida was named one of TIME's 100 Most Influential Companies of 2024, a testament to the brand's global influence and Hirschhorn's visionary leadership. Her dedication to empowering parents through innovation and support continues to inspire, proving that with passion and purpose, it's possible to make a profound difference in the lives of millions.

Chelsea Hirschhorn's journey is a powerful reminder that the best innovations often come from a place of empathy and real-world experience. By addressing the real challenges of parenthood with honesty and creativity, she has not only built a successful business but has also created a lasting impact on families around the world.

BIG TAKE

LEAD WITH TRUST

Dr. Elliott Q. Gomez,
Major, USA, Retired, LSSBB, CDEI

THE ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGY FOR THRIVING IN TOUGH TIMES

Leaders cannot command trust; they can only build it through what they say and do and how they act, speak, and behave towards others. A sincere leader keeps their word and cares about the people they lead – building trust from the top down and throughout their organizations. In the case of an authentic leader, the deed reinforces the credibility of the word. Their behavior clears up the ambiguity and answers what to do when it gets challenging.

When leaders are called upon to deliver bad news or be challenged in their role, this is the time that the stakeholders and the wider community will be harshest. Every communication and subsequent action will either entrench that roll-of-the-dice approach or build a belief in you and what you must deliver. So, what should leaders do? They should focus on deep and frank communication. What is happening? Why is this decision being made? What is this complexity, and how are we so optimistic we can pull through? Can you take a step back and praise and appreciate the team's work?

At least as necessary is listening and asking for input, which good leaders also do, demonstrating the theory that the output must be sought to be delivered. In listening, the leader shows respect, identification with, and empathy for the employee, as well as building connections and learning about the employee's perspective, issues, and needs. The employee's sense of ownership, commitment, and trust is embedded in the listening quotient (Brown & Treviño, 2021).

In sum, empirical evidence supports the critical role that trust-based leadership can play in times of crisis. Leaders' trustworthiness significantly predicts the performance of their organizations at large and with strength under unfavorable circumstances. For example, a study found that leaders' general trustworthiness robustly predicted collective performance across diverse organizations, especially under volatile conditions. Because of the trust-based bonds that they create with employees, leaders can elicit more significant collective effort from their teams, keep them motivated, and direct their energy towards resilient performance despite adversity. Trust also means that employees will be more likely to initiate inventive solutions and take more risks.

Good leaders lead from the front, great leaders lead from the crowd, exceptional leaders lead from the heart!

Leaders must conduct themselves trustworthy and periodically check in with their people to see and respond to their shifting needs. If leaders believe that trust will stand on its own, they might find that the soil for the trust that they relied on has been washed away.

TRADEFLOCK™

JOURNEY OF LEADERS

Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA

Founder and CEO,

Expensify

From Passionate Programmer to Visionary CEO

DAVID BARRETT

David Barrett's journey from a small-town programmer to the CEO of a billion-dollar fintech company is nothing short of extraordinary. Born in Saginaw, Michigan, Barrett discovered his passion for coding at the age of six—a passion that would eventually lead him to revolutionize how businesses manage their expenses. With a degree in computer engineering from the University of Michigan, Barrett's early career was marked by innovation in virtual reality and 3D graphics, setting the stage for his future success.

Reflecting on his path, Barrett often shares, "The best ideas come from the most unexpected places." This belief in serendipity and innovation would soon guide him to create one of the most influential platforms in financial technology.

WE DIDN'T JUST WANT TO MAKE EXPENSE REPORTS EASIER; WE WANTED TO MAKE THEM ENJOYABLE.

Expensify: From a Simple Idea to a Billion-Dollar Revolution

In 2008, after stints in the video game industry and at the peer-to-peer file-sharing company Red Swoosh, Barrett founded Expensify in San Francisco. What began as an idea for a prepaid debit card to help the homeless morphed into a revolutionary expense management platform after banks rejected the initial concept. Barrett's pivot led to the creation of Expensify, a tool designed to simplify the complex and often tedious process of managing business expenses.

Expensify's first major breakthrough was the introduction of SmartScan, a feature that allowed users to capture and transcribe receipts easily. Barrett's goal was clear: "We didn't just want to make expense reports easier; we wanted to make them enjoyable." This innovation resonated with businesses globally, propelling Expensify to over 12 million users across more than 200,000 companies.

Today, Expensify is valued at approximately $3.87 billion, and Barrett remains at the helm, steering the company towards new horizons.

Leading with Purpose: Blending Innovation and Social Responsibility

Barrett's leadership is marked not only by technological innovation but also by a deep commitment to social responsibility. "Businesses have a duty to be a force for good in the world," Barrett asserts. This philosophy led to the creation of the Expensify Card and its Karma Points program, where 10% of every transaction's revenue is donated to causes like climate justice, food security, and housing equity.

In 2020, Barrett made headlines for his bold political stance, urging Expensify's users to vote in the U.S. Presidential election. His declaration that "In a democracy, there's no such thing as being apolitical" underscored his belief that corporate leaders have a responsibility to influence positive change.

AT THE END OF THE DAY, IT'S ABOUT SOLVING PROBLEMS THAT MATTER.

Under Barrett's guidance, Expensify went public in November 2021, marking another milestone in the company's journey. The IPO not only solidified Expensify's position in the fintech world but also demonstrated Barrett's unwavering commitment to growth and innovation.

Empowering the Future: A Legacy of Innovation and Integrity

David Barrett's leadership goes beyond financial success; it is about using that success to make a difference in the world. Today, Expensify operates on four continents, yet Barrett remains deeply involved, ensuring that the company's growth is aligned with its mission to solve real-world problems.

"At the end of the day, it's about solving problems that matter," Barrett often says—a mantra that has guided his career and continues to inspire those around him. As Expensify continues to evolve, Barrett's influence as a visionary leader will undoubtedly leave a lasting impact on both the fintech industry and the broader global community.

Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA

DREW UHER

Founder & CEO,
HomeLight

Simplifying Real Estate for Americans

Steering the U.S. real estate market can often feel like crossing a maze of complexities, inefficiencies, and a glaring lack of transparency. Buyers and sellers frequently encounter complex processes, from finding a trustworthy agent to securing financing and closing deals. These challenges are compounded by opaque practices and inconsistent service quality, leaving many overwhelmed and uncertain. Having experienced these hurdles firsthand, Drew Uher envisioned a solution to simplify and streamline the real estate journey. By founding HomeLight, he introduced a data-driven platform that matches clients with top-performing agents, offers competitive mortgage options, and ensures seamless closings. This innovative approach simplifies transactions and instils confidence and clarity, transforming the real estate experience into trust and efficiency.

From Finance to Real Estate Innovation

Drew has revolutionised the industry with his innovative approach, seamlessly blending technology with real estate to create an inspiring experience for buyers and sellers. His professional journey began in the finance sector. He graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in Finance, which laid the foundation for his analytical and strategic thinking. His early career saw him working at Morgan Stanley, where he honed his skills in financial analysis and business development. This experience gave him a deep understanding of market dynamics and the importance of data-driven decision-making.

Building a Strong Foundation

Before venturing into the world of real estate technology, Uher held significant roles in various organizations. At PubMatic, a digital advertising technology company, he served as a Business Development Manager. Here, he was instrumental in driving growth and forging key partnerships. His tenure at PubMatic expanded his business acumen and exposed him to the transformative power of technology in traditional industries.

The Birth of HomeLight

The idea for HomeLight was born out of Uher's personal experience. When he and his wife were buying their first home, they encountered numerous challenges, from finding a reliable real estate agent to navigating the complexities of the transaction process. This experience highlighted the real estate market's inefficiencies and lack of transparency. Determined to address these issues, Uher founded HomeLight in 2012.

HomeLight's mission is to empower people to make smarter decisions when buying or selling homes. The platform uses data and technology to match clients with top-performing real estate agents, ensuring a smoother and more efficient process. Under Uher's leadership, HomeLight has expanded its services to include mortgage solutions, cash offers, and closing services, making it a one-stop shop for real estate transactions.

> HomeLight's success is evident in its impressive growth metrics. The company partners with over 28,000 agents across the United States and has facilitated billions of dollars in real estate transactions.

Elevating USA's Real Estate Game

As the CEO of HomeLight, Drew Uher has significantly impacted the real estate industry. His innovative approach has simplified the home buying and selling process and brought greater transparency and trust to the market. HomeLight's success is evident in its impressive growth metrics. The company partners with over 28,000 agents across the United States and has facilitated billions of dollars in real estate transactions.

His commitment to innovation and customer-centricity characterises Uher's leadership style. He believes in leveraging technology to solve real-world problems and constantly explores ways to enhance HomeLight's offerings. His vision has positioned HomeLight as a leader in the real estate tech space, earning the company numerous accolades and a loyal customer base.

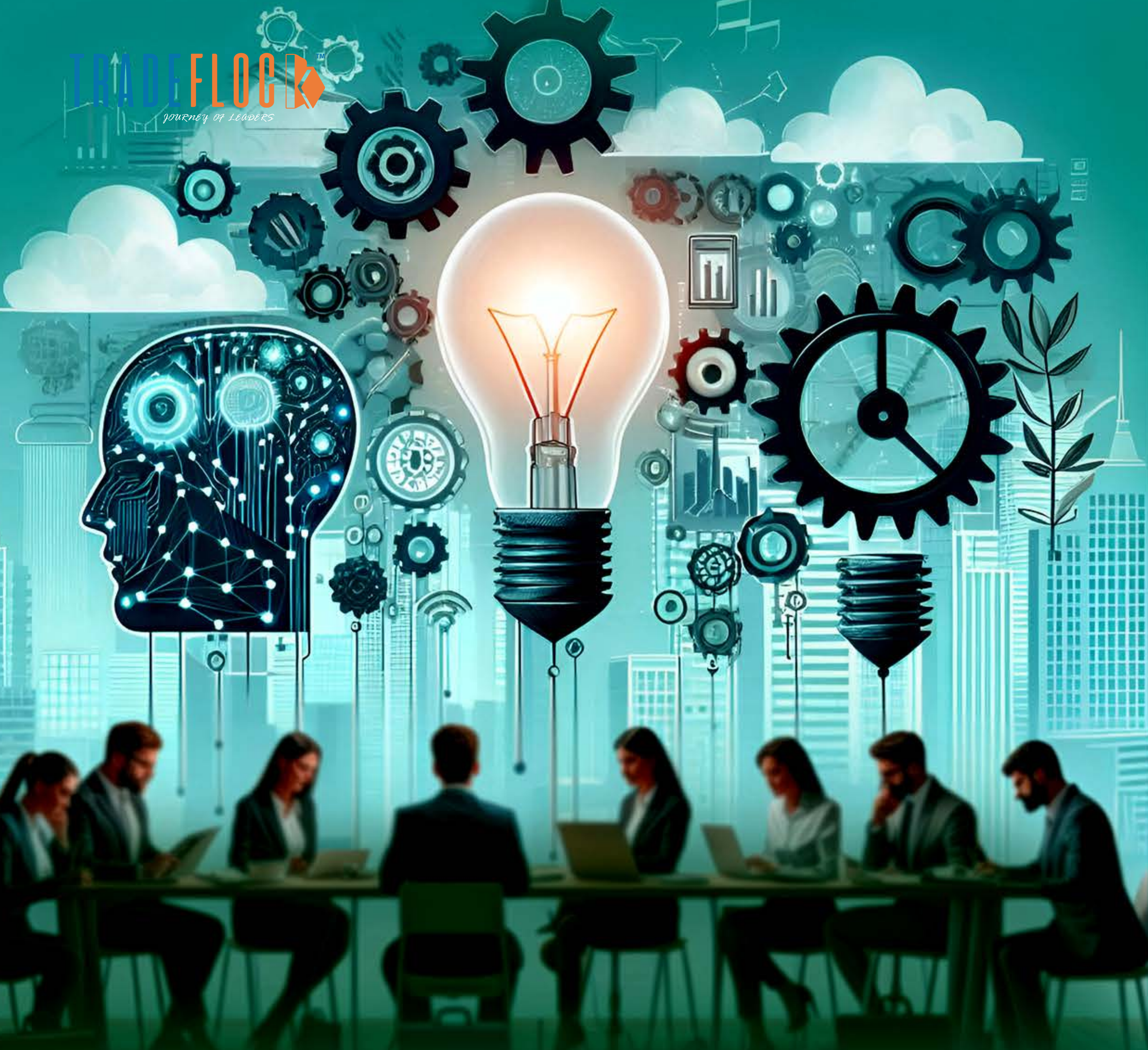
Celebrating Achievements

Drew Uher's contributions to the real estate industry have not gone unnoticed. Inman News recognized him as one of the 100 Most Influential Leaders in Real Estate, and HousingWire named him a Tech Trendsetter in 2019. These awards reflect his dedication to innovation and his impact on the industry. Additionally, HomeLight has been featured in various prestigious lists, including the Inc. 5000, which highlights the fastest-growing private companies in America.

And the Journey Continues

Drew Uher's journey from finance professional to pioneering tech entrepreneur is a story of vision, perseverance, and innovation. As the Founder and CEO of HomeLight, he has revolutionised the real estate industry, making it more transparent, efficient, and customer-friendly. His achievements inspire aspiring entrepreneurs and testify to the power of technology in transforming traditional industries.

With HomeLight continuing to grow and evolve, the future looks bright for Drew Uher and his mission to redefine real estate. His story reminds us that with the right vision and determination, one can turn personal challenges into opportunities for innovation and success.



FROM FIXED TO FLEXIBLE

Adopting a Growth Mindset in the Workplace

Adaptability and innovation must be prioritized to stay ahead in today's cutthroat business competition. It necessitates a culture that focuses on continuous learning and development. Unfortunately, many companies focus only on assessing an individual's skills and qualifications, neglecting the crucial aspect of their mindset and willingness to learn and grow. From sports personalities to top business performers, the idea of mindset is well-known. In today's corporate world, where business success is as crucial as business survival, cultivating the right mindset throughout the organization and among your staff is vital.

Several companies have successfully implemented growth mindset cultures and reaped the benefits. For instance, Microsoft has embraced a growth mindset under

CEO Satya Nadella's leadership. The company encourages employees to learn from their mistakes and continuously improve, leading to significant innovation and growth. Similarly, Google promotes a culture of continuous learning and development. The company offers various programs and resources to help employees expand their skills and knowledge. This focus on growth has contributed to Google's success as a leading tech company.

The Concept

Psychologist Carol Dweck introduced the term "growth mindset" to revolutionize the educational process. She and her team noticed that while some students were easily discouraged by minor setbacks, others could bounce back from failure and persist. Although the growth mindset concept was initially intended to transform teaching methods in schools, it can also be applied to various other fields.

A growth mindset is the belief that dedication and hard work can develop abilities and intelligence. It contrasts with a fixed mindset, where individuals believe their talents are innate and unchangeable. Employees with a growth mindset are more likely to embrace challenges, learn from feedback, and persist in facing setbacks. This attitude benefits individual employees and contributes to a more dynamic and resilient organization.

The Impact

A growth mindset helps businesses become more innovative regarding their products or services. A Forbes study reveals that companies with a growth mindset culture are 49% more likely to promote innovation. In a company with a growth mindset culture, employees feel encouraged to experiment and take risks, knowing that failures are seen as learning opportunities rather than setbacks. According to the Harvard Business Review, employees in growth-oriented companies are 65%

more likely to say their company promotes risk-taking.

A company culture with a growth mindset helps create a collaborative environment where employees are more open to sharing ideas and working together to solve problems. This leads to more effective teamwork and a stronger sense of community within the company. The organization's leadership plays a crucial role in developing a culture of growth mindset since it requires intentional effort and commitment from leadership.

Applying Growth Mindset to the Business

In a Stanford alumni magazine article, Carol Dweck discussed how a growth mindset impacts businesses. Here are two key ways to apply a growth mindset in your business:

1. **Accept Mistakes**
   In her article, Carol highlighted Enron's collapse, which involved a focus on talent and intelligence that led employees to hide mistakes. In a growth mindset culture, mistakes are seen as learning opportunities. Team members are encouraged to admit errors and improve. As a leader, embrace failures as learning moments and promote this attitude within your team.

2. **Focus on Skill Development**
   Leaders with a growth mindset invest in programs to enhance skills, leading to more engaged and effective employees. This approach is more beneficial than merely ticking boxes on performance reviews. Carol's research found that fixed-mindset companies had employees more concerned with failure, leading to cheating and secrecy. In contrast, growth-mindset companies had more positive supervisors and collaborative, innovative employees.

Developing a growth mindset within your organization can lead to increased innovation, higher employee engagement, better performance, and enhanced collaboration. Business leaders and managers can develop a dynamic and resilient workplace by encouraging learning, promoting a positive attitude toward challenges, providing constructive feedback, leading by example, creating a culture of collaboration, and recognizing growth. In today's competitive business environment, a growth mindset is not just a nice-to-have trait but a necessity. By investing in the development of your employees and creating a supportive culture, you can ensure your company thrives and achieves long-term success

TRADEFLOCK
JOURNEY OF LEADERS

Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA

Co-Founder and CEO,
Esper

Leading a Policy Revolution with Esper

MALEKA MOMAND

As the Co-Founder and CEO of **Esper**, Maleka Momand has redefined how governments manage and create public policy through technology. Esper's innovative platform has rapidly become a cornerstone for more than 60 government agencies, including high-profile clients such as the NYPD and the State of Kentucky, by streamlining the complex process of policy drafting, review, and collaboration.

Born in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and raised in a household that valued curiosity and education, Momand was a standout student at the University of Central Arkansas, where she graduated summa cum laude with a degree in Political Science and Interdisciplinary Studies. Her academic background laid the foundation for her future success, blending political theory with the practical demands of real-world governance. Her professors described her as assertive, engaged, and destined for significant achievements, and they were proven right as she emerged as a key figure in GovTech.

The Birth of Esper: A Vision for Smarter Governance

Momand's journey began in San Francisco, where she worked at a venture capital firm. While there, she saw how regulations often became roadblocks for innovative startups. This experience ignited her interest in how policies were created and managed, revealing a lack of technology to streamline these processes. "I realized there was no technology to manage it," she recalls, speaking about her eureka moment. "There's a need for transparency and efficiency in how policies are created and managed." This insight led to the founding of Esper in 2018.

Esper's platform fills a critical gap, enabling government agencies to manage the entire lifecycle of policy—drafting, collaboration, public feedback, and approval—on one seamless platform. One of the key innovations Esper introduced was data-driven policymaking, which allows agencies to track the effectiveness of policies over time, providing insights into what works and what needs to be improved. "At the end of the day, it's about making policies that work for the people they're meant to serve," Momand explains.

Leading with Collaboration and Empowerment

Momand's leadership style is as innovative as her company. She fosters a culture of trust and autonomy, where every team member has the freedom to lead and make decisions. "I believe in bottom-up decision-making," says Momand, "because the best solutions

"I BELIEVE IN BOTTOM-UP DECISION-MAKING BECAUSE THE BEST SOLUTIONS COME FROM THOSE CLOSEST TO THE PROBLEM"

"GOVERNMENT PROCESSES AFFECT EVERYONE, SO THEY SHOULD BE EFFICIENT, TRANSPARENT, AND BUILT TO SOLVE REAL-WORLD PROBLEMS"

come from those closest to the problem." This leadership approach has not only empowered her team at Esper but also helped the company grow from a startup to a key player in the GovTech space.

Her partnership with co-founder Lilli Oetting is also unconventional. "We didn't know each other very well before starting the company, but that actually helped us," she says. "We were able to challenge each other's ideas without any personal bias, which I think strengthened our decision-making process." This collaborative spirit has been key to the rapid success Esper has enjoyed.

The Impact and Future of Esper

Since its inception, Esper has expanded its reach to over 60 government agencies, including major state and local governments across the U.S. By introducing modern, cloud-based tools for policy management, Esper has brought much-needed transparency and efficiency to a system often bogged down by bureaucracy. In 2022, both Momand and Oetting were recognized for their impact on the industry when they were named to Forbes' 30 Under 30 in the social impact category.

Momand's vision for the future is clear. "We want Esper to be the operating system for all policymaking," she says, emphasizing the company's goal to transform how governments work. "Government processes affect everyone, so they should be efficient, transparent, and built to solve real-world problems." Esper continues to push boundaries, and under Momand's leadership, it's well on its way to becoming a defining player in government technology.

TRADEFLOCK
JOURNEY OF LEADERS

Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA

Co-Founder and CEO,
Canva

Crafting a Design Revolution with Canva

MELANIE PERKINS

Melanie Perkins stands out as a visionary leader in the dynamic world of technology and design. As the Co-Founder and CEO of Canva, she has revolutionized how people create and share visual content. Her journey from a university student with a simple idea to the CEO of a billion-dollar company is a testament to her creativity, perseverance, and entrepreneurial spirit.

Background: From Perth to the World Stage

Melanie Perkins was born and raised in Perth, Australia. Her early life was infused with creativity and ambition, qualities that would later define her career. Perkins pursued her education at the University of Western Australia, where she studied communications, psychology, and commerce. During her time at university, she first encountered the challenges of designing software. Teaching fellow students how to use complex programs like Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, she realized there was a significant gap in the market for a simpler, more accessible design tool.

Early Ventures: The Seeds of Entrepreneurship

Perkins' entrepreneurial journey began long before Canva. As a teenager, she started her first business designing and selling handmade scarves. This early venture taught her valuable lessons about business and customer needs. However, her experience with design software sparked the idea for Canva. She and co-founder Cliff Obrecht launched her first startup, Fusion Books, an online tool for creating school yearbooks. The success of Fusion Books provided the foundation and confidence to pursue a larger vision.

Founding Canva: The Birth of a Design Revolution

The idea for Canva was born out of a desire to democratize design. Perkins and Obrecht envisioned a platform that would make design accessible to everyone, regardless of their technical skills. However, turning this vision into reality was no easy feat. They faced numerous rejections from investors who doubted the potential of their idea. Undeterred, Perkins and her team continued to refine their product and pitch their vision.

In 2013, Canva was officially launched. The platform offered an intuitive drag-and-drop interface, a vast library of templates, and a collaborative design environment. It quickly gained traction, attracting millions of users who appreciated its simplicity and power. Canva's mission to empower the world to design resonated with individuals and businesses alike, propelling the company to rapid growth.

"Under her leadership, Canva has grown to serve over 60 million users per month across 190 countries. The platform has expanded its offerings to include various design tools, from social media graphics to presentations and marketing materials"

Impact as a Founder and CEO: Leading with Vision and Innovation

As the CEO of Canva, Melanie Perkins has profoundly impacted the design industry. Under her leadership, Canva has grown to serve over 60 million users per month across 190 countries. The platform has expanded its offerings to include various design tools, from social media graphics to presentations and marketing materials. Perkins' commitment to innovation and user-centric design has positioned Canva as a leader in the tech industry.

Perkins's leadership style is characterized by her focus on inclusivity and empowerment. She believes in creating a supportive and collaborative work environment where every team member can thrive. This approach has fostered a strong company culture and driven Canva's success. Perkins' vision extends beyond business growth; she is passionate about using technology to positively impact society.

Awards and Recognition: Celebrating Achievements

Melanie Perkins' achievements have been widely recognized. She has been named one of the youngest female CEOs of a tech startup valued at over A$1 billion. In 2023, she ranked 89th in Forbes' list of "World's 100 Most Powerful Women" and 92nd in Fortune's list of Most Powerful Women. These accolades reflect her influence and leadership in the tech industry. Additionally, Canva has received numerous awards for its innovative approach and rapid growth, including featured in the Inc. 5000 list of fastest-growing private companies.

A Remarkable Journey as a CEO

Melanie Perkins' journey from a university student with a bold idea to the CEO of a global tech company is a story of vision, resilience, and innovation. As the Co-Founder and CEO of Canva, she has transformed the design landscape, making it accessible to millions worldwide. Her achievements serve as an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs and a testament to the power of creativity and determination. With Canva continuing to evolve and expand, the future looks bright for Melanie Perkins and her mission to democratize design. Her story is a reminder that with the right vision and perseverance, one can turn challenges into opportunities and create lasting impact.

Top 10 Inspirational CEOs USA

TADEU CARNEIRO

Chief Executive Officer,

Boston Metal

A VISIONARY LEADER POWERING THE GREEN STEEL REVOLUTION

In an industry as critical and carbon-intensive as steel, one leader is making waves with a bold vision for the future—Tadeu Carneiro, CEO of Boston Metal. Carneiro isn't just steering a company; he's at the forefront of a revolution that could fundamentally transform how steel is made, helping to decarbonize one of the world's most essential materials. With a career spanning nearly five decades, Carneiro brings unparalleled expertise and a relentless drive to innovate, proving that leadership in the metals industry can also mean leadership in sustainability.

From Niobium Success to Global Green Steel Leader

Tadeu Carneiro's journey to becoming a key figure in the fight against climate change started long before he joined Boston Metal. As the former CEO of CBMM, the world's top niobium producer, Carneiro led the company to remarkable success, growing its revenue from $100 million to over $2 billion and expanding the global niobium market by 800%. This experience laid the groundwork for his next challenge—revolutionizing the steel industry with Boston Metal's groundbreaking technology.

OUR PLANET'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON INNOVATION

Carneiro asserts, a belief that has driven his leadership at Boston Metal. Since taking the helm in 2017, he has guided the company through rapid growth, securing over $370 million in funding and positioning Boston Metal as a leader in the green steel movement.

Redefining Steel Production: The MOE Technology

Boston Metal, under Carneiro's leadership, has developed Molten Oxide Electrolysis (MOE), a revolutionary technology that eliminates carbon emissions from the steelmaking process. In an industry responsible for nearly 10% of global CO_2 emissions, this innovation could be game-changing. Carneiro's vision for MOE is clear: to decarbonize steel production at a scale large enough to make a significant impact on global emissions.

"Our technology is designed to disrupt the industry and support a net-zero economy," Carneiro explains. The potential of MOE has already attracted significant attention, with major investments from industry giants like ArcelorMittal and recognition from TIME as one of the 100 Most Influential Companies of 2024.

Global Impact and Future Vision

Beyond the United States, Carneiro's influence extends globally, with the establishment of Boston Metal do Brasil in 2022. This subsidiary focuses on extracting valuable metals from mining waste, further advancing the company's mission to make metals production more sustainable and profitable.

Carneiro's leadership has earned Boston Metal numerous accolades, including being named North American Company of the Year by the Cleantech Group in 2023. Yet, for Carneiro, these achievements are just the beginning. His unwavering commitment to innovation and sustainability continues to drive Boston Metal forward, positioning the company as a critical player in the global transition to a greener economy.

INNOVATION IS OUR GREATEST WEAPON IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

Carneiro believes, a sentiment that encapsulates his approach to leadership and his vision for the future of the steel industry. Under his guidance, Boston Metal is not just changing how steel is made—it's setting a new standard for how industries can lead the way to a sustainable future.

THE PROMISE AND PERILS OF AI-LED OPERATIONS

AI technologies, such as machine learning and generative AI, are revolutionizing business operations. They automate repetitive tasks, provide deep insights from vast data sets, and enhance decision-making processes. For instance, AI can predict market trends, optimize supply chains, and personalize customer experiences, leading to increased productivity and profitability.

Despite the benefits, AI-led operations come with substantial risks. A recent MIT Sloan Management Review and Boston Consulting Group report highlights that over 70% of organizations struggle to keep up with the rapid advancement in AI. This struggle often leads to significant risks, especially when companies rely heavily on third-party AI tools. In fact, 55% of AI-related failures stem from these third-party tools.

The Risks Involved

AI systems require vast amounts of data to function effectively. However, ensuring the integrity and security of this data is a major challenge. Cyberattacks targeting AI systems can lead to data breaches, financial losses, and reputational damage. Accountability and trust is another issue involved in AI-led operations. Many AI models operate as "black boxes," making it difficult to understand how they arrive at specific decisions. It's crucial for businesses to strive to understand these processes, as this lack of transparency can hinder accountability and trust. As AI technologies evolve, so do the regulations governing their use. Companies must navigate a complex landscape of compliance requirements, which can be both time-consuming and costly.

Mitigating the Risks

To harness the benefits of AI while minimizing risks, organizations must adopt robust risk management strategies, including investing in Responsible AI programs, regular audits and monitoring, and regular training.

A BCG report reveals that Companies with strong RAI programs report 58% more business benefits than those without. These programs focus on ethical AI development, transparency, and accountability. Another aspect of risk mitigation is the continuous monitoring and auditing of AI systems, which can help identify and mitigate risks early. Additionally, employing multiple evaluation methods increases the likelihood of uncovering potential issues. Moreover, it is crucial for companies to educate employees about AI risks and best practices. This ensures that everyone in the organization understands their role in maintaining AI integrity and security.

AI-led operations offer immense potential for growth and innovation. However, the associated risks cannot be ignored. Organizations can navigate these challenges by implementing comprehensive risk management strategies and developing a culture of responsible AI use. Ultimately, the key lies in balancing the promise of AI with the need for caution and responsibility.

Lifeboats

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ABZLGA210

Your support saves lives, and we look forward to keeping in touch with you by post and phone, sharing our news, activities and appeals.

Would you like to receive our emails and text messages too?

☐ **Yes,** I'm happy to hear from you by email

☐ **Yes,** I'm happy to hear from you by text

Even if you have received our communications in the past, we'll make sure we honour the preferences you express here.

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