

# Senior Managers Guide CEOs in Roundtable Talks

**Former chambers of commerce employees in Gothenburg, Sweden, have established a network of senior managers able to meet the needs of CEOs in key areas of company management.**

IN A WORLD CHANGING ever more rapidly, it is increasingly difficult for a single person to make good and rational decisions that will benefit a company in the long run. To help CEOs, General Managers and other key decision-makers in a company, four former chamber of commerce employees have started Chamber Business Network Executive (referred to as CBN hereafter).

“The idea is to bring around ten CEOs with the same issues on the agenda together, and let them exchange ideas and experiences with each other,” says Peter Johansson, Vice President of Chamber Business Network Executive.

## Four steps

CBN Executive is a process in four steps. By interviewing potential participants individually for an hour and 15 minutes, their priorities are identified. In the second step (about one month later) the CEO get the chance to meet one of the most



**CBN BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** First Row, starting from left: Chairman Jan-Olle Folkesson, also Chairman of the Board and President of 6 AP-Fonden (Public Pension Fund), Anders Halldin, Founder of Mercuri International. Second row, starting from left; Lennart Nodby, CEO of SC Gruppen, Mats Viking, Economic Director of SC Gruppen, Peter Johansson, Vice President of CBN and Robert Jukyc, President of CBN.

distinguished specialists of a chosen subject. During half a day the CEO is able to develop his or hers urgent issues from step one. Before the meeting the senior manager has studied the CEO's company and priorities thoroughly. This means that he or she is able to get to the bottom of the issues right away.

In the third step the chosen CEOs (about ten) get together for a full day's activity. They get to meet the senior managers from step two again. But they also sit down for a roundtable talk where everyone can give and take of experiences, know-

ledge and insights concerning the questions and issues addressed in the previous steps. The fourth and last step is a tailored dive into each respective subject, also aimed at the CEO's own specialists, like chief of economics, logistics manager or IT-manager. The talks of this step are also centred on the issues from the earlier steps. Step four constitutes a half-day's activity on each subject. The CEOs decide which of the events they prefer to participate in.

“The seven subjects that a participant can focus on are: strategic communication and

ethics, management, law, cash management, IT, risk management and, finally, logistics. A moderator, even he or she a senior manager, answers for the continuity of the process and functions as catalyst and chairman of the discussions,” says Peter Johansson.

## Neutral ground

CBN Executive has chosen the chambers of commerce as the third party of their consortium.

“It is a neutral ground where everyone can meet on equal terms. Besides, it's a most trustworthy actor. The information shared in the meetings is of course confidential. By using ChamberSign, owned by the chambers of commerce, we provide a high level of security. The communication between the CEOs and senior managers is executed in a certified and coded environment, demanding authorised identity of user and receiver,” says Peter Johansson.

The senior managers that provide the special competencies have been chosen carefully and are part of the corporate elite in Sweden. They come from the following companies: Oracle, Setterwalls solicitors, JKL, Alfakonsult, Accenture, Öhrlings Price Waterhouse Coopers, SEB, KPMG, SUN Microsystems, AT&T, Schenker, and Gernandt & Danielsson solicitors. The moderator for the third step is Ingemar Claesson from the School of Economics and Commercial Law, Gothenburg. ■