

YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MODERN LEADERSHIP

HOW TO TAKE ON THE ROLE AS A MODERN LEADER AND
ENABLE THE PATH TO ACCELERATED GROWTH



Howwe®

INTRODUCTION

Today's fast-paced business climate adds new challenges to the role of the leader and his or her ability to achieve acceleration of growth. This e-book will give you the tools you need to excel as a modern leader and by doing so, enable your company to reach its goals.

We will deep-dive into the role of the modern CEO and senior management and explore why alignment & commitment in an organization starts with the leadership.



With us to do this, we have three experienced CEOs that will share their experiences on modern leadership and offer insights into how tools like Howwe facilitate the challenges CEOs and leaders are struggling with.

Kajsa Hedberg - CEO of St1 Biogas

Jonas Hernborg - CEO of Elitfönster

KlasTockling - Vice President of Caverion Sweden

Happy reading!

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Johan Grönstedt, Chief Strategy Officer at Howwe Technologies, will guide you through this e-book and its principles of modern leadership.



Howwe

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MODERN LEADER?

MODERN LEADERSHIP



What defines a modern leader? Here is what the panel of CEOs answered:

- Your most important contribution as a CEO is to unite everyone in the organization. Define and communicate a clear vision and strategy.
- Communicating the vision and strategy once is not enough. Communicate every time you have the opportunity and make the vision visible.
- Show an interest without taking away the responsibility from the people in the organization.
- Dare to be transparent to enable a successful follow-up process.
- Dare to have an open dialogue with employees based on trust and equality.
- Being able to break down the strategy into defined goals and activities on all levels of your organization.
- Create empowered employees that take ownership in the success of the company.
- Be a source of inspiration in order to get commitment and engagement.
- Hold the course over time.
- Be accessible, personally committed and visually part of the organization.

THE CHALLENGES OF MODERN LEADERSHIP



To truly understand what it means to be a modern leader, we have to start by looking at the reality in which the leader acts in. Howwe Technologies conducted a CEO Poll where we asked hundreds of CEOs about their way of working to implement their strategy and business plan and the challenges they experience linked to it.

Efficient and company-wide strategy implementation is crucial for successful business governance and organizational management. That hardly comes as a surprise to anyone. Nevertheless, Howwe Technologies' CEO Poll shows that CEOs experience major challenges when executing their plans. In addition, about half of the respondents think that the pandemic has further complicated governance. A lack of commitment and focus are the biggest problem areas they experience as a consequence of the pandemic. 37% state that the organization generally lacks sufficient commitment and proactivity to succeed.

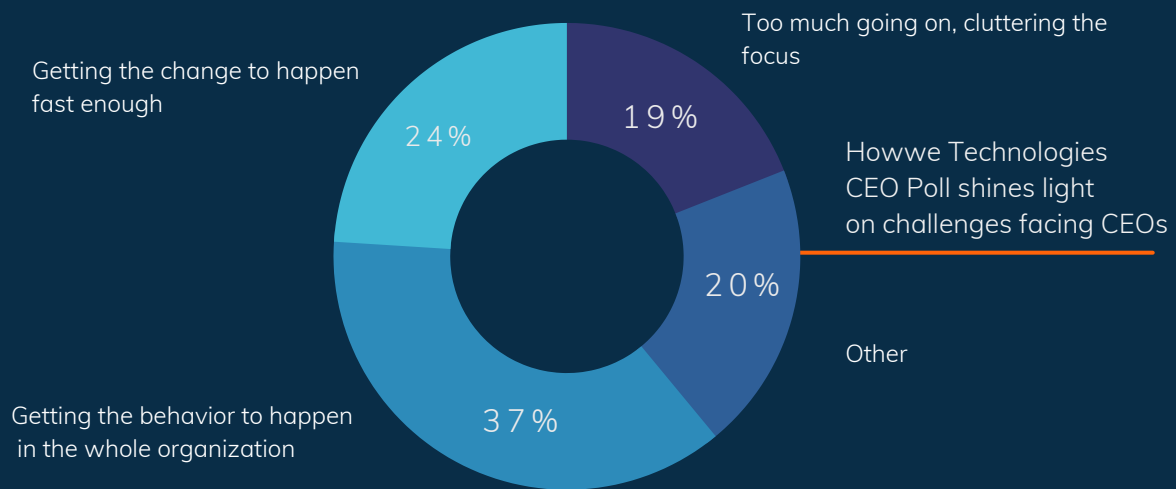
One of the results that really stood out was when asked how often financial goals are met in a five-year period. **Only 12 percent of CEOs in the poll reach their goals on an annual basis.**

The reasons why they do not achieve their goals vary widely, but external and unforeseen factors, such as Covid-19, stand out. Actually, more than 60% of companies in the poll have had to change their strategic goals as a result of the pandemic. Additionally, half of the respondents feel that it is more difficult to manage the organization with large parts of the workforce working from home.

The fact that companies rarely meet the goals they set in their strategies is well supported in other studies. According to Harvard Business Review, companies' strategies deliver only 63% of their promised financial value, meaning of a promised 100 MUSD turnover in three years, the average company only manages a turnover of 63 MUSD. Estimations suggest that around 1 MUSD is needlessly lost every 20 seconds. To us, this indicates that the problem is huge.

Typical for these companies is that they lack an application that helps the entire company to accelerate the strategy or business plan execution. The CEO Poll also shows that more than half of companies do not use a modern goal steering tool, and instead pursue the company's most important business challenges and strategic goals with traditional programs such as Excel or PowerPoint.

What aspect of driving change do you struggle with the most?



A wide-spread lack of modern execution tools

So far, appropriate applications for strategy and business plan execution management have been virtually non-existent, leading to massive waste across industries. There is minimal digitalization and most of the tools used are decades-old. Companies generally still use management consulting services and Excel. As a result, execution is often stuck at the mid-management level, and most employees have no idea what to focus on or how to prioritize to achieve set goals.

86% of CEOs drive too many goals leading to a cluttered organization

The CEO Poll also confirms that many CEOs and management teams have a large number of prioritized goals and initiatives. 42% of respondents have between 5-20 goals. According to Harvard Business Review, the risk that none of them are achieved is high as organizations easily get cluttered with too many goals and the focus is lost*.

70% never reach through the management layer with their core priorities

The ability to prioritize goals creates a foundation for succeeding with them. Having that ability, and a structured plan to make them actionable, is typically the next step in successful strategy execution. The results in the CEO Poll indicate that roughly 70% struggle to reach through the management layer to the employees throughout the company and thus fail to successfully communicate the actionable

activities that support their goals. They also lack transparency to make the progress towards goals inclusive for the rest of the organization. 20% of respondents state that their core priorities only involve the senior management team and 11% do not set an actionable plan for achieving goals at all.

Insights derived from data are key to increase competitiveness

A positive finding in the results is that a vast majority, 76% of respondents, have access to structured data and BI, which they use to improve both the performance of the organization and as a base for important decisions. 11% of those have access to situational insights that include suggestions for actions.

Data-driven insights have become a hygiene factor for modern management teams. However, the results indicate that even if data is commonly used, it lacks smartness. Without the skills to interpret it correctly, it cannot be used to its full potential. Handled manually, this process is both time-consuming, expensive and the data reactive instead of proactive. MIT's Sloan Management Review points out that data on its own has value, but insights derived from data substantially increases that value**.

The CEOs represented in this e-book use Howwe. Howwe scales and automates the data and generates faster and more profound insights at a fraction of the cost of a traditional model.

A man with glasses and a microphone is sitting in a chair, gesturing with his hands as if speaking. The image is overlaid with a dark blue filter and a white text box. The text reads "IT STARTS WITH THE WHY".

**IT STARTS
WITH THE WHY**

THE WHY

One of the ingredients in modern leadership is elementary, but often not prioritized enough: The CEOs represented in this e-book never underestimate the importance of a strong Why to secure success of their goals. But they also point out that having a Why is not enough. It's first when the Why is anchored in the organization that it has a true effect on the outcome.

Micael Broström, Sales & Marketing Director at Elitfönster, argues that motivating the Why is actually the most important part of succeeding with any plan or goal. His advice is to initiate any project by asking your team 'What are you going to do and How are you going to do it?'.



“TAKE YOUR TIME AND ANCHOR YOUR WHY DEEPLY WITHIN THE TEAM. IF YOU DO THAT, YOU CAN BE SURE THAT THE PERFORMANCE WILL REACH A MORE POSITIVE OUTCOME.”

Micael Broström, Sales & Marketing Director at Elitfönster

One of the contributing factors to why strategies fail is that employees don't know what to do. And the problem starts already at management level. Research shows that merely half of an executive team can list their company's top three initiatives. If you look at the employee level, that number is 13%. And these numbers are just from looking at the What. Just imagine what the equivalent statistic would be for the anchoring of the Why?

To set the foundation for success of the strategy you have to have a strong Why that you anchor in the organization. Anchoring means ensuring that the people who will execute the strategy really understand why, and above all, understand their own role and contribution to this work.

Start the anchoring of the Why as soon as possible

The sooner a CEO or management group begins discussing openly the reason why a project is needed, the better.

Anchor on all levels

Dare to go outside the management room, share with others that there are ongoing discussions, and dare to get input from other parts of the organization. Transparency leads to less worry and reduces the risk of rumors spreading.

THE WHY

"I think it's important for every person to see how they can contribute and fit into the bigger picture. That's how you get the commitment and power from everyone to drive the changes that you want to make. I think the Why is important and not only on top level. It needs to be broken down to the different departments and finally down to each individual. If you have your Why it's much more fun to go to work and be a part of the company"

- Johan Hernborg, CEO at Elitfönster.



Anchoring is a continuous process

Instead of management doing all the planning, communicating the plan to managers and leaders, who in their turn communicate it to all employees, anchoring should be a structured, continuous process.

In order for the anchoring process to be fast, it needs to be well planned and structured. We recommend that you appoint one person to manage and be responsible for this whole process.

The responsibility of the modern leader

CEO and/or management plays an extremely important role in this work: they can under no circumstances delegate the ownership of the acceleration, instead they need to be highly involved. They always need to be visible and emphasise how important this is.

It is important that there is consensus within management and that they share the same goal for the anchoring of the Why to succeed.

The anchoring is done in a structured and consistent way throughout the whole organization. One part of the anchoring is also to relay input from the organization back to management.



My strong advice is to get your story straight and compelling in the management team and that you succeed to tell it with feeling.

Building your company alignment around a compelling vision for the future is a powerful way to get the organization thinking for themselves - aligned with your vision.

JOHAN GRÖNSTEDT
CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER
HOWWE TECHNOLOGIES



THE POWER OF PRIORITIZING

and the secret behind high
performing teams

PRIORITIZATION

Many leaders struggle with the concept of priority. This ends up with teams and individuals being overburdened with too many often conflicting priorities - resulting in a cluttered and stressful environment. By focusing on less, you can actually achieve more. However, many leader seem to not recognize this. Or at least not act like they do.

At the core of performance lies the ability to prioritize. The main problem with setting goals in a traditional bottom-up approach is that your ambitious employees love the process of thinking about goals and aspirations. Several hundreds of ideas, goals, initiatives and ambitions have suddenly filled the business plan and the ambition is disconnected from the ability to execute.

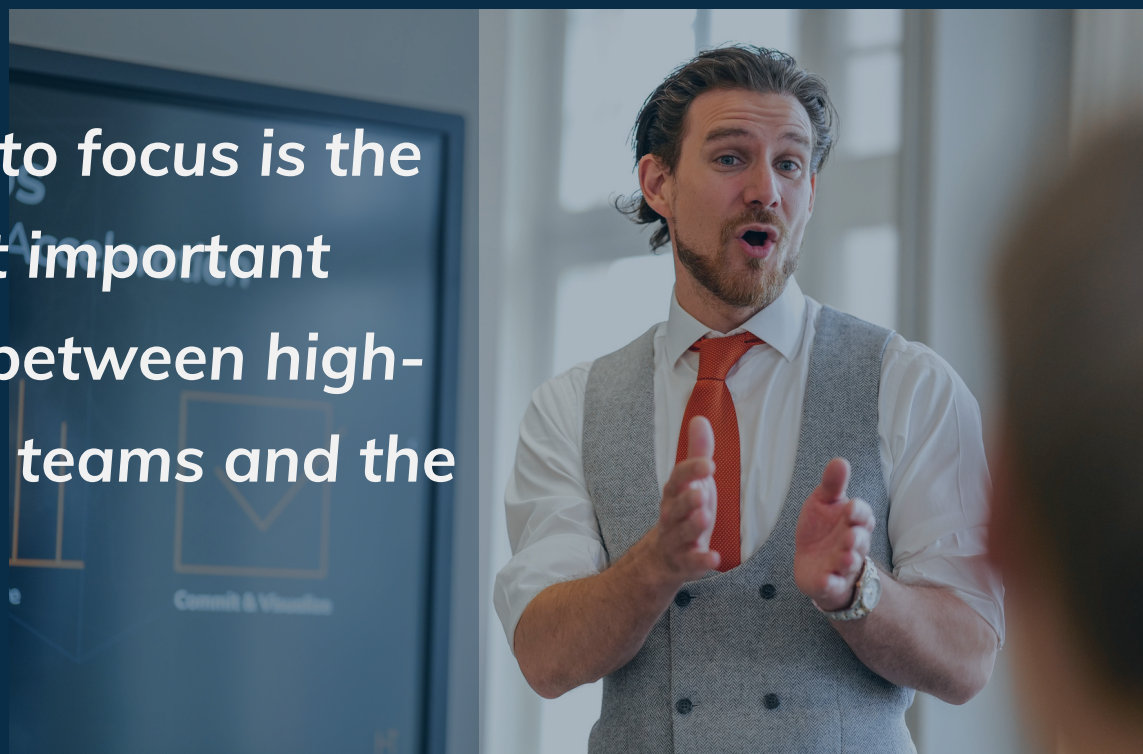
Although you have an awesome list of ideas and aspirations, you have not created an executable plan with focus and clarity. Most likely you have done even worse than that - you have installed a hotbed for stress and unreachable scorecards ending up with teams and individuals being overburdened with too many, often conflicting, priorities - resulting in a cluttered and stressful environment.

Let's allow Johan Grönstedt to put this into perspective.

"In the Howwe way of working we use Most Important Goals. These are designed to create clarity and alignment around priorities. Research shows that there is an inverse relationship between the number of goals you set and the number of goals you can achieve. That's why we've put a golden rule of two to three simultaneous goals per team at any given time."

Beginning at the top, the management team is forced to really nail down what is most important. The company then figures out, team by team, what they can do to support that goal. Every team aligns themselves to the priorities that are set by the team above them and ultimately from your top strategic goals. This is a group exercise, meaning that every team's involvement is paramount.

The ability to focus is the single most important difference between high-performing teams and the rest."





KLAS TOCKLING,
VICE PRESIDENT
CAVERION SWEDEN



A lot of companies have too many goals and too many activities. We found out the hard way that with too many goals, you're not going to achieve anything at all. I started working with Howwe and its structured way of working and it's easier to work with a few goals to actually achieve them.



SUCCESSING WITH DRIVING CHANGE

SUCCESSFULLY DRIVING CHANGE



In today's business climate, change comes fast and often unexpected. Andreas Larsson is the Group CFO at Kährs. Below, he shares his view on the ideal leadership style and his best advice on how to drive change within an organization.

Ultimately, successfully driving change comes down to leadership style. Many leaders report being torn between two ideals of what a leader should be. On the one hand you have traits like delegation, trust and bottom-up approaches. On the other hand, you have traits like top-down clarity, transparency and follow up. What is the ideal leadership style?

Andreas Larsson: The latter with a top-down approach is probably the fastest and most common way to get a result. However, I'm hesitant if it's the best way to create a long-lasting result. I believe a mix is needed. Be firm in terms of vision and prioritization, but make sure you get traction in the organization and encourage the organization to drive the change bottom-up.

Here is my best advice:

- Your most important role as a leader is to lead change. To succeed with this you have to act as a role model for your organization.
- Management has to act as one voice. Therefore, achieving alignment in the management team is crucial to successfully drive change out into the organization.
- Make sure you get traction and maintain a momentum. This is something you can achieve only if the organization understands why the change is needed in the first place.
- Swallow your pride. Don't be afraid to admit when the methodology needs adjustment and dare to try doing things in new ways.
- Don't let too many activities and projects scatter your focus. Follow through on the projects you've set out to do.



The key is to enable everyone to contribute towards the strategy. I often compare it with a magnet. We have a number of compass needles and we need to align them to point in the same direction to get the force needed to drive change.

That's one of the key success factors to make growth sustainable and how we accelerate growth with the help of Howwe as a tool.

KAJSA HEDBERG
CEO AT ST1 BIOGAS



You need to be invested in driving the execution. It doesn't happen by itself.

Basically, you can have the best strategy but you won't get anywhere with bad execution. You can have a not-so-great strategy but with a great execution you will succeed. My advice is to be personally involved and be the front-figure for change.

JONAS HERNBORG
CEO AT ELITFÖNSTER





**PROACTIVITY
INSTEAD OF
REACTIVITY**

PROACTIVITY

Making the shift into a proactive way of working creates benefits for everyone in the organization. In our opinion, later is always too late for making necessary changes. Here are the best tips from the CEOs*.



- Take time to set a detailed plan of goals and activities. That will make the daily work much smoother for the leaders within the company.
- Create and maintain a sense of urgency.
- Lead proactively by doing weekly analyses, preferably with the help of Howwe, and offer your support on early deviations.
- Help teams evaluate their Most Important Goals and Key Activities and adjust where necessary.
- Involve your employees in the strategy and get them personally involved by asking them what they can do to contribute to the overarching goals.
- Release the creativity around the way of reaching the goals by inviting your employees to contribute on a personal level.
- Be the voice of perseverance and remind your leaders about the improvement they have made.
- Don't monitor or measure just for the sake of it. Measure what's most important.
- Don't fear transparency. It is not equal to competition.

*The participating CEOs use Howwe to proactively lead their organizations. To learn more about Howwe and the Howwe way of working, we recommend the e-book "[The CEO Playbook for Growth](#)" or a visit to howwe.io.

Being Equipped for Modern Leadership

Just like any other job, the role of CEO is a lot easier when you are properly equipped for it. Tailors need scissors, captains need a compass and CEOs need a modern and efficient way to lead and steer their companies. Let us introduce Howwe - the SaaS application Howwe is a new type of business innovation for a business challenge that has not been solved during the last thirty years – an enterprise software for accelerated growth that empowers your organization to execute your strategy and business plan in time.

Howwe transforms the strategy, which typically is both complex and high-level, into role-based Most Important Goals and connected high-impact Key Activities, thereby making the strategy clear and actionable for all. We've packaged a proactive way of working into an easy to love digital product that supports the organization on all levels, from the CEO to the front-line employees. It may sound complex, but it's actually the opposite. Executing strategy has never been easier. Here are some of the benefits our customers experience, in addition to an unbeatable ROI between 3.5-25.

Freeing up time for your leaders to work on what matters – Putting an end to meeting marathons

71% of meetings are unproductive and inefficient. Unclear actions lead to confusion in 43% of meetings. A focused 15-minutes weekly meeting is all it takes to get an overview of the real-time progress of the goals and activities that matter the most. You and your team take proactive commitments on the activities that you need to secure, boosting engagement and accountability.

Making the business plan clear and actionable – instead of a shelf warmer

When was the last time you looked at your business plan? It might not be the case for you, but for many, it's once a quarter. Using Howwe, the goals and the activities supporting the goals are integrated into weekly tasks. They are clear and transparent for each and everyone in your organization.

Anchoring the business plan and aligning the whole organization towards goals

Already in the management team, only half of the members share the same top three initiatives as the CEO, meaning that the other half is spending their time driving other priorities. Employees below management level don't know what to focus on, yet they want to contribute. Howwe aligns the focus of every employee in the same direction and gets everyone involved in the execution of the goals.

Getting the business plan to happen now

90% of organizations fail to implement their strategy in time. Too many goals and initiatives clutter and stress the organization. Howwe helps you to prioritize, enabling you to focus on less to achieve more. With visualization of progress, employees know where to focus and leaders can act proactively. The weekly 15-minute meeting is your teams chance to be reminded of activities, support each other where gaps are arising, to proactively commit and to celebrate progress. That's how relentlessness is created, allowing you to succeed with your projects and goals, every week, every year.

A common platform allows everyone to speak the same language

Howwe is an enterprise software used by everyone in the organization. With a common tool, everyone speaks the same language, no matter what function they belong to. It creates clarity, involvement and greatly facilitates reporting.

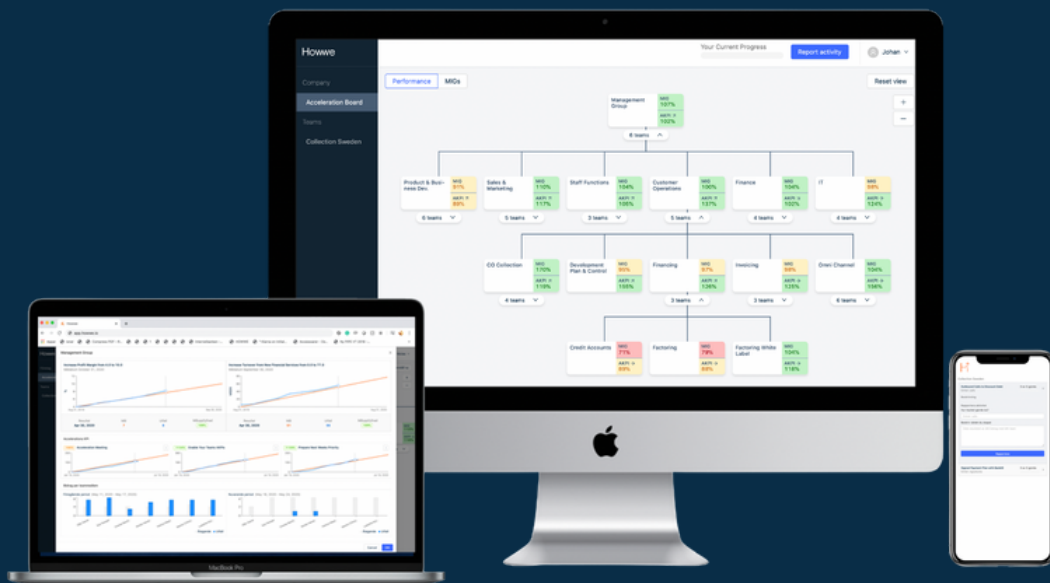
Get away from management's silos and create a relentless focus on what's most important

"Howwe gives us an helicopter view and helps us to focus on the most important things instead of getting caught up in the daily work", says Kajsa Hedberg, CEO at ST1 Biogas.



Howwe is an enterprise software for accelerated growth that empowers your organization to execute your strategy and business plan - in time.

It's your tool to succeed as a modern leader.



GET A DEMO