

The Leadership Imperative in the Age of AI



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EXECUTIVE PERSPECTIVES
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Dear Reader,

Artificial intelligence marks a watershed moment in business. For years, organisations competed by acquiring capabilities others did not have. As advanced analytical capabilities become widely available, the advantage is shifting from who has access to technology to who makes better decisions with it.

For leaders, this changes the very nature of competition. How do organisations keep learning when the skills they need keep changing? What should continue to be a matter of human judgement even as AI becomes more capable? How do leaders preserve trust despite data, algorithms and automation playing an increasingly larger role in making business decisions? And how do they ensure that investments in AI strengthen the organisation rather than exist as isolated technological gains?

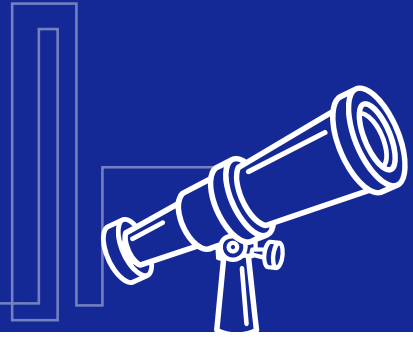
The thought leadership in this edition examines these questions from multiple perspectives: building capabilities that keep pace with change, governing AI responsibly, making better decisions about talent, and translating technological advances into sustained business performance. The pattern across all of them is that organisations creating enduring value from AI are the ones investing in judgement as deliberately as they invest in technology.

We hope this edition adds a useful perspective to the decisions leaders are making today.

Warm regards,

Team Executive Perspectives

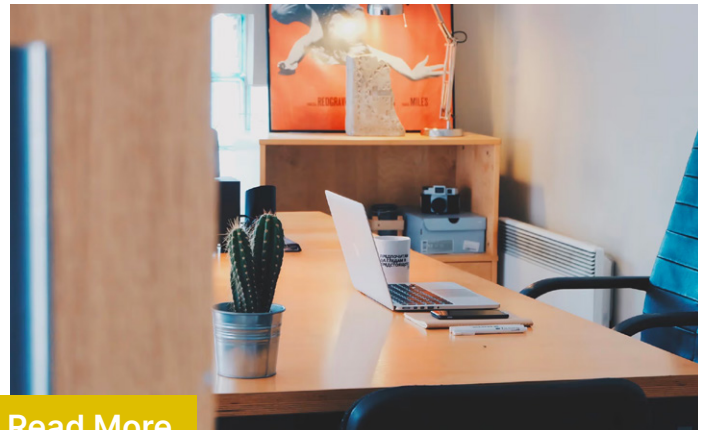
Executive Perspectives



Articles

Why Career Breaks Are More Costly Now Than Ever for Women in Leadership

Many women step away from work expecting to return to the careers they left. Increasingly, they return to workplaces that have moved on without them. As AI accelerates the pace at which skills and roles evolve, career breaks carry consequences that extend well beyond the time away, forcing organisations to rethink how they retain experienced talent and support re-entry.



[Read More](#)

Why Skills-first Organisations Will Outperform in the AI Economy

The organisations that adapt fastest know where their skills are, how quickly they can build new ones, and when to redeploy them, that knowledge counts for more than access to the newest technology. As AI reshapes work, competitive advantage will come from keeping capability in step with change on an ongoing basis, rather than through periodic reskilling pushes.



[Read More](#)

AI vs Machine Learning vs Deep Learning: Matching the Capability to the Right Business Problem

The success of an AI initiative depends as much on choosing the right capability as it does on the technology itself. This article explores the strategic differences between AI, machine learning, and deep learning, helping leaders assess which approach best fits their business objectives and constraints.



[Read More](#)

Viewpoint



Watch Video

Who Gets to Decide When AI is Safe?

Every breakthrough in AI brings the same question back into focus: who decides when the technology has become too risky to release?

In this edition of Viewpoint, Vandith Pamuru, Assistant Professor of Information Systems at ISB, examines the debate through the recent decisions of AI company Anthropic, whose shifting approach to releasing advanced models has reignited questions about responsibility, oversight and trust. He explains why recursive self-improvement has become a growing concern, whether AI companies should regulate themselves, and why global agreement on AI safety may be harder than it sounds. The discussion offers business leaders a practical way to think about one of the most consequential governance questions emerging from the AI revolution.

ISB Discover

Where Research Meets Real-World Decisions



ISB's research-driven knowledge portal, ISB Discover, translates faculty scholarship into insight leaders can use. Designed to bring ideas from journals into boardrooms, policy rooms, and strategy conversations, it spans Leadership & Organisations, Strategy & Innovation, Finance & Accounting, Economics & Public Policy, Operations & Logistics, Marketing, and Technology, across formats that privilege clarity over theory and application over abstraction.

Much of this quarter's research examines how organisations are rethinking work as roles evolve, skills shift, and decision-making moves closer to the front line. The focus is on how leaders allocate authority, build capability, and sustain performance as organisational models change.

Articles

How to Handle Data Responsibly in the Age of Distrust

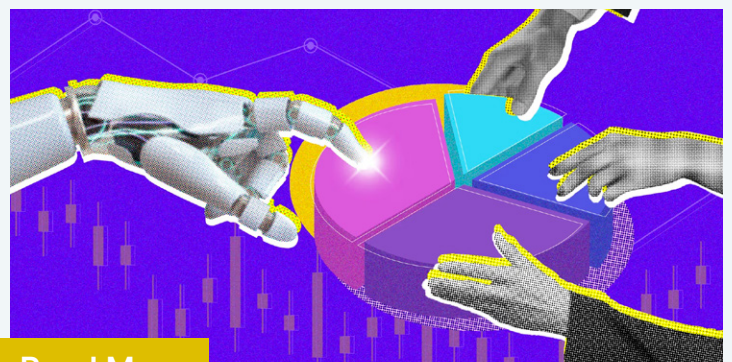
Consumer data has become one of the most valuable assets a business can possess, yet its value depends on something that cannot be collected or stored: trust. As AI gives organisations new ways to mine and combine customer data, responsible stewardship increasingly means earning the trust that makes that data valuable in the first place, well beyond meeting compliance requirements.



[Read More](#)

AI Alone Won't Win Investors; A Strong Marketing Team Will

The commercial value of AI is rarely determined by the technology alone. Investors are just as interested in whether a company understands its market and customers and has the organisational capability to turn innovation into growth. This research explains why strong marketing increasingly shapes that judgement.



[Read More](#)

C-suite Programmes



Senior Management Programme

Sep 27, 2026 - Sep 21, 2027

Develop skills to make better decisions using AI, create strategies for India's unique market, and lead digital change responsibly. The programme guides you through real-world challenges, leadership assessments, ethical governance, and board engagement to prepare you for complex enterprise leadership.

Accelerated General Management Programme

Sep 25, 2026 - Aug 8, 2027

Develop the skills to make cross-functional decisions with confidence, drive strategy across finance, marketing, and operations, and lead teams beyond your function. The programme guides you through real-world business challenges, hands-on simulations, and cross-functional learning to prepare you for enterprise-wide general management roles.



Chief Human Resources Officer Programme

Aug 22, 2026 - Jun 27, 2027

Develop the ability to operate at the enterprise level, shaping people strategy, applying analytics and AI to workforce decisions, and becoming a strategic advisor to the CEO. Strengthen your capacity to align people strategy with business priorities, navigate complexity, and lead organisational transformation with accountability and impact.



Executive Programmes

Executive Programme in Fintech and AI

Oct 31, 2026 - Jun 6, 2027

Gain an interdisciplinary understanding of AI, Fintech, and digital finance to evaluate emerging technologies, navigate evolving regulations, and shape the future of financial services.

Executive Programme in Business Management

Sep 26, 2026 - May 9, 2027

Develop a sharp business mindset by weaving together strategy, AI, finance, and leadership to solve complex challenges and drive lasting impact across organisations.

Executive Programme in Strategy and Leadership

Sep 19, 2026 - Jun 20, 2027

Strengthen the ability to frame complex business problems, make informed strategic choices, and align organisations to translate strategy into execution and lead transformation in dynamic environments.

Women's Leadership Programme

Sep 27, 2026 - Mar 28, 2027

Address the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions by building the competencies needed to overcome the unique challenges they face.

Emerging Leaders Programme

Sep 19, 2026 - May 23, 2027

Accelerate your leadership trajectory as you step into broader responsibility, building self-awareness and a personalised leadership plan grounded in authenticity and purpose. Strengthen your interpersonal effectiveness and gain the agility to lead through uncertainty and digital disruption, spotting growth and innovation opportunities along the way.

Strategic Digital Leadership Programme

Aug 9, 2026 - Nov 4, 2026

Build the strategic, analytical, and leadership capabilities required to lead digital transformation, leveraging AI, innovation, and data-driven insights to drive sustainable organisational growth in an evolving digital economy.

Certificate Programmes

Essentials of Leadership Programme

Aug 2 - 6, 2026

Unlock the leadership potential within you, building the foundation to step confidently into roles of greater responsibility. Develop the core capabilities needed to seize the opportunities that come with expanded scope and accountability.

Business Storytelling and Executive Presence Programme

Aug 28 - 30, 2026

Learn the art of storytelling to build connections, inspire action, and command a leadership presence that stands out. Shape messages that engage stakeholders, drive organisational change, and lead with impact.

Public Policy

Sep 5, 2026 - Feb 6, 2027

Build a structured understanding of policymaking in India, covering institutions, evidence, finance, and sectoral challenges across complex governance systems.

Strategy Formulation and Execution Programme

Aug 20 - 22, 2026

Craft and implement resilient strategies, anticipating market shifts, aligning organisational resources, and navigating complexity effectively. Refine your strategic acumen to ensure your vision is embraced, executed with clarity, and drives sustainable competitive advantage.

Mastering Negotiation and Influence Programme

Oct 23 - 25, 2026

Sharpen your ability to negotiate, persuade, and build consensus across stakeholders with competing interests. Learn to navigate resistance, secure buy-in, and translate your strategic vision into outcomes that others commit to and act on.

Digital Business Transformation with AI

Sep 26, 2026 - Mar 21, 2027

Master AI, IoT, and data analytics to drive strategic decisions, enhance cybersecurity, lead innovation, and implement technology-driven business models for lasting impact.

UPCOMING LEARNING INTERVENTIONS

AI in Business: Fundamentals to Applications

Sep 19, 2026 - Feb 27, 2027

Harness AI's transformative power through a curriculum that builds from foundational concepts to hands-on applications, empowering smarter decisions and business innovation.

Mastering Executive Presence

Sep 19, 2026 - Jan 3, 2027

Learn how to communicate with clarity, build a compelling personal brand, and strengthen emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and negotiation skills to influence with confidence.

Project Management

Sep 19, 2026 - Mar 7, 2027

Master end-to-end project management with real-world tools and proven frameworks to navigate uncertainty, optimise resources, deliver value, and lead complex projects successfully.

AI for Leaders: Strategy to Action Programme

Sep 24 - Sep 26, 2026

Build the fluency to deploy AI with judgement, read AI cost and model choices, practise hands-on with the tools, and leave with a roadmap for your own organisation.



UPCOMING EVENTS



CHRO Dialogues

The Human Strategy Advantage:
Why trust is the execution layer of AI-led transformation

 Sep 3, 2026
 9:30 AM onwards
 ISB, Hyderabad
 In-person

[Register Now](#)

CHRO Dialogues

The Human Strategy Advantage: Why Trust is the Execution Layer of AI-Led Transformation

Join us for CHRO Dialogues 4th Edition, an in-person conversation on why trust and not technology will be the real differentiator as organisations invest in AI and digital transformation. Designed for CHROs and senior people leaders, this edition explores how human-capital decisions shape innovation and why trust determines AI adoption success.

Register now and help shape strategic advantage.

MasterClass

Strategy that sticks: why execution kills more companies than bad strategy

Join us for a live-virtual MasterClass on 'Strategy that Sticks: Why Execution Kills More Companies Than Bad Strategy', led by Deepak Jena, Assistant Professor of Strategy at ISB, as he takes you inside one of the most consequential and most underexamined problems in management.

Register now and learn why your strategy isn't sticking and exactly what to do about it.



MasterClass on
Strategy that Sticks:
Why Execution Kills
More Companies
Than Bad Strategy

 Aug 7, 2026
 5:30 PM IST
 Live-Virtual | Zoom

Deepak Jena
Assistant Professor of Strategy
ISB

[Reserve Your Spot](#)



MasterClass on
**Leading in the Age
of AI: Strategy, Not
Just Tools**

 Sep 18, 2026
 5:30 PM IST
 Live-Virtual | Zoom

Vishal Karungulam
Clinical Assistant Professor (Teaching),
Information Systems, ISB

[Register Now](#)

MasterClass

Leading in the age of AI: strategy, not just tools

Join us for a MasterClass on 'Leading in the Age of AI: Strategy, Not Just Tools', led by Vishal Karungulam, Clinical Assistant Professor (Teaching) of Information Systems at ISB, as he unpacks what it really takes to lead through this shift, beyond the tools.

Register now and learn why the real AI advantage isn't in the tools you buy, it's in the strategy you lead.

Custom Solutions for Enterprises



HSBC

Doing Business in India - 2026

June 7, 2026 (4-day)

Global leaders from HSBC spent four days at our Hyderabad campus unpacking the forces shaping India's business landscape. Modules spanned the macro story, financial system architecture, Digital Public Infrastructure-led banking transformation, sustainable finance, and frugal innovation, moving participants from market awareness to informed business application.

AstraZeneca

Enterprise Edge: Executive Development Programme

April 27, 2026 (4-day)

The India leadership team at AstraZeneca came together for a customised residential programme aligned to the organisation's growth priorities. Strategic foresight, financial judgement, stakeholder influence, and navigating a complex global matrix were central themes, helping leaders move from functional depth to enterprise breadth.



CHRO Dialogues

3rd Edition

May 7, 2026

The third edition of CHRO Dialogues brought together 55+ senior HR leaders at ISB's Hyderabad campus exploring the shift from automation to orchestration in HR. Sessions examined AI's evolving role in workforce decisions, governance and ethics in agentic systems, and the human capabilities leaders must strengthen to lead effectively in an AI-dominated world.

Custom Solutions for Government

National e-Governance Division (NeGD)

Digital Transformation for Senior Leaders - A Capacity Building Programme under Digital India
May 4, 2026 (5-day)

The fifth cohort of senior government officials completed a five-day residential programme on digital transformation in government, delivered in collaboration with NeGD, MeitY. Faculty-led sessions, applied discussions, and an industry visit explored AI adoption and institutional readiness, strengthening participants' leadership in technology-led public systems.



National Mineral Development Corporation Limited (NMDC)

Management Development Programme
May 22, 2026 (8-day)

Early career professionals from finance, commercial, and civil functions across NMDC's operations spent five days at our Hyderabad campus on a bespoke learning journey. Leadership confidence, communication, collaboration, and stakeholder engagement were the focus, equipping participants to contribute with greater organisational awareness across teams.



Arun Jaitley National Institute of Finance Management (AJNIFM)

Indian Financial System, Emerging Technologies & Ethical Leadership
June-15, 2026 (5-day)

Officer trainees from ICAS, IDAS, IP&TAFS, and ICoAS spent five days at AJNIFM on a programme complementing their grounding in financial management and audit. Macroeconomics, India's financial system, cyber resilience, AI-enabled decision-making, and public-sector ethics rounded out a broader perspective on financial governance.





Executive Education & Digital Learning, ISB

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write to execed@isb.edu

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