HUNT PARTNERS

LEADERSHIP EMERGENT INDIA

The Hunt Report
Vol. 18, 2026-27

THE NEW LEADERSHIP EQUATION:

LEADING IN A REDEFINED WORLD

The European Perspective





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Director, Chair, Advisor, and Educator

Prof. Raghu Iyer
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Nawshir Mirza
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Julie McLellan
Director, Advisor, Mentor and Facilitator

Bob Semple
Director, Chair and Facilitator

Sujjain Talwar
Co-founding Partner at ELP

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PREFACE

Dear Readers,

Every era presents its leaders with defining questions. Today, these are increasingly interconnected. How should organisations harness artificial intelligence while preserving human judgement? How must leadership evolve as generational expectations shift? What does sustainable growth look like amid geopolitical uncertainty?

These questions are already shaping boardroom conversations, investment decisions and organisational strategies.

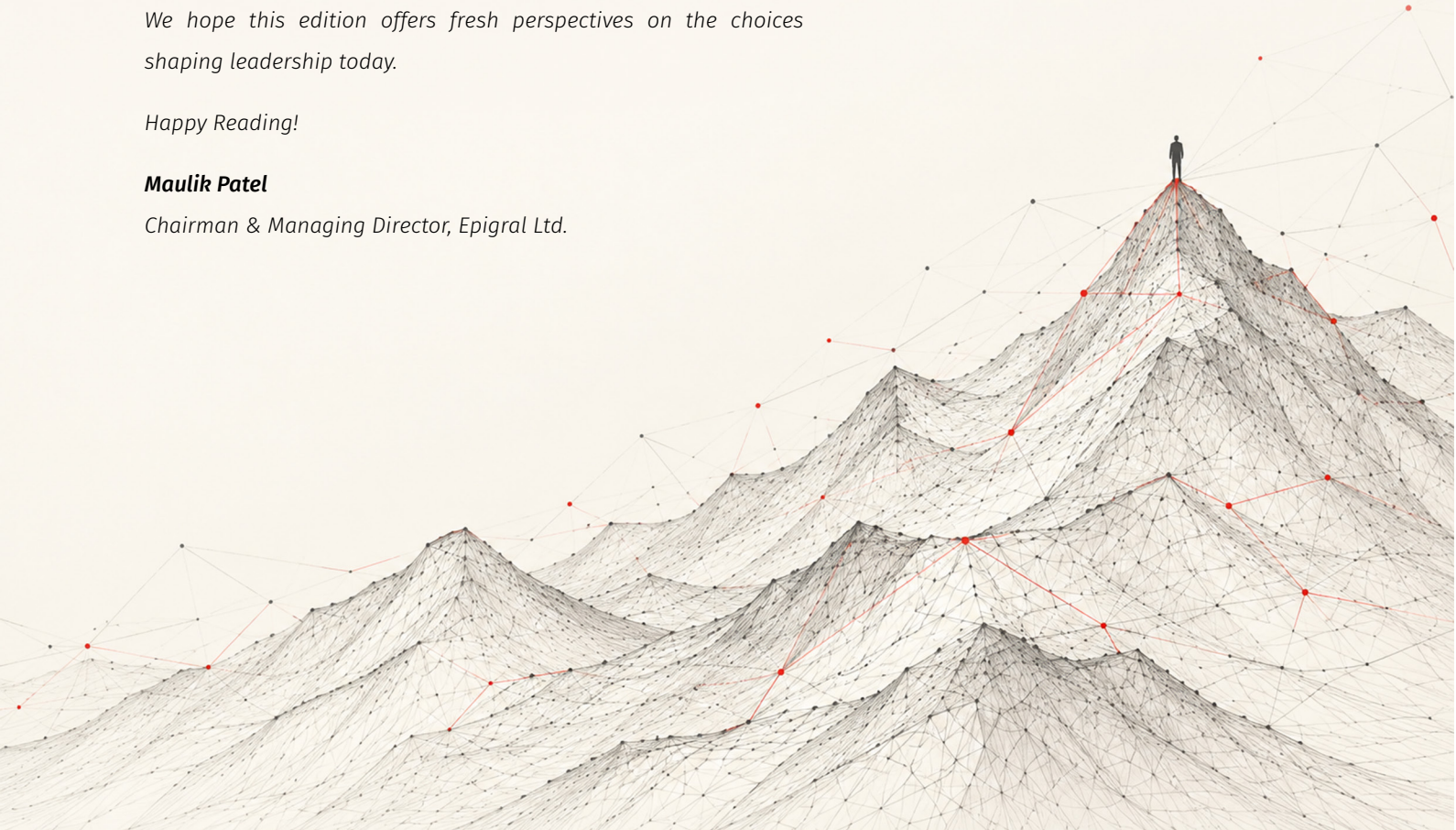
The Hunt Report Vol. 18 - The New Leadership Equation: Leading in a Redefined World, explores how leaders across sectors are navigating this changing landscape. Through conversations with business leaders and perspectives on evolving industries, this edition examines the capabilities and mindsets needed to respond to disruption, recognise opportunity and build resilient organisations.

While the context for leadership continues to evolve, the fundamentals remain vital: sound judgement, adaptability, integrity and purpose. The challenge lies in balancing these enduring qualities with the willingness to question established approaches and embrace new possibilities.

We hope this edition offers fresh perspectives on the choices shaping leadership today.

Happy Reading!

Maulik Patel
Chairman & Managing Director, Epigral Ltd.





CONTENT

The New Leadership Equation: Leading in a Redefined World - A European Perspective 05



THE NEW LEADERSHIP EQUATION: LEADING IN A REDEFINED WORLD - A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

By Alain de Borchgrave, Eric Salmon & Partners (Hunt Partners' cross-border alliance partner in Europe)

Leadership today is no longer defined by precedent or position. Across Europe, leaders are navigating an environment reshaped by AI-enabled decision-making, evolving workforce expectations, sustainability imperatives, and ongoing geopolitical volatility. A common thread emerges from conversations with senior leaders: Leadership is being redefined less by authority and more by responsibility, coherence, and long-term value creation.

From Decision-Making to Decision Stewardship in the AI Era

Technology, particularly AI, is transforming how organisations analyse data and make decisions. Yet, senior leaders consistently stress that leadership responsibility does not diminish as automation increases; it intensifies. While AI augments insight and speed, accountability remains firmly human.

European CEOs and executives emphasise the importance of judgement, context, and ethical oversight in AI-supported decisions, particularly in regulated and trust-based environments. Leadership, therefore, is shifting from simply *deciding* to *stewarding decisions* - ensuring transparency, robustness, and alignment with corporate values.

Rewriting the Psychological Contract with the Workforce

A second defining shift concerns people and culture. Leaders highlight that Gen Z and younger millennials have profoundly altered workforce expectations. Purpose, flexibility, authenticity, and inclusion are no longer complementary elements; they are central to engagement and performance.

Female leaders in particular describe leadership credibility as stemming from consistency between words and actions. Authority today is earned through trust, listening, and empowerment rather than hierarchy. At the same time, CEOs underline that clarity of direction and performance discipline remain essential. The leadership challenge lies in reconciling empowerment with execution.

In the European context - where social dialogue, diversity, and employee representation are structurally embedded - this evolution reinforces the role of leaders as orchestrators of collective intelligence rather than top down decision makers.

Sustainability: From Obligation to Strategic Compass

Sustainability emerges as a core leadership responsibility. Rather than framing ESG as compliance, leaders increasingly describe it as a strategic compass guiding investment, innovation, and cultural change.

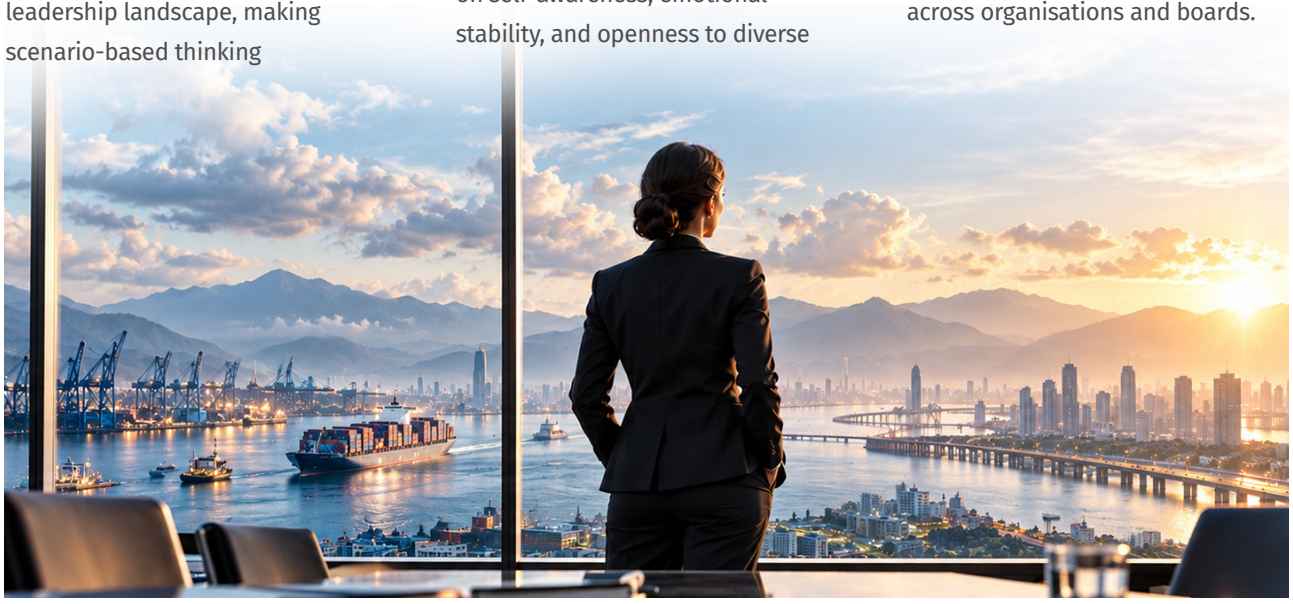
Female leaders stress the importance of long-term thinking and stakeholder balance, while CEOs highlight the need to translate sustainability ambitions into operational and financial realities. The common theme is integration: sustainability is most effective when embedded into strategy, governance, and incentives, not treated as a parallel agenda.

This approach reflects a distinctly European leadership mindset - one that values resilience, intergenerational responsibility, and long-term competitiveness over short-term optimisation.

Leading Through Volatility: Resilience Over Certainty

Geopolitical instability, supply-chain disruption, and macroeconomic uncertainty have become permanent features of the leadership landscape, making scenario-based thinking increasingly important in place of linear planning.

At the same time, resilience rests on self-awareness, emotional stability, and openness to diverse viewpoints. Leadership today requires the ability to act decisively without full certainty, while maintaining alignment and trust across organisations and boards.



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The New Leadership Equation

Taken together, these insights redefine leadership as a continuous balancing act:



Data-driven insight and human judgement

Empowerment and accountability

Short-term execution and long-term value creation

Innovation and responsibility

In Europe, this equation is shaped by strong governance traditions, stakeholder capitalism, and heightened societal expectations. The leaders who succeed are not those who simplify complexity, but those who navigate it transparently and responsibly.

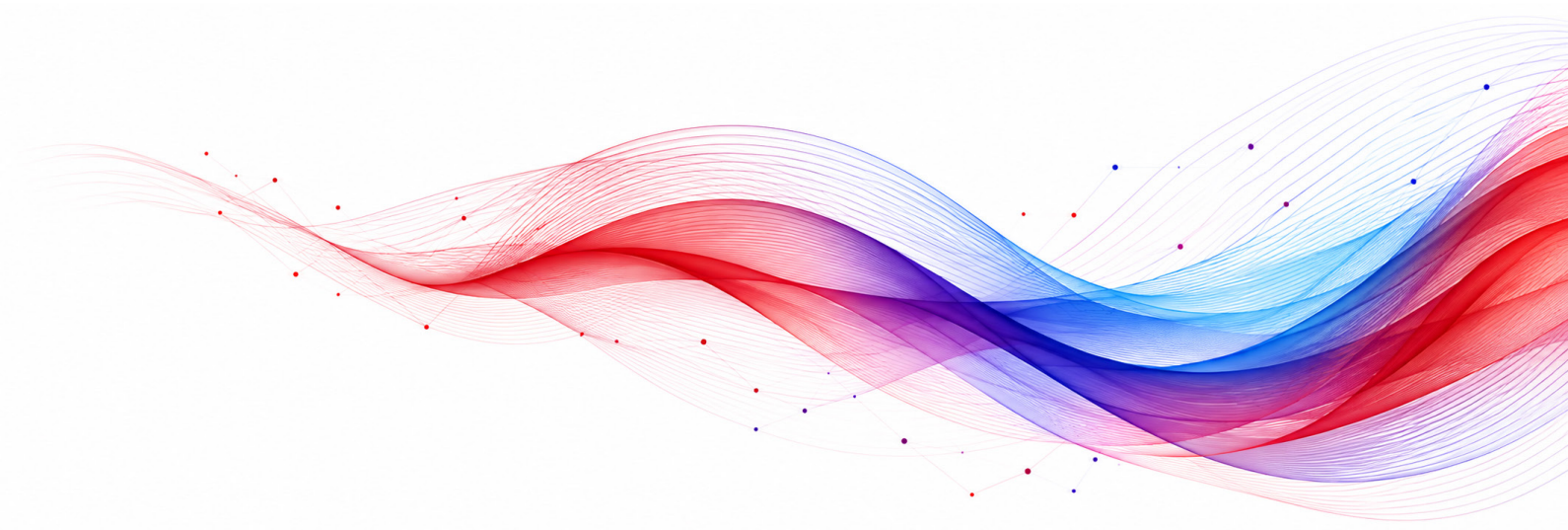
Leadership in a redefined world is no longer an individual performance - it is a collective endeavour. It requires aligned boards, diverse leadership teams, and organisations capable of learning and adapting continuously.

The future belongs to leaders who combine strategic ambition with humility, technological progress with ethical clarity, and decisiveness with long-term vision. Solving the new leadership equation is not a one-off task - it is an ongoing discipline.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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REFERENCES



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ABOUT THE HUNT REPORT

The Hunt Report, crafted by the esteemed team at Hunt Partners, serves as a comprehensive resource offering key business insights and their implications on the talent landscape across a diverse array of industry practices. This meticulously curated report amalgamates strategic data derived from both publicly available sources and insightful discussions with senior industry figures. Through an in-depth analysis, The Hunt Report delves into the pivotal business issues affecting each of the industry practices we engage in, shedding light on their impact on executive recruitment. Furthermore, the report provides a comprehensive summary of executive movements within these sectors, offering valuable insights into trends shaping the executive hiring landscape. With its wide-ranging coverage and nuanced exploration of industry dynamics, The Hunt Report serves as an indispensable tool for understanding and navigating the complexities of executive hiring across various industries.

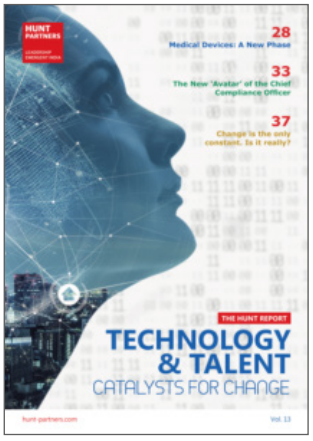
Previous Volumes

















REFLECTIONS

Director Development Programme

The Director Development Programme is a certification workshop designed for current and aspiring Directors. Conducted over three weeks, it features expert faculty-led sessions, case studies, and mock board simulations. A compact, well-curated cohort ensures maximum engagement, personalized attention, and highly interactive discussions.






Illuminati Dialogues

An exclusive, closed-door event curated for C-Suite executives to engage in meaningful conversations with distinguished speakers and connect with a select group of peers.





Hunt Scope

Each edition of Hunt Scope presents an exclusive interview with a senior leader, offering insights into their challenges, strategies, and key lessons, providing valuable guidance for industry colleagues.





Joe Ellis
Former MD & CEO NielsenIQ

Avinash Gupta
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ABOUT HUNT PARTNERS

Hunt Partners is one of Asia's leading executive search firms with principal offices in Mumbai and Abu Dhabi. Hunt Partners offers expertise across a broad spectrum of industries. The firm ensures highest quality service standards through its ownership approach for all the partners. Over a decade, the firm has been consistently ranked amongst the top 10 retained executive search firms and witnessed rapid expansion and growth in revenues and clientele. Hunt Partners provides services like Interim Management, Talent Management and Organization Alignment to help their clients achieve desired business results through effective and pragmatic talent management strategies. Hunt Partners also specializes in board advisory services, provides research, and even offers unique board-certification programs under 'Director Education Workshop' for aspiring and existing Directors.

OUR OFFERINGS

Altus
Board Governance & Education
HUNT PARTNERS INITIATIVE

Our Board Practice provides a range of services for Statutory and Advisory Boards. These services include appointing Chairpersons and Independent Directors, Compensation Advisory, Training and Effectiveness Services.

COACH KOMPASS
LEADERSHIP COACHING
HUNT PARTNERS INITIATIVE

Hunt Partners have designed the Coach Kompass platform to assess and coach leaders to push beyond the present, to experiment, to plan, to be prepared to take on challenges and to 'be' more and deliver greater business outcomes.

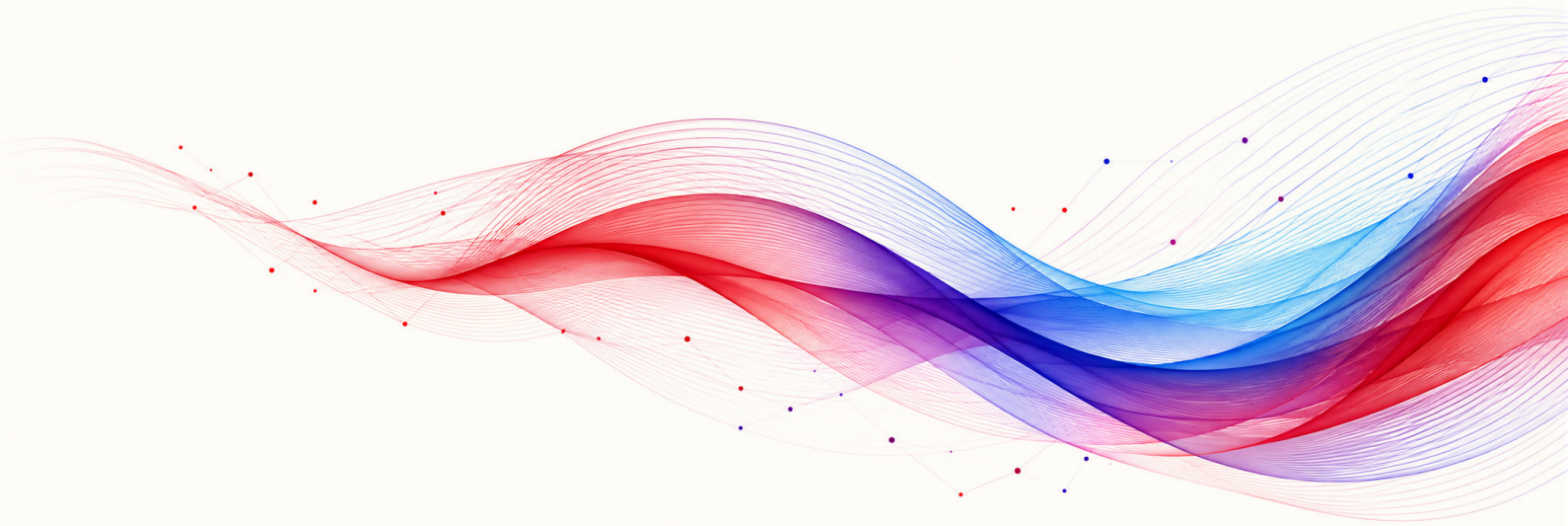
ELAN
INTERIM MANAGERS
EIM-HUNT PARTNERS INITIATIVE

Interim Management is the provision of senior management resources on a short-term basis to organizations to meet an immediate need. This offers clients a flexible resourcing solution to enlist the services of a senior-level executive and/or specialist temporarily. Interim Managers can be an excellent solution for businesses dealing with challenges, leading change, transitioning, or fulfilling a gap.

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Executive Search and Hunt On Demand

Hunt Partners experienced consultants (Partners and Principals) bring unrivaled expertise in talent and leadership assessment to offer their clients high quality service in a broad spectrum of industries and functions across Asia.



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