**Introduction**

The questionnaire covers 4 themes Alignment, Ambition, Mobilization and Execution. Each theme follows a similar and simple structure of questions. Each theme takes 8-12 minutes to cover. Our focus is HOW a CEO should or could work to achieve success.

0. Which year did you start as CEO? (Let the CEO select if several applicable CEO jobs).

*We start with theme Alignment & Governance*

**Theme 1 – Alignment & Governance**

**Alignment**

1. Please describe the 2 most important actions performed by the owner representatives that contributed to successful trust & alignment between the owner representatives and you as CEO (alignment regarding critical objectives, business plan and way of working together)?

2. Please provide 2 specific suggestions for how the owner representatives could have acted to even further strengthen trust & alignment between the owner representatives and you as CEO?

3. Imagine that you responded to the following question 6 months into your CEO assignment – how do you score the degree of trust & alignment between the owner representatives and you as CEO regarding critical objectives, business plan and way of working together – on a 10 grade scale where “3” is poor, “5” is ok and “7” is good?

4. If score <7, Which 2 key factors explain the score?

5. Which 3 key factors or actions would have improved the score to 9?

**Competence**

6. Please describe the 2 most important contributions by the owner representatives on the theme of business-critical knowledge & competence (in the shape of competencies, methods, people etc.)?

7. Please provide 2 specific suggestions for how the owner representatives could have made even stronger contributions on the theme of business-critical knowledge & competence?

8. Imagine you responded to the following question 12 months into your CEO assignment – how do you score the contribution of business-critical knowledge & competence from owner representatives on a 10 grade scale where “3” is poor, “5” is ok and “7” is good?

9. If score <7, Which 2 key factors explain the score?

10. Which 3 key factors or actions would have improved the score to 9?

**Governance**

11. Please describe the 2 most important contributions by the owner representatives to ensure an effective governance model, i.e. for performance management of the company and its business plan?

12. Please provide 2 specific suggestions for how the owner representatives could have made even stronger contributions to ensure an effective governance model?

13. Imagine you responded to the following question 12 months into your CEO assignment – how effective is the overall governance model on a 10 grade scale where “3” is poor, “5” is ok and “7” is good?

14. If score <7, Which 2 key factors explain the score?

15. Which 3 key factors or actions would have improved the score to 9?

*Now theme 2 of 4 - Ambition & Priorities*

**Theme 2 – Ambitions & Priorities**

16. In your first business plan as CEO of the private equity owned company – what is your view of the overall ambition level regarding financial & strategic targets?

(i) Too low targets

(ii) Somewhat too low targets

(iii) Targets at the right level

(iv) Targets were somewhat over-ambitious

(v) Targets were clearly over-ambitious

17a. Please provide short motivation to your answer in question 16?

17b. Roughly, what was the target for EBIT increase for the first 3 years in the business plan?

(i) EBIT + 25 % first 3 years

(ii) EBIT + 50 % first 3 years

(iii) EBIT + 75 % first 3 years

(iv) Double EBIT first 3 years

(v) EBIT should more than double first 3 years

(v) Other 3-year EBIT target – describe briefly

18. Please describe the 2 most important success factors regarding the process of developing the financial & strategic ambition level of the business plan?

19. Please provide 2 specific suggestions for how the development of the ambition level could have been improved further?

20. In your first business plan as CEO of the private equity owned company – what is your view on the number of key initiatives defined in the business plan?

(i) Too few key initiatives

(ii) Well balanced number of key initiatives

(iii) Somewhat too many key initiatives

(iv) Too many key initiatives

21. Why did you end up with too few or too many key initiatives (depending on answer in q20)

22. What were the implications of too few or too many key initiatives (depending on answer in q20)

23. How many “mission-critical” initiatives (or key themes / focus areas) were part of your first business plan?

(i) 1-2 mission critical initiatives

(ii) 3-5 mission critical initiatives

(iii) 5-7 mission critical initiatives

(iv) 8-10 mission critical initiatives

(v) 10 - 15 mission critical initiatives

(vi) >15 mission critical initiatives

24. Which were the 2 most important success factors to ensure a clear priority of the “mission-critical” initiatives in the business plan?

25. Please provide 2 specific suggestions for how the process of achieving a clear priority of the key initiatives could have been even better?

26. How what you rate your first business plan on a 10 grade scale with regards to ambition level *and* clear prioritization of key initiatives? where “3” is poor, “5” is ok and “7” is good

27. If score <7, Which 2 key factors explain the score?

28. Which 3 key factors or actions would have improved the score to a strong 8 or 9?

*Theme 3 out of 4. It is shorter. People & Mobilization.*

**Theme 3 – People & Mobilization**

29. In which ways did you secure strong organizational ownership for the business plan´s objectives and key initiatives – describe the 2 most important actions?

30. Please provide 2 specific suggestions for how you and the top management team could have ensured an even stronger organizational ownership for the business plan initiatives?

31. Imagine you responded to the following question 12-18 months into your CEO assignment – How strong is the overall ownership for the business plan´s objectives and key initiatives among the top 10% of management – please score on a 10 grade scale where “3” is poor, “5” is ok and “7” is good?

32. Which 3 key factors or actions would have improved the score to a strong 8 or 9?

33. Imagine you responded to the following question 12-18 months into your CEO assignment – How strong is the overall organizational ownership for the business plan´s objectives and key initiatives – please score on a 10 grade scale where “3” is poor, “5” is ok and “7” is good?

34. Which 3 key factors or actions would have improved the score to a strong 8 or 9?

35. After 12-18 months into your CEO assignment; to what degree did you have your “dream-team” - i.e. the right person in the right place regarding the 5% highest managerial positions?

(i) The right person in the right place for >90 % for the 5% highest managerial positions

(ii) The right person in the right place for 80-90 %

(iii) The right person in the right place for 70-80 %

(iv) The right person in the right place for 60-70 %

(v) The right person in the right place for 50-60%

(vi) The right person in the right place for <50 % for the 5% highest managerial positions

36. How could you have acted to better or faster ensure the right person in the right place for the top 5% managerial positions – top 2 suggestions?

*Now the final section. Theme Implementation & Results.*

**Theme 4 – Implementation & Results**

37. How did you secure speed & pace in the development and execution of the business plan – please describe the 2 most important factors or actions?

38. What could you have done even better to secure speed & pace in the development and execution of the business plan - top 2 suggestions?

39. You get this question 18 months into your CEO assignment – How strong is the speed & pace in the execution of the business plan; please score on a 10 grade scale where “3” is poor, “5” is ok and “7” is good?

40. If score <7, Which 2 key factors explain the score?

41. Which 3 key factors or actions would have improved the score to a strong 8 or 9?

42. In which ways did you secure the organization’s success in implementing the mission-critical initiatives in the business plan– please describe the 2 most important factors or actions?

43. What could you have done differently to enable even stronger organizational success in implementing the business plan - top 2 suggestions?

44. You get the following question 18 months into your CEO assignment – How do you score the implementation success of the business plan’s key initiatives; please score on a 10 grade scale where “3” is poor, “5” is ok and “7” is good?

45. If score <7, Which 2 key factors explain the score?

46. Which 3 key factors or actions would have improved the score to a strong 8 or 9?

*Finally, just 3 concluding questions*

47. Which were the top 2-4 mission-critical initiatives in the business plan to drive absolute EBIT growth – select from the following (read all of them quickly 1-2 times)?

(i) Organic growth

(ii) Growth via acquisitions

(iii) Drive consolidation

(iv) Digitalization

(v) New international markets

(vi) Turn-around / restructuring

(vii) Integration of acquisitions

(viii) Profitability improvements

(ix) Cost cut

(x) Operational excellence

(xii) Making operations more professional

(xiii) Other themes – indicate what / which

48. During your last year as CEO prior to the COVID -19 crisis – what was the annual organic EBIT growth?

(i) Double digit % positive organic EBIT growth

(ii) Single digit % positive organic EBIT growth

(iii) Flat / zero organic EBIT growth

(iv) Negative organic EBIT growth

49. If you could do your CEO journey all over again from day 1 – what would you have done slightly or entirely differently to ensure an even better success – 2 specific examples?

50. Lastly, our conversation has covered best practices and lessons learnt in order to succeed as a CEO in a private equity context – on that theme – which are your top 3 specific advice to an incoming CEO who is new to the private equity context?