



AGENDA

Location: Dubai, UAE

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

8:30 **Informal Breakfast**

9:30 **Welcome**

Dennis Carey – Founder, CEO Academy

Sandy Climan – Chairman, CEO Academy

Michael Useem – William and Jacalyn Egan Professor Emeritus of Management and Faculty Director, Leadership Center & McNulty Leadership Program, The Wharton School

9:45 **Leveraging AI and Digital Transformation for Unprecedented Economic Power and a Competitive Edge**

In an era where digital transformation defines economic sovereignty and national resilience, this session offers a global perspective on how leaders can harness the power of technology and AI to drive economic diversification and secure a competitive edge on the world stage. It highlights the strategic role of AI, data, and innovation in redefining governance, operations, and cross-border competitiveness. From digital trust and infrastructure security to the transformative potential of AI, this dialogue offers a roadmap for leaders ready to advance their national and organizational agendas through technology-led growth.

Speaker: **Tiger Tyagarajan** – Former President and CEO, Genpact

Moderator: **Achal Khanna** – CEO, SHRM India, APAC & MENA

10:30 **From Covert Ops to Boardroom Strategy: Uncovering Lessons from a CIA Spy Turned Global Advisor**

Step into a rare and riveting narrative as a former CIA operations officer and global strategy consultant, who reveals the hard-won lessons of navigating shadowy geopolitical terrain and high-stakes global markets. Combining espionage-grade operational precision with boardroom-level strategic insight, this session will translate clandestine truths into executive advantage. Whether responding to emerging tech vulnerabilities, safeguarding reputational and digital assets, or capitalizing on art-finance intersections, participants will learn how every strategic move—like a covert operation—demands foresight, agility, and resilience that resonate across the rapidly evolving markets of GCC, APAC, and Africa.

11:15 **Break**

11:25 **The CEO's Balancing Act: Building Enduring Businesses Across the GCC and Beyond**

The session will explore what it takes to drive sustainable growth and organizational transformation in high potential but often volatile markets. Drawing on his leadership experience, he will offer practical insights on scaling innovation across fragmented geographies, building trust as a strategic asset, and navigating disruption with resilience and purpose.

Speaker: **Shiv** – Operating Partner, Advent International; Former CEO, PepsiCo India

12:10 **(LUNCH) NETWORKING LUNCH**

13:15 **AI, Deficits, and the New Economic Regime: How CEOs Must Navigate the Next Decade**

A high-level discussion on navigating economic shifts and thriving amid transformative AI, fiscal deficits, and geopolitical disruption. Leveraging his roles as Chief Investment Officer at Red Cell Partners and distinguished fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, Ferguson will highlight key macroeconomic forces such as AI's potential, structural deficits, and interest rate inflection points and their implications for national resilience, investment strategy, and institutional leadership for the decade ahead.

Speaker: **Roger W. Ferguson Jr.** – Former CEO and President, TIAA

Moderator: **Sandy Climan** – Chairman, CEO Academy; CEO, Entertainment Media Ventures

- 14:00 **Navigating Power and Policy: Business, Diplomacy, and the New Global Order**
The world of work is witnessing a dramatic shift in global diplomacy – one that upends long-standing alliances, rewrites trade agreements, and tests the resilience of international institutions. From navigating tense negotiations with heads of state to managing the fallout of policy shocks that reverberated across markets, Sondland brings rare, first-hand insights that will reshape the rules of global engagement. In this session, he'll share unfiltered lessons on leveraging political change to create opportunities, anticipating policy moves before they hit the headlines, and building resilience in an era where a single decision can alter the trajectory of entire industries. Leaders will leave with a clearer roadmap for thriving in a high-stakes environment where political disruption is not the exception, but the norm.
Speaker: **Ambassador Gordon D. Sondland** – Founder & Chairman, Provenance Hotels; Former U.S. Ambassador to the European Union
- 14:45 **Break**
- 15:00 **The Future of Capital: Navigating Investment Strategy and Financial Innovation**
From digital currencies to shifting interest rates and evolving capital markets, CEOs and public-sector leaders are navigating a rapidly changing financial landscape. This session explores how policymakers and investors are rethinking capital deployment, balancing innovation with fiscal prudence amid macroeconomic volatility, and advancing regional investment ecosystems. Learn how emerging financial technologies and new models of capital deployment are redefining national resilience and long-term growth.
Speaker: **Vineet Budki** – Managing Partner and CEO, Sigma Capital
Moderator: **Sandy Climan** – Chairman, CEO Academy; CEO, Entertainment Media Ventures
- 15:45 **Insight to Action: Strategy, Innovation, and Resilience in a Shifting Global Landscape**
As nations and enterprises recalibrate in a world of technological acceleration, shifting capital flows, and redefined alliances, senior leaders are being asked to do more than respond – they must redefine how their organizations lead, grow, and endure. This facilitated session brings executives together in small, trusted peer groups to explore how these global forces are shaping their own leadership agendas. Through candid, off-the-record dialogue, you'll connect across geographies and industries to unpack the complexity behind innovation, economic transformation, talent shifts, and sustainable growth models.
Breakouts: **Pierre Heistein** – Executive Facilitator, Moderator and Author, SHRM Linkage
- 16:30 **Break**
- 17:30 **Dinner and Entertainment**

Thursday, December 11, 2025

8:30 **Informal Breakfast**

9:30 **Introduction to Day 2**

Dennis Carey – Founder, CEO Academy

Sandy Climan – Chairman, CEO Academy

Michael Useem – William and Jacalyn Egan Professor Emeritus of Management and Faculty Director, Leadership Center & McNulty Leadership Program, The Wharton School

9:45 **Driving Global Growth: Lessons from Leading in Complex Markets**

Gain valuable insights on managing operations across geographies and successfully driving growth in diverse, high-stakes markets. Drawing from his leadership in markets including Europe, Japan, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, and North America, Vecera will highlight strategies for navigating economic and geopolitical complexities, fostering organizational agility, and driving sustainable growth in dynamic environments. Participants will gain practical, globally tested insights to help their businesses thrive in today's interconnected world.

Speaker: **Stanislav Vecera** – President, Asia Pacific, Middle East, and Africa, Procter & Gamble

Moderator: **Christopher D. Lopez** – Managing Director, CEO Academy

10:30 **Bridging Borders: A CEO's Guide to Navigating Global Diplomacy and Building Strategic Alliances**

Unparalleled insights into diplomacy, policy, and partnership. Leaders will learn how to navigate complex geopolitical landscapes, engage effectively with global delegates, and leverage diplomatic channels to secure sustainable business alliances. This session will challenge leaders to rethink traditional approaches to foreign markets. Whether businesses are entering new territories or expanding existing partnerships, this session will equip them with the tools to forge meaningful, long-lasting international relationships that drive business growth and global influence.

Speaker: **Ambassador Joseph W. Westphal** – Senior Global Fellow, The Lauder Institute; Former U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Moderator: **Dennis Carey** – Founder, CEO Academy; Vice Chairman, Korn Ferry

11:15 **Break**

11:25 **Why Your Human Capital Strategy May Be Sabotaging Your Growth**

Drawing on his recent columns and research, Cappelli will show executives why many workforce initiatives – such as flashy well-being programs, AI investments, and hybrid work policies – erode culture, fuel turnover, and restrict innovation rather than drive value. This session is a call to re-engineer the strategic architecture of people decisions, which is especially vital for companies navigating ambitious growth across Dubai, the Gulf region, and around the globe.

Speaker: **Peter Cappelli** – George W. Taylor Professor of Management and Director, Center for Human Resources, The Wharton School

12:10 **NETWORKING LUNCH**

13:15 **Power, Pressure, and Pivot Points: Leading Through Geopolitical Upheaval and Global Realignment**

A new era of geopolitical complexity is taking shape – defined by fractured alliances, election-fueled uncertainty, China's global overproduction, rising economic nationalism, and the accelerating influence of AI and digital infrastructure on global power dynamics. For senior leaders, this is not just background noise - it's a reshaping of the playing field. In this high-stakes session, you'll explore what it means to "win" in the age of volatility and how to position your organization to lead through disruption, de-risk your global footprint, and thrive amid the convergence of technology, talent, and geopolitics.

Speaker: **Ram Charan** – Director; Advisor to Global CEOs and Boards

- 14:00 **Capitalizing on New Leadership Models for Sustainable Success**
A thought-provoking look at Japan's emerging model of corporate leadership. Drawing from his in-depth research and recent book *Resolute Japan*, this session explores how Japanese companies are navigating today's global pressures while outperforming in areas such as shareholder return, stakeholder trust, and organizational resilience. In an era defined by volatility and competing priorities, Useem will offer fresh insights into how leaders can drive enduring success without compromising agility, responsibility, societal impact, or results.
Speaker: **Michael Useem** — William and Jacalyn Egan Professor Emeritus of Management and Faculty Director, Leadership Center & McNulty Leadership Program, The Wharton School
- 14:45 **Break**
- 15:00 **Financing Growth in a Fragmented World: Unlocking Capital and Opportunity Across Africa, the Middle East and Beyond**
In an era where capital moves faster than trust and geopolitical alliances shift overnight, the quest to finance growth has never been more complex or fuller of opportunity. From sovereign funds in the Gulf to venture investors in Silicon Valley and institutional money flowing into African infrastructure, new power centers of finance are emerging. In this dynamic fireside chat, Ibrahim Sagna, Executive Chairman of Silverbacks Holdings, will discuss where capital is truly being unlocked and who controls it. Participants will explore how investors can balance profit and purpose, the rise of Africa as a financial and cultural force, and the opportunities at the intersection of sports, tech, entertainment, and finance.
Speaker: **Ibrahim Sagna** — Executive Chairman, Silverbacks Holdings
Moderator: **Sandy Climan** — Chairman, CEO Academy; CEO, Entertainment Media Ventures
- 15:45 **Insight to Action: Power, Policy, and Performance in Fragmented Markets**
Global leadership today means operating amid fractured alliances, contested markets, and shifting centers of power. From capital strategy and regional expansion to talent planning and policy navigation, decisions once considered routine are now shaped by volatility, fragmentation, and competing pressures across borders. In this facilitated peer dialogue, senior executives from across the GCC, India, Asia Pacific, and beyond will convene in small, high-trust groups to reflect on how these forces are playing out in their own enterprises.
Breakouts: **Pierre Heistein** — Executive Facilitator, Moderator and Author, SHRM Linkage
- 16:30 **Key Takeaways and Wharton Certificate Presentation**
- 16:45 **End of Program**
- 18:00 **Dinner (Optional)**