

CEO/ The
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Institute

TOP 5 CEO ISSUES

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Productivity and Efficiency Pressures

01

Improving productivity is a recurring priority, particularly in SMEs facing rising wage costs and flat output. Leaders are reviewing meeting structures, performance metrics, automation opportunities and time allocation to lift efficiency. There is a strong focus on measuring baseline productivity, reducing decision friction and ensuring systems, data and AI support better commercial outcomes.



Succession Planning and Leadership Transition

Succession remains firmly on the agenda, from CEO succession and board renewal to transitioning founders out of day-to-day leadership. Many businesses lack formal succession plans, creating risk at both executive and governance levels. Leaders are also considering equity plans and development pathways without overpromising future roles.

Growth, Scaling and Revenue Challenges

While some members report positive M&A activity, many are facing flat revenue or contraction in parts of their business. CEOs are debating growth strategies, scaling SaaS models, developing new markets, improving RFP win rates and positioning businesses for sale. The tension between growth ambition and operational capacity (“bandwidth”) is evident across multiple regions.



Business Model Change and Restructuring

Several CEOs are actively challenging or shifting their business models in response to market conditions. This includes restructuring teams, managing redundancies, consolidating cultures post-acquisition and realigning operations to strategy. Leaders are reassessing what is core to their future and what may need to be divested.

05

Cash Flow, Banking and Funding Constraints

Cash flow pressure and dealing with banks feature repeatedly, particularly where growth or M&A activity requires funding. CEOs are experiencing funding delays, stricter lending conditions and greater scrutiny from financial institutions. Maintaining liquidity while investing in capability and technology is an increasingly delicate balancing act.



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