

HOW TO BE THE CEO WHISPERER



Solve **their** problems. Accelerate **your** career.

“My leadership team is dysfunctional.”

You: Become the connector.

- Build cross-functional trust and context; share information across silos.
- Translate between functions (finance  ops  product).
- Model company-first thinking. Make the right decisions, not the right decisions for just you.

“I can’t hire great people fast enough.”

You: Become a talent magnet.

- Hire exceptionally. Stand up against mediocre hires. Even when it's not for your team.
- Sell candidates on mission and culture. don't just recruit. Inspire.
- Keep a personal bench of talent ready to call on when needed.

“People don’t care enough.”

You: Be visibly all-in.

- Show ownership, intensity, and urgency. Make your energy contagious.
- Speak in outcomes, not tasks. Do the tasks to drive the outcomes.
- Help your team connect emotionally to why the work matters.

“Execution is too slow.”

You: Drive momentum.

- Shorten cycles. Remove blockers. Celebrate fast iteration over perfect plans.
- Clarify decisions. Who's contributing? Who's deciding? And by when?
- Default to action, and make it safe for others to do the same.

“I’m the only one who sees the big picture.”

You: Think like an owner.

- Anticipate second-order effects.
- Frame tradeoffs in company terms, not department terms.
- Bring integrated insights that help the CEO zoom out.
Outside the company. Outside the immediate.

“We’re not keeping pace with technology.”

You: Be the tech translator.

- Stay current on AI, automation, and digital tools. Always have an experiment in-flight.
- Turn buzzwords into practical use cases for your function.
- Be the bridge between innovation and execution.

“There’s zero accountability.”

You: Be relentlessly reliable.

- Never end a meeting without clarity on who owns what by when.
- Track commitments publicly. Build clear KPIs. Hang them on the wall.
- Give peers feedback when they drop the ball. Respectfully, but directly.

“We keep solving the same problems.”

You: Fix systems, not symptoms.

- Notice recurring issues and codify solutions (processes, templates, training).
- Push for root-cause analysis after misses. Volunteer to lead them.
- Document, delegate and teach. Don't get trapped in just doing.

“Our culture’s getting diluted as we grow.”

You: Be a culture warrior.

- Translate values into daily behavior.
- Call out when something feels “off-brand.” Show the culturally-aligned alternative.
- Help onboard new people into not just what we do, but how we do it.

“Everyone needs my input on everything.”

You: Earn trust through judgment.

- Make decisions with strong reasoning and communicate them clearly. Show your work.
- Keep the CEO informed, not involved. Be a filter, not a funnel.
- Own the outcomes. Especially the imperfect ones.

“Nobody wants to take smart risks.”

You: Normalize wise risk-taking.

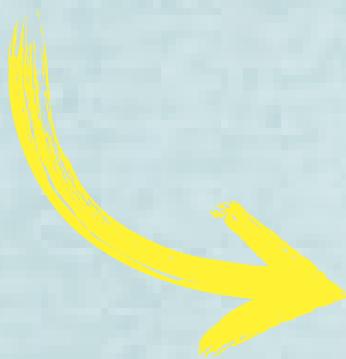
- Frame risks as controlled experiments with clear learning goals.
- Protect people who try bold things. Celebrate the right mistakes and make them well.
- Reward insight and learning, not just outcomes.

CEOs don't need perfection.
They need leverage.

Those who make real pain go away
aren't employees. **They're leaders.**

Even if the title
hasn't caught up with them yet.

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