

# Leadership, Structure, and Judgement in an Age of **Workforce Transformation**



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## **FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK**



Dear Reader,

Workforce transformation today is less about adopting AI and more about judgement: who decides, how authority is distributed, and where accountability sits as organisations navigate technological change and uncertainty. Leadership effectiveness is increasingly defined by the quality of decisions made at the point of action.

This edition draws on ISB's knowledge repository to examine decision-making across organisational contexts. It considers how leaders respond to uncertainty in deep-tech investments, why performance varies within diversified business groups, and how authority and execution at the business-unit level shape outcomes. The issue also examines shifts in organisational governance, from co-CEO models to performance appraisal systems, as organisations reassess accountability and trust under growing complexity.

At ISB Executive Education and Digital Learning, we view workforce transformation as a leadership challenge shaped by structure, incentives, and judgement. Our programmes integrate research and practice to support leaders navigating these shifts.

We hope this edition offers perspectives that meaningfully inform your work.

**Warm regards,**

Team Executive Perspectives

# Articles

## The Rise of the Dual Boss: Can Two CEOs Run a Company Better Than One?

Single-leader models are struggling to keep pace with global scale, rapid technology shifts, and constant transformation. Drawing on examples from Spotify, Comcast, and Oracle, this article examines why companies are turning to co-CEOs and when shared authority can deliver sharper decisions, greater resilience, and smoother succession in high-complexity environments.



## Are Annual Performance Reviews Still Relevant in 2026?

As organisations reset talent priorities in 2026, leaders are questioning whether annual reviews still support meaningful performance and growth. This article examines why the model is faltering and what senior executives should weigh as they shift to continuous, data-informed approaches.



## Breaking Down What Truly Defines Great Leadership

Disruption and rising stakeholder expectations are redefining what leaders must deliver. This article examines ten essential capabilities that distinguish effective leadership in today's environment, from emotional and cultural intelligence to adaptability and strategic decision-making. It provides a clear rationale for why these skills matter now and offers a concise framework for leaders seeking to remain credible, resilient, and prepared for emerging challenges.



## 10 Leadership Traits That Set Successful Leaders Apart

Effective leadership is defined by clarity of purpose, sound judgement, and the ability to bring people along. This article identifies 10 core leadership traits that distinguish successful leaders, including integrity, accountability, communication, and emotional intelligence. It offers a clear view of the behaviours that enable leaders to build trust, align teams, and deliver results in increasingly complex organisational environments.





# Industry Bytes



## Future-Proofing India's Financial Services Workforce

In this episode of Industry Bytes, Kripa Krishnamoorthy, SVP – Asia Talent Strategy at Synchrony, discusses how organisations can build leadership and talent that is resilient to fast-paced technological disruptions and be better equipped for an AI-enabled workplace.

Watch this video for a concise look at leading change with empathy, supporting employees through role transitions, and cultivating learning-driven cultures.



# ISB Discover

Where Research Meets Real-World Decisions



ISB's research-driven knowledge portal, ISB Discover, translates faculty scholarship into insight leaders can use. Designed to bring ideas from journals into boardrooms, policy rooms, and strategy conversations, it spans Leadership & Organisations, Strategy & Innovation, Finance & Accounting, Economics & Public Policy, Operations & Logistics, Marketing, and Technology, across formats that privilege clarity over theory and application over abstraction.

Much of this quarter's research examines how organisations are rethinking work as roles evolve, skills shift, and decision-making moves closer to the front line. The focus is on how leaders allocate authority, build capability, and sustain performance as organisational models change.

## Articles

### **New Evidence on What Makes Performance Vary in Business Groups – ISB Research**

Performance variation in business groups is often attributed to corporate strategy, scale, or group-level synergies. New research led by Professor Sougata Ray shows that the largest performance differences emerge at the business-unit level.

Performance improves when attention moves closer to where work is managed, through unit-level leadership, operating choices, and everyday decisions.



### **A Simple Guide to Navigating Deep Tech Innovation and Uncertainty**

Most deep-tech initiatives fail not because funding dries up, but because leaders misdiagnose uncertainty. Professor Rajendra Srivastava presents a decision framework that distinguishes between technological uncertainty, market uncertainty, and their interaction a distinction that increasingly shapes how firms invest, staff, and sequence innovation efforts.



## C-suite Programmes

### ISB-NUS Global Advanced Management Programme

Feb 22 - Jun 28, 2026

The ISB-NUS Global Advanced Management Programme, in partnership with NUS Singapore, delivers advanced leadership development with rigorous strategic insight across data, AI, technology, sustainability, and regulation. Grounded in global, real-world challenges, it equips leaders to make high-stakes decisions, optimise capital allocation, and build durable competitive advantage in complex, interconnected markets worldwide.



### Senior Management Programme

Feb 21, 2026 - March 10, 2027

The Senior Management Programme helps leaders strengthen decision-making using AI, shape strategies for India's unique markets, and lead digital change responsibly. Through real-world business challenges, leadership assessments, ethical governance, and board engagement, participants are prepared to navigate complexity, manage risk, and deliver sustainable enterprise value with confidence.







## General Management Programme

Mar 22, 2026 - Jan 19, 2027

The General Management Programme helps high-calibre executives accelerate their leadership journey and assume broader strategic responsibility. It strengthens strategic thinking beyond functional silos, builds multidisciplinary perspectives, and harnesses the digital economy. Through collaborative learning and real-world challenges, participants learn to navigate complexity, drive innovation, and create sustained organisational impact value.

## Chief Growth and Marketing Officer Programme

Mar 15, 2026 - Jan 13, 2027

The Chief Growth and Marketing Officer Programme develops marketing and growth leaders through behavioural science, economics, and analytics. Participants build deep customer-centricity, decode evolving preferences, and strengthen performance across channels. The programme emphasises AI, digital transformation, and brand leadership, preparing executives to drive sustainable growth in domestic and global markets.





# Executive Programmes

## Women's Leadership Programme

Mar 29 - Aug 3, 2026

The Women's Leadership Programme (WLP) addresses the persistent underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, providing them with the necessary competencies to overcome unique challenges.

## Emerging Leaders Programme

Mar 22 - Nov 23, 2026

The Emerging Leaders Programme (ELP) is designed to develop a new generation of leaders equipped with technical proficiency and exceptional interpersonal skills to thrive in the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

## Executive Programme in Business Management

Mar 22, 2026 | 32 Weeks

Expand your leadership impact beyond functional boundaries. This programme helps professionals build strategic thinking, data fluency, and cross-functional agility to make informed decisions, lead teams effectively, and drive business growth with confidence.



# Certificate Programmes

## Business Storytelling and Executive Presence

Feb 22 - 24, 2026

The Business Storytelling and Executive Presence programme is crafted to empower executives and leaders with the art of storytelling, enabling you to build connections, inspire action, and establish a leadership presence that stands out.

## Digital Business Transformation with AI

Mar 22, 2026 | 25 Weeks

Gain expertise in emerging technologies like AI, Blockchain, IoT, and Cybersecurity. This programme equips you with the knowledge to integrate these innovations into business operations effectively.

## AI in Business: Fundamentals to Applications

Mar 22, 2026 | 20 Weeks

Learn AI fundamentals, generative AI, and ethical AI practices. Gain hands-on experience with tools like GPT, Llama, and DALL-E to enhance decision-making, streamline processes, and drive innovation.

## Strategy Formulation and Execution

Feb 19 - 21, 2026

The Strategy Formulation and Execution programme empowers leaders to craft and implement resilient strategies that anticipate market shifts, align resources, and navigate complexity effectively. Refine your strategic acumen to ensure your vision is executed with clarity and drives lasting competitive advantage.

## Mastering Executive Presence

Mar 22, 2026 | 15 Weeks

Enhance leadership potential by mastering self-awareness, storytelling, and personal branding. This programme equips executives to project influence, inspire stakeholders, and navigate complex business settings with confidence.

## Leadership Essentials

Mar 22, 2026 | 20 Weeks

Develop a dynamic leadership style to lead decisively. This programme enhances self-leadership, stakeholder engagement, team performance, and agility, equipping you to navigate workplace challenges effectively.

## Business Strategy

Mar 22, 2026 | 22 Weeks

Strengthen strategic acumen and innovative thinking. This programme equips you with tools to formulate and execute business strategies, navigate disruptions, and drive long-term success.

## Project Management

Mar 22, 2026 | 24 Weeks

Lead projects with precision and agility. This programme equips professionals with the frameworks and tools to manage complexity, mitigate risks, and deliver impactful results in dynamic business environments.

# Custom Solutions for Enterprises



## Kotak

### Leadership Vanguard Programme

October 1 - 5, 2025

Designed for senior leaders at Kotak Mahindra Bank, the Leadership Vanguard Programme focused on strengthening strategic thinking, leadership influence, and execution excellence. Through immersive classroom discussions, peer learning, and experiential formats, participants explored frameworks for navigating complexity, leading transformation, and aligning stakeholders to drive sustained institutional impact.



## Nasscomm x Optum

### LeadHERship Next: Building the Future of Women's Leadership in GCCs

November 29 - 30, 2025

The programme brought together senior women leaders from Global Capability Centres across India to strengthen strategic influence, executive presence, and decision-making. Designed as an intensive learning journey, the programme combined faculty-led insights with collaborative learning to help participants navigate complexity, lead with confidence, and translate emerging technologies into business impact.



## CHRO Dialogues

November 27, 2025

The CHRO Dialogues at ISB Hyderabad convened senior HR leaders to reflect on the evolving mandate of HR leadership amid shifting workforce dynamics. Faculty-led discussions explored the role of people analytics, AI-enabled decision-making, and skills-based organisational models, alongside the human dimensions of leadership, including influence, collaboration, and empathy in an increasingly technology-driven workplace.



# Custom Solutions for Government



## IOCL

**the AI-Driven Innovation Programme**  
Oct 1-3, 2025

Designed for senior leaders at IOCL, the AI-Driven Innovation Programme focused on the strategic adoption of AI and Generative AI across operations, supply chains, and customer interfaces. Through applied discussions, participants examined governance, ethics, and organisational readiness, building leadership capabilities to embed AI at scale and advance IOCL's digital transformation agenda.



## GAIL

**Market Leadership Programme for Geographical Area Heads**  
October 15 - 17, 2025

Designed for senior professionals from GAIL (India) Limited and GAIL Gas Limited, this programme focused on strengthening market leadership, strategic execution, and commercial agility. Through immersive sessions, participants explored frameworks to enhance negotiation outcomes, deepen customer relationships, and drive growth across diverse geographies in a dynamic energy landscape.



## CBC

**Advanced Faculty Development Programme**  
November 29 -30, 2025

The Advanced Faculty Development Programme brought together senior faculty members from Civil Service Training Institutions nationwide to strengthen pedagogical capability and learning design. Focused on contemporary teaching approaches and evolving philosophies of education, the programme supported institutional capacity building and reinforced the role of continuous learning in strengthening public governance systems.



## Executive Education & Digital Learning, ISB

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