

## C Suite discussion agenda ...

### 1. Operations

- Sales ... top line growth challenges
- Cash situation
- Profit determinants ... Bottom line growth issues
  - ✓ Margin
  - ✓ Velocity
  - ✓ Customer segments
- Adapting to shifts in customer preferences

### 2. Future Proofing Strategy for the Organization

- Rapidly changing technology and its implications on business
- Large shifts in consumer behaviour
- Predicting black swan events based on an intensive study of markets

### 3. Macro Global Landscape

- Geopolitics & its Business impact
  - ✓ Asia, US and Europe
  - ✓ Middle East and its dynamics
  - ✓ Threats from Islamic fundamentalism & Its impact on Globalization
- Changes in government policy internationally and in India
- Macro oil price trends and levels

### 4. Human Resources

- Attracting and retaining people with the best skills
- Talent Strategy ... Hiring part time experts

### 5. Growth Strategy

- Brainstorming on opportunities Globally and in India
- Quantification of risk
- Strategic fit
- Market Entry & Monetization of opportunity
- Cross Industry concept transplants
- New Product & Service offerings

### 6. Design Thinking

- Designing a customer centric organization
- Organization design
- Product & Service design



# CEO Advisory ... and Its Interesting Conversations

X36 Falcon Design

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In our role as strategic planners and CEO advisors we are sometimes called upon to advise senior management and people at the board level on directional issues.

Often it is about a large scale investment decision, a market entry strategy, a New project design or a deadlocked negotiation.

The primary reason we are on call is the fact that they are banking on our ability to see something that no one else can ... or ... they are looking for a unique solution that lets all stakeholders walk away happy.

## 1. The CEO Agenda

Typical CEO discussion agendas today have the following elements :

1. Operations
2. Future Proofing Strategy for the Organisation

3. Macro Global Landscape ... Trade Tension & its business impact
4. Human Resources
5. Growth Strategy
6. Design Thinking

## **2. Challenges facing CEOs today**

As can be imagined the range is pretty vast and the discussions can be very interesting.

In our experience most CEOs have the necessary Business Acumen to spot opportunities and monetize them and they understand the importance of Cash , Margin, Velocity and Customer segments.

But given that their plate is full with reporting to the board and meeting analyst expectations, there is often not enough time to look beyond execution ... at the road up ahead ... at how the industry is changing ... or how things can be done better.

CEOs do not get the opportunity to distance themselves from their situation to take in the larger environment and the way it is changing, especially today.

And ... disruption comes in all forms and sizes as every industry is under attack.

In the battle for ideas and new ways of doing things, what is often forgotten is that Change is a Vector quantity like velocity ... and it has two components :

1. Magnitude
2. Direction

Now your whole business model can collapse in weeks, just because some kid looked at your industry differently.

### 3. The Importance of Strategic Design & Design Thinking

Design thinking is the new buzzword in the market. It is however a lesser science to its more incisive cousin “ Strategic Design “.

Strategic Design can provide CEOs with extraordinary insights and growth solutions by looking at the entire business ecosystem within which a firm operates. Strategic design can also help a company recover money which it has lost in a project which went wrong.

Design thinking on the other hand is really all about listening to your customers and observing your environment and then thinking deeply ... about possibilities.

Strategic Design and Design thinking therefore can help organisations and businesses stay relevant within a rapidly changing landscape.

Dozens of Fortune 500 companies have vanished because they did not see change happening in their industry and did not move fast enough to adapt to that change.

Design thinking is not just about producing a Rev 00 prototype of a complex product or service in a few days of brainstorming sessions.

Design goes much beyond that and in today's knowledge economy its well worth the money that an organization pays to that rare knowledge worker who sees something that no one else can ...

### 4. Interesting Conversations

Possibly the most famous, expansive and brilliant CEO advisor ( if he can be called so) ... was Leonardo da Vinci.

Born on the 15th of April 1452, Leonardo da Vinci grew up to become not just the greatest artist of all time but also an extraordinary advisor and confidant to all the major regional satraps in renaissance Italy, starting with Lorenzo de' Medici of the ruling Medici family of Florence and then the Duke Ludovico Sforza of Milan.

da Vinci later also shook a leg with the notorious Cesare Borgia, son of Pope Alexander VI, in Romagna ... who was probably more interested in the maestro's weapon designs.

The ideas da Vinci shared with these heads of state were many and the subjects ranged from Art to Science and Medicine to Politics and ... weapon designs.

It is no different today.

While the world of the 21st century is remarkably different , with a more diverse economy and players within a much wider and more sophisticated ecosystem, the fundamentals have remained the same and so has the need for people with ideas and integrity.

The integrity part is especially important in this role.

The work is also very interesting, One day you are advising a client on a complicated subject such as the price of oil and predicting a number six months away. This could be worth hundreds of millions of USD to the company or trader who takes that advice, especially if you are a guy who can predict large market moves accurately.

Another day you are on an International advisory board setting the agenda for a discussion with foreign diplomats, bankers and several CEOs who are on the board. This is something we at X36 Falcon have some experience with.

A third day you are called to advise on a Negotiation strategy. Someone is stuck in a contract that will possibly cost him billions of dollars and if you can come up with an idea that can cut their losses, the two hours that they spend with you could be very valuable to them.

Or you could be designing a large waterfront project like Canary wharf or talking to the finance minister & governor of the reserve bank about how to solve a snowballing national banking crisis.

In the end, it is the people you meet along the way and the conversations that you have that are the most exciting and fulfilling.

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**– Concluded –**