



CRF Annual Conference

BUILDING & SUSTAINING GREAT ORGANISATIONS

TUESDAY 12 OCTOBER, 9.00 – 20.00

London and Online



2021 CRF PROGRAMME





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CRF's annual conference will be held this year at London's JW Marriott Grosvenor House on 12 October. The full-day event will explore the topic of **Building and Sustaining Great Organisations**. The capacity of organisations to adapt and renew has been tested through 2020 and 2021, as the world continues to wrestle with the coronavirus pandemic. Our programme of experts includes academics and practitioners who will explore the defining features of a great organisation, discussing how to create success, develop great people, deal with failure and implement high-growth strategies.

We are delighted to be able to welcome attendees in person and look forward to seeing many of you at the drinks reception following the day's proceedings. For those members who wish to attend online, we are pleased to offer unlimited access to the conference with the flexibility to drop in and out of sessions throughout the day. The conference has been designed with both in-person and online guests in mind to provide the best experience for all. We look forward to welcoming you on 12 October for an insightful and thought-provoking conference.

ATTENDANCE OPTIONS

FOR MEMBERS:

In-Person: Attendance at London's JW Marriott Grosvenor House, including the evening drinks reception. Members attending in person are also invited to join a series of interactive masterclasses led by CRF's Partners. These will be delivered over breakfast from 9.00am, ahead of the day's main programme and will cover topics relevant to the conference themes. When registering as an in-person attendee you will be prompted to select your chosen masterclass. See [page five](#) for masterclass descriptors.

Online: CRF members wishing to attend online will have **unlimited access** to the conference, with the flexibility to drop in and out of sessions throughout the day.

FOR NON-MEMBERS:

In-Person: Tickets for non-CRF members will be available at a cost of £750 + VAT per person. If you wish to book more than three places, please email events@crforum.co.uk for our discounted group rate.

REGISTRATION

Members: can register by logging into their CRF account online or by emailing events@crforum.co.uk. When registering for the event, please select the ticket type you require from the drop-down options and you will be provided with the appropriate attendee information.

Non-Members: can register by emailing events@crforum.co.uk



AGENDA



LIVE STREAM **BST Times** **TUESDAY 12 OCTOBER**

08.45	Masterclass Attendee Arrival and Registration	
09.00	BREAKFAST MASTERCLASSES – See next page for descriptors Choose from: Achieve Breakthrough, APS, Bird & Bird, BTS, EY Lane4, Mercer, RHR International	
((⓪)) 10.00	CONFERENCE WELCOME Welcome and housekeeping from conference chair: Helen Pitcher	 Helen Pitcher OBE is an experienced Chairman, Board member, facilitator and coach. She works across the range of FTSE, professional service, private equity and family firms, where she has led some of the biggest board evaluations. Helen is also a coach to many leading CEOs, Chairmen and NED's. She was awarded an OBE for services to Business in 2015.
((⓪)) 10.15	Creating, Delivering and Evaluating Your Business Strategy As Professor of Strategic Management at IMD Business School, James Henderson looks at how organisations can develop and implement strategy through uncertainty. In this session, he will cover how companies can form, execute, communicate and evaluate an effective strategy.	 James Henderson is Professor of Strategic Management at IMD Business School. His areas of interest are strategy under uncertainty, competitive and corporate strategy, and strategy execution. He helps companies achieve and sustain competitive advantage at all levels through directing custom specific programs, facilitating workshops and teaching.
10.45	TABLE BREAKOUTS AND Q&A	
11.25	BREAK	
((⓪)) 11.45	Creating Successes Through Failures New innovations rarely come easily. As some of the world's largest organisations show, there has to be an acceptance that failure (not incompetence) will often mark the road to success. Stephen Carver will utilise a storytelling approach to share his expertise on how to experiment and innovate effectively.	 Stephen Carver lectures in Project Management, Action, Execution and Implementation at Cranfield University. He previously worked in the oil industry and for Virgin, with project and risk management experience in most sectors. He is a prolific writer, much sought-after speaker and highly regarded as a global expert in Risk, Influencing and Crisis Management.
12.15	TABLE BREAKOUTS AND Q&A	
12.55	LUNCH	
((⓪)) 13.40	Smart Growth: Improving Yourself and Your Team to Improve the Company To fulfil the aims of any high-growth strategy, you first need high-growth individuals. As one of the world's leading business thinkers, Whitney Johnson is an expert in helping leaders to grow their people in order to grow their organisation. Whitney will share how to grow your people, especially during periods of uncertainty.	 Whitney Johnson is one of the 50 leading business thinkers in the world (<i>Thinkers50</i>) and an expert on disruptive innovation and personal disruption. She has written widely on disruption and is a co-founder of the Disruptive Innovation Fund with Harvard Business School's Clayton Christensen.
14.10	TABLE BREAKOUTS AND Q&A	
14.50	BREAK	
((⓪)) 15.10	Building a Great Organisation – the Howdens Story Matthew Ingle built Howdens from £1m to over £1bn in turnover in just two decades. In this session he will share how he built the company through developing an entrepreneurial spirit and a demanding but empowering culture. See more information about Howdens here .	 Matthew Ingle founded Howdens Joinery Group in 1995 and was CEO until 2018. As part of the MFI Group, Howdens grew rapidly. Its 'worthwhile for all' culture, unique business model, innovative products and relentless focus on customer service set it apart, and in 2017 it was ranked the 7 th best large company to work for by <i>The Sunday Times</i> .
16.00	TABLE BREAKOUTS AND Q&A	
((⓪)) 16.20	SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING COMMENTS Summary and concluding comments from Accenture: Kent McMillan	 Kent McMillan leads Accenture's Global Organisation Practice, working with executives to re-imagine operating models and embrace change. He has over 18 years' experience across industries, helping clients to deliver on their growth, agility, productivity, and sustainability objectives. He recently received a US patent for Accenture's organisation analytics and design platform.
16.40	DRINKS RECEPTION	
20.00	CONFERENCE CLOSE	



INTRODUCTION TO HOWDENS

Howdens was created in 1995 when Matthew Ingle had the vision to create a business which would support builders to deliver the complex task of designing and fitting kitchens for their customers. Howdens began trading as a division of MFI with just 40 people, 14 depots and seven kitchen ranges. Revenue in the first year was barely £1M, whereas by 2020 the company had 793 depots, a turnover of £1.5billion and pre-tax profits of £185million.

During his tenure, Matthew not only oversaw Howdens' rapid and exceptional growth, he also became CEO of the wider MFI Group. He successfully dealt with a dwindling MFI share price and resolved legacy issues in the MFI business which had led to a business collapse as a result of the 2008 financial crisis. Matthew and his executive team resolved MFI's legacy issues while ensuring that suppliers, employees and pensioners did not lose out, and in parallel continued to grow the Howdens business. Under its new Chief Executive, Matthew's successor, Howdens' exceptional growth is likely to continue. This is in a fiercely competitive commercial sector.

The purpose of the business is to help trade customers achieve exceptional results for their customers, and to profit from doing so. The company – now the UK's largest supplier of kitchens to trade

customers – is an example of a great organisation with an exciting vision, clear business plan, dynamic culture, distinctive values and high-performing leadership. It has a unique, highly decentralised business model. It only sells to trade customers and operates its own state of the art factories, which results in a highly flexible supply chain. Local depots build trusted partnerships with trade professionals and depot managers are autonomous, with significant local discretion. This creates an entrepreneurial, competitive environment where people strive for success.

Howdens was founded on the principle that the business should be worthwhile for all concerned – customers, prospective customers, homeowners, tenants, local communities, suppliers, investors, staff and their families. An example of this principle in action is the profit share model. Each depot is allocated a percentage share of its profit, which the depot manager allocates to staff at his or her discretion. This founding principle has shaped the business model and strategic decisions for more than 20 years, and it continues to be at the heart of what Howdens does.

Matthew retired from Howden in 2018 but will describe what he did in creating a major success story.



BREAKFAST MASTERCLASSES

8.45 MASTERCLASS REGISTRATION, LONDON Choose one from:



Vitality is Vital – Making the Shift from High-Performance to High-Vitality

When it comes to developing teams, organisations conventionally focus on high performance. Yet, whilst it's essential organisations deliver extraordinary results, the demand for high performance can easily create a pressure-cooker environment that diminishes sustained improvement. We encourage organisations to look beyond performance and instil a commitment to overall vitality. In this session we will unpack the 'tripod of vitality' to explore what this approach requires and enable you to marry the development of sustainable accomplishment and high-performance in your organisation.



Equipping Geographically Dispersed Leaders with Critical Skills for Tomorrow, Today! – A Case Study

A successful international manufacturing organisation needed to prepare for a new phase of growth, reviewing and developing the critical skills required for the future, while facing the pressure of a global pandemic.

In this session, we will explore how the organisation's HR leadership partnered with APS to do more than just define behaviours and assess the current situation. Identifying potential strengths and gaps enabled specific skills to be targeted and the introduction of an online skills development system, providing live practice on serious, real-life interactions and leadership challenges. Short and time-effective individual and group exercises were specifically designed, allowing globally dispersed leaders to receive detailed, personalised feedback with actionable outcomes. The organisation has been able to cost-effectively integrate the results to help identify talent and develop future leaders. Strategically, the business has integrated the behaviours into their own performance management system to drive further collective development.



The Legal Challenges in the Battle for Talent – Implementing a Global D&I Policy

Regardless of the sector in which you operate, there is always a shortage of good people. Implementing an effective D&I policy is a powerful tool in the battle to attract and retain talent.

However, devising and implementing global policies which cover the entire life cycle of the employment relationship requires careful navigation. Actions which are legal or culturally acceptable in one country can be a showstopper in another. We will look at some of the legal issues in the formulation and implementation of a D&I policy, including, the constraints in data collection, and setting recruitment and promotion targets. We will draw on our experience to illustrate the importance of understanding the cultural and legal framework in which you are operating, in order to devise a viable policy.



Shifting Mindsets – How Organisations Become and Remain Great

Great organisations remain great by understanding, anticipating and adapting to changes in the wider ecosystem in which they operate. However, the execution of those strategic shifts is often fraught with challenges making it a slow, disconnected and painful process. We often see that organisations remain focused on formulating (rather than executing) strategy, or focus their attention on operational, procedural and technical issues while missing the point. Execution is about people and specifically their ability to shift mindsets that support the behaviours that are required now.

In this session we look at how organisations can more effectively execute strategies and change. We explore how organisations can prompt mindset shifts by working through connected experiences that confront leaders with what their future organisations require of them.





**Future-proofing L&D –
How to Create the Best
Learning Environment in a
Hybrid World**

People are at the heart of what makes an organisation sustain greatness. Continued success hinges on how well people perform, how quickly they learn, and how trusted they feel to push the boundaries of what’s possible. Learning and development teams are not responsible for people’s performance or learning (individuals must take ownership for both those things), however, L&D is responsible for creating the best learning environment possible so that everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

There is also no escaping the fact the business world has changed dramatically. Hybrid working is the new normal and L&D need to make sure they keep adapting their approach to fit the times we’re in. In this session, we will explore what direction L&D teams should be taking, showcasing a future-proof learning approach to help your business achieve and maintain outstanding performance in the years to come.



**Raising the Bar:
How to Activate a Talent
Marketplace, Infused with New
Work Standards**

Join Mercer to learn how great organisations can democratise work through a fluid talent marketplace and heightened work values. In this session, you will find out how responsible, innovative employers reshape and create new work opportunities, increase quality of work, invest in people, adapt with agility to meet the needs of business transformation. Mercer will offer inspirational but practical examples and share insights from Mercer and World Economic Forum research on the five pillars of new work standards being embraced by sustainable organisations.



**Fail Fast, Refresh, and Bounce
Back!**

Whether it is post-COVID, consumer-led growth or a natural cycle of global commercial activity, business is booming for some, while others are mired in uncertainty about their very survival. As ever, the quality of leadership will be the key factor determining whether organisations advance to greatness or continue to struggle; these are the sort of leaders who can fail fast, refresh, and bounce back.

In this session, we identify the qualities that define and differentiate leaders who best set the right tone for a great organisation. We also reveal research-based techniques to develop those characteristics and build relevant skills and discuss how to develop resilient leaders to sustain performance over the long term.



WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO CRF PARTNERS



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