



2020-2021 Virtual CEO Roundtable Executive Report

December 3, 2020

FEATURED SPEAKER: Deanna Mulligan, Board Chair, *Guardian Life Insurance Company of America*, led a focused discussion on the evolution of work and trends CEOs need to know related to reskilling, retraining, and education. Set against the stark picture of record unemployment, participants brought a sense of urgency and action to the conversations.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Training employees is critical. The cost of having under-skilled employees overshadows the cost of potential attrition after investing in their training.
- External partnerships are proven opportunities to support upskilling and reskilling employees, as well as creating an additional pipeline of new hires.
- Along with providing time capacity to learn, creating a culture of learning encourages employees to continuously develop with company needs.
- The skills gap continues to grow from the impacts of Covid-19, and companies have an opportunity to provide skills trainings to develop potential employees.
- Hybrid office environments will become more prominent as companies embrace remote work, but CEOs still see the value of interacting in-person to build culture and cultivate innovation in potentially smaller, spatially redesigned office spaces.
- Take a look at the Roundtable's press release, [here](#).

"Early in my tenure as CEO, business was becoming digitized and the company had a lot of work to do in order to survive in a digital world," said **Deanna Mulligan, Board Chair, *Guardian Life Insurance Company of America***. "Guardian's values are to do the right thing, hold ourselves to high standards, and know that people count. Putting people out on the street didn't align with the company values so we knew we had to invest in reskilling our employees."

"Showing mobility, even if it's at a modest scale, is key for employees to engage and buy-in to the company. If you can demonstrate that you can bring people to a better place and encourage employees to embrace change, a company will be better positioned to evolve with the ecosystem." – **Charles Meyers, CEO, *Equinix***

"Our society faces an issue of not valuing those who work with their hands as much as we used to," said **Andrea Owen, CEO, *Herman Miller***. There continues to be so much emphasis on knowledge workers and upskilling, but not enough emphasis on the value of a workforce that encompasses both. We need to understand the continued importance of our employees who work with their hands and provide rewarding opportunities and careers for all."

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