



# 2021-2022 CEO Roundtable Executive Report

December 16, 2021

**FEATURED SPEAKER:** Doug Conant, Founder & CEO, *ConantLeadership* and former CEO, *Campbell Soup Company*

In a session of CECP's CEO Roundtable series, Doug Conant, Founder & CEO, *ConantLeadership* and former CEO, *Campbell Soup Company* discussed actionable steps for CEOs to manage changing employee expectations with meaningful and authentic engagement.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Employee engagement isn't a "nice to do". With the great resignation/reshuffling this is a "must do".
- Employees are where it all begins and ends for a company. They are the only way to coherently connect to all stakeholders at the same time. IR team connects with investors, CR team connects with community, etc.
- Ask employees to prioritize which employee engagement metrics matter, and celebrate progress on them. Publish engagement results in the CSR report (employees will open and share it); they are more important than financial reporting.
- Stop talking about "hybrid/virtual"; instead talk about how to make it "personal".
- Reset the employee value proposition and update the social contract between the company and the employee.
- Engage managers so they are all in, as they influence the culture. Managers can be your heroes, but they are also why people leave. Ask managers to focus with their people on personal connection and growth.
- Safety, especially today, opens the door to all kinds of other conversations and builds trust with workers.
- You have to win in the workplace before you can win in the marketplace.
- Invest in development. Companies can engineer smart, efficient training into a budget.
- Corporate purpose will evolve; it is a living thing. Ask employees to help grow the purpose, identifying and addressing what is and isn't working. Employees should live corporate purpose each day.

"There is indisputable evidence that having a highly engaged workforce will drive high performance. On the contrary, there is no evidence that having a neutral-to-toxic organization culture will deliver high engagement or performance. The key to success is to nurture a living and breathing sense of purpose that transcends the ordinary."  
- Doug Conant, Founder & CEO, *ConantLeadership* and former CEO, *Campbell Soup Company*

"When employees feel valued, they stay with your organization. Employees retain a lot of knowledge and value, so it's a loss when they choose to move on from your company. Excellence begets excellence. If your people flourish and prosper, you do too."  
- Surya Kant, Chairman, *TCS North American*

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