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Interview with Francisco Belil

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“No job lasts a lifetime, but we do have to prepare ourselves to be employable for life”



Francisco Belil | Deputy Chairman of Fundación Bertelsmann

Education, corporate social responsibility, leadership and risk management are some of the matters raised by Francisco Belil, Deputy Chairman of Fundación Bertelsmann, during the interview. In the search for talent that combines values, excellence and passion, the executive emphasises the need for both the young and seniors alike to train continuously in both a specific area and in a wider range of areas.

What qualities and values must an executive have?

Executive and leader should be synonymous. A leader looks for talent and knows how to guide this talent towards objectives that are important for the company; they look for people who, besides being intelligent, have integrity, are honest with a balanced ego, and, above all, with a passion for excellence. Leaders must also ask themselves continuously: Are my actions adding value to my company? Do they bring me closer to achieving my goals? This will enable them to promote the growth of the people, the organisation and, ultimately, society.

How important is Corporate Social Responsibility for companies?

CSR is very important for companies in that, in addition to creating value and employment, it also has a moral obligation to give back to society what companies have received. Giving is always more satisfying than receiving and, therefore, apart from fulfilling your obligation, you will also feel an enormous amount of gratification.

“A leader looks for talent, for people who, besides being intelligent and having integrity, also have a passion for excellence.”

How should an executive manage risk and uncertainty?

To live is to face permanent risks that we are accustomed to managing. As far as companies are concerned, we encounter different risks but the system is not very different: assess the risk intelligently and objectively, categorise the risks depending on the likelihood of occurrence and, lastly, create an action plan with preventive measures and that will reduce the impact. Even if the organisation has a global risk

plan, it is necessary for each person to have sufficient sensitivity and judgment to manage the risks that occur in their area.

What is your opinion of leadership in Spain?

Working and leading in 20 different countries worldwide has given me the opportunity to get to know different cultures, nationalities and customs, and this has made me realise that Spanish leadership is among the best. Other countries' accusation that Spain has low productivity has nothing to do with leadership, but rather is due to other causes such as the size of the market, the financing possibilities of companies and the lack of R&D, among others.

What advice would you give to young people who are entering the management of organisations?

One thing I would tell young people is that they must find their passion, look for what they most like to do and dedicate themselves to it. We will only achieve good results, grow as a person and help our organisations if we like what we do.

Also, young people are the future and must be continuously trained, not only in a specific subject, but together with a more holistic training and a continuous curiosity. Today's work dynamics indicate that jobs do not last a lifetime, but we do have to prepare ourselves to be employable for life.

“It is necessary for each person to have sufficient sensitivity and judgment to manage the risks that occur in their area of work on a daily basis.”

Contact

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