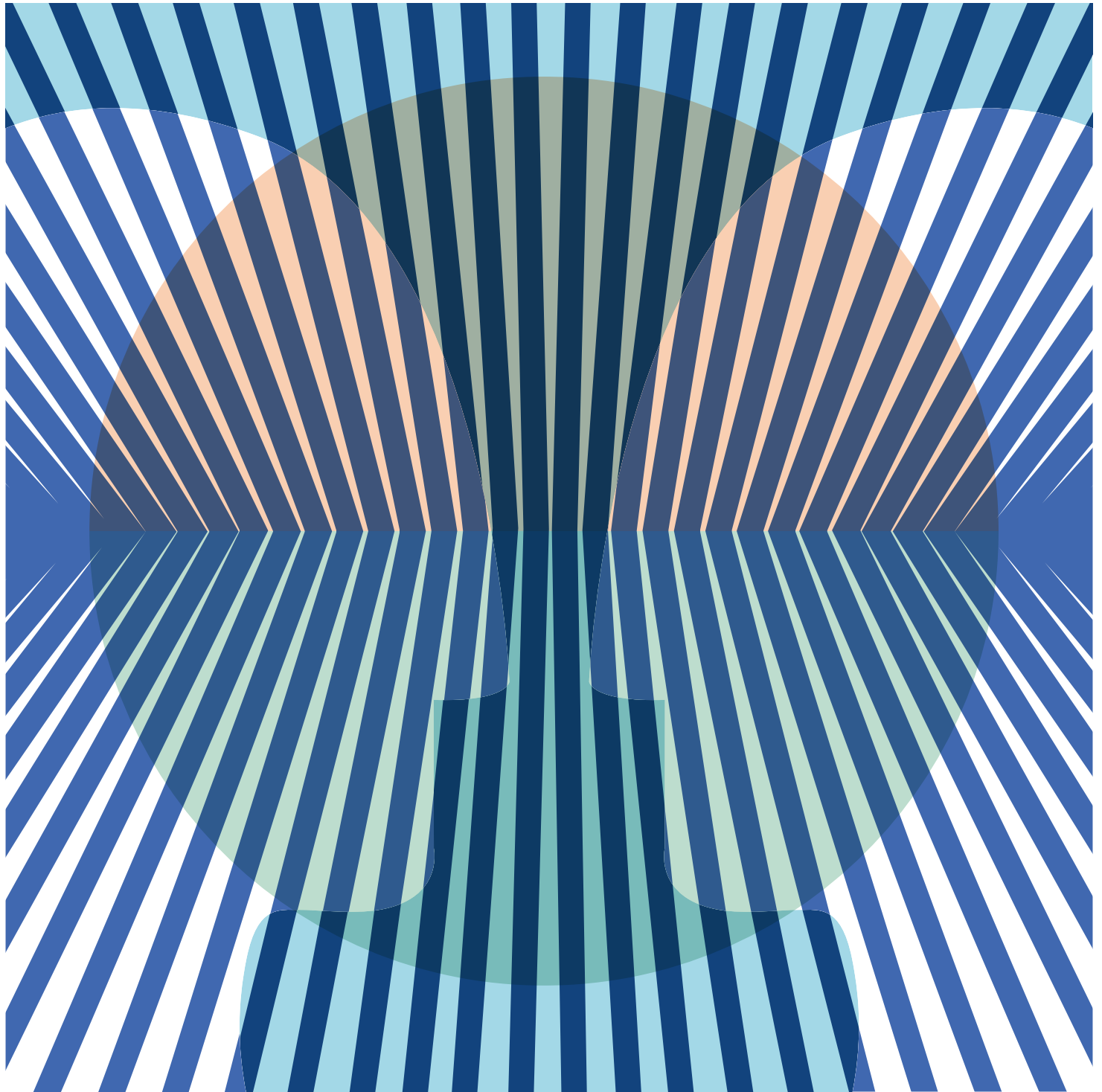


WELCOME 2026

Reflections and insights for management
from the partners of
Roy C. Hitchman Executive Search AG



ROY C. HITCHMAN AG
EXECUTIVE SEARCH

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// *We are large enough
to carry out
search assignments
professionally.*

*And small enough
to make them a success
with agility, speed and
a personalized approach.* //

Dear Readers,

The "Welcome 2026" publication in front of you is something special, which not only ventures a look to the future, but also marks an important milestone: the 40th anniversary of Roy C. Hitchman Executive Search AG.

We have been supporting executives and companies on their journeys toward excellence and sustainable success for four decades now. This anniversary gives us an opportunity to pause for a moment, reflect and share with you the essence of what constitutes good leadership in an ever-changing world.

In an era characterized by unprecedented upheavals and complexity, focus and in-depth understanding are more important than ever. Markets are changing at a break-neck pace, technologies are undergoing exponential development and the demands on executive leadership are growing all the time. How can you navigate storms? How can you promote innovation when the familiar promises security? And how can you remain human and authentic in an increasingly digitalized working environment?

We share our answers to these questions in this publication. It is a collection of food for thought for management and ideas on leadership development that are guided by the timeless wisdom of twelve choice quotes from great thinkers, philosophers and persons of note.

From Albert Einstein's plea for simplicity to Hermann Hesse's call to action, from how the Dalai Lama viewed challenges to Konrad Adenauer's appeal to show courage – each and every quotation serves as a starting point to take a more in-depth look at key leadership topics.

We did not select these quotes at random. They reflect the **core principles** that we at Roy C. Hitchman have been embracing and communicating for 40 years:

Clarity, resilience, readiness to engage in dialog, courage, composure, willingness to learn, innovative spirit, value orientation, resilience to crises, perspective shifts, encouragement, strong follow-through, hope, emotional intelligence, and the indivisible link between leadership and learning.

All this makes "Welcome 2026" far more than just an anniversary publication. It is a compass for the executives of today and the future, an invitation to self-reflection and continuous development. May the thoughts gathered here inspire you to rethink your own role as a leader.

We would like to thank you for your trust and look forward to continuing to support you on your journey in the years to come.

Sincerely,

The team at
Roy C. Hitchman Executive Search AG

***“If you can’t
explain it simply,
you don’t
understand it
well enough.”***

Albert Einstein



Food for thought

Clarity of concept and in communication indicates a deep understanding. Leaders should be able to present complex ideas in a way that makes them understood at every level.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Understand concepts in depth, recognize complexity

- Develop the ability to break down complex situations, analyze them and extract their core message
- Apply strategies for prioritizing and structuring information to convey it in an easily understandable manner

2 Learn to communicate in a manner tailored to your target audience

- Develop a language geared toward your target group that is consistent in terms of technical content and subject matter yet adapted specifically to each recipient group (team, senior management, the public) – transparent formulation
- Hone your visual and narrative presentation skills (storytelling, analogies, simple diagrams, etc.)

3 Reflect on your own understanding and blind spots

- Identify gaps in your own knowledge: If you cannot explain something in simple terms, focus on re-learning and examining it in greater detail
- Cultivate self-reflection as an integral part of authentic leadership

4 Empathetic leadership through transparent communication

- Create trust through clear, understandable communication – even in difficult or emotionally charged situations
- Make targeted use of active listening and follow-up questions as leadership tools

5 Promote knowledge transfer and a culture of learning

- Do not simply accumulate knowledge; rather make a conscious effort to share it and make it accessible to others
- Create an environment where questions are welcome and learning is encouraged at every level



*“Every situation
you master now
is one that
you will not have
to deal with again
in the future.”*

The Dalai Lama

Food for thought

Challenges are training grounds for the future. Making conscious use of them lets you create resilience, at both the individual and the organizational level.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Resilience and emotional self-regulation

- Make a conscious decision about how you handle pressure, stress and setbacks to preserve your ability to take action, even when times get tough
- Develop emotional stability that lets you infuse the team with calm and clarity – especially in times of uncertainty

2 Self-reflection and consciousness development

- Challenge your own patterns, mindsets and reactions in order to learn from experience
- Cultivate internal observation skills that make leadership a conscious decision, not a reflex

3 Courage and decisiveness

- Even when faced with ambiguity, make decisions without succumbing to perfectionism or paralysis
- Tread new paths, practice responsible risk-taking and provide guidance by taking clear action

4 Communication in challenging contexts

- Address conflicts constructively and conduct difficult discussions empathetically without being evasive or escalating the situation
- Create a culture of openness and psychological security in which honest feedback is possible

5 Long-term thinking and personal development skills

- View challenges as drivers of development and leverage them for personal and professional growth
- Work continuously on improving your own leadership qualities – through mentorships, coaching or conscious self-development

***“You can not
shake hands
with a
clenched fist.”***

Indira Gandhi



Food for thought

Conflict management skills mean making conscious use of tensions rather than avoiding them. Mature leadership understands that candor and trust are the shortest path to clarity, mutual respect and sustainable relationships.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Resolving and mediating conflicts

- Identify the type of conflict (task, relationship, values) and select the correct approach – early intervention reduces lost energy and protects relationships
- Separate interests from positions and establish common criteria – this will lead to solutions that overcome black-and-white thinking

2 Dialog instead of confrontation

- Use structured forms of dialog (such as listening three times, speaking once) before making an assessment – this improves understanding and reduces the risk of unnecessary escalation
- Employ the “observation – impact – suggestion” approach to formulate concerns. Clear, respectful language fosters cooperation rather than defensiveness

3 Maintain your composure during conflicts

- Before embarking on difficult conversations, reflect on your own triggers and blind spots – an awareness of them prevents emotions from taking control
- Stick to the topic and avoid generalizations – that way, you protect the other person’s dignity and keep the focus on the matter at hand

4 Promote a trusting team culture

- Establish team rules for a culture of debate, feedback and decision-making channels – clarity about rules makes conflicts manageable, not threatening
- Openly express appreciation for differing opinions – an environment in which objections are welcome makes for better decisions and stronger commitment

5 Communication as a leadership strength

- Use mirroring, summarizing and clarifying questions – these microtools establish a common frame of reference and reduce misunderstandings
- Always conclude discussions with clear agreements (“Who will do what and by when?”) – commitment creates trust and momentum

***“He who fights
may lose.
He who doesn’t
fight has already
lost.”***

Hermann Hesse



Food for thought

Courage is essential if you are to have an impact. Avoidance behaviors cost more than a calculated failure that becomes a learning experience.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 **Courage to make decisions in the face of uncertainty**

- Define decision-making criteria in advance and weight them transparently – this makes decisions reproducible, even if the facts are incomplete
- Communicate the rationale behind the decision – this enables both consistency and adaptability

4 **Clarity of targets and force of will**

- Translate your vision into quantifiable quarterly targets with ownership – this keeps the direction clear and progress measurable
- Practice conscious prioritization: first important, then urgent – consistency when saying no protects/preserves strategic energy

2 **Risk literacy and a culture of failure**

- Differentiate between calculated, negligent and systemic risk – this distinction clarifies responsibilities and learning pathways
- Institutionalize blame-free “post mortems” – mistakes then become a source of process and product improvements

5 **Self-guidance and determination**

- Cultivate morning and end-of-day rituals for focus and stock-taking – little routines create dependability in day-to-day leadership
- Make decisions transparently and stand by them – clarity takes pressure off the system and expedites follow-up decisions

3 **Agile in thought and deed**

- Use short cycles, clear learning questions and visible artifacts – repetition eliminates guesswork and leads to higher-quality results
- Reduce “work in progress” and maximize throughput – focus creates speed and trust among stakeholder groups



*“If you always
do what you’ve
always done,
you’ll always get
what you’ve
always got.”*

Henry Ford

Food for thought

Renewal gives rise to relevance. Consistent learning will help you remain effective – both as a person and an organization.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Develop a willingness to learn

- Plan learning objectives just as you would business objectives and set aside time in your calendar – this way, learning becomes part of your strategy instead of an add-on
- Actively look for areas of friction where new things emerge – institutionalizing curiosity will keep you adaptive

2 Feedback as a driver of development

- Set up a regular 360° feedback rhythm and visibly respond to it – practiced feedback engenders trust and quickens the pace
- Practice asking precise questions: “What should I do more, less or differently?” This makes feedback specific and actionable

3 Leave your comfort zone

- Make an effort to take on projects that exceed your past experience by 20–30% – moderate overload triggers growth
- Document learning progress and aha moments when they come – visibility boosts motivation and knowledge transfer

4 Learning role model

- Openly share details about your own learning in the team and be frank about failures – this releases the pressure to be perfect and invites others to learn along with you
- Recognize efforts to learn, not just results – this draws attention to process quality

5 Learning as an integral part of the strategy

- Combine skills acquisition with strategic initiatives and KPIs – this makes them budgetable and a priority
- Regularly assess learning impact: Which skills have had a quantifiable effect? Evidence strengthens investment decisions

***“The people
who are crazy
enough to think they can
change the world
are the ones
who do.”***

Steve Jobs



Food for thought

Innovation isn't chaos – it's a courageous approach to order. Leadership provides freedom, gives guidance – and as an architect of innovation, shapes the spaces where new things can emerge.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Develop a visionary mindset

- Draw a bold vision of the future and make its benefits visible – a clear direction mobilizes energy faster than numbers
- Work with future scenarios across multiple time horizons – this makes ambitions concrete and controllable

2 Promote and protect otherness

- Create space for unconventional thinking – diverse approaches increase the odds of achieving true innovation
- Evaluate ideas based on their impact, not their origin – a meritocracy frees creativity from a personality cult

3 Strengthen the culture of innovation

- Create safe spaces for experimentation with small budgets and clear learning questions – learning loops replace discussion loops
- Define transparent cancellation criteria for projects – this promotes the courage to get started and a respect for pulling the plug in time

4 Shape the future

- Make a conscious decision to steer time and resources toward exploration, not just utilization – those who only manage are bound to fall behind
- Communicate about lighthouse initiatives and visible interim stages – progress fosters credibility

5 Leadership as a facilitator

- Remove obstacles and make quick decisions in favor of teams that are strong at getting things done – leadership creates freedom, not dependency
- Celebrate progress in learning and successes as they arise – motivation happens along the way, not only at the finish line



“Like rejoices in like.”
Cicero

Food for thought

Shared values connect diversity to power. There’s nothing soft about culture – it is the foundation for performance. Consciously permit otherness.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Value-based leadership

- Translate corporate values into specific behavioral anchors for each role – this transforms values from words on a poster into a compass for decision-making
- Check important decisions for value coherence – for greater integrity and internal consistency

2 Consciously shape diversity and inclusion

- Create a measurable definition of diversity (professional background, ways of thinking, etc.) and keep actively adjusting it – a broad perspective makes for better problem-solving
- Ensure participation by using moderation formats that make quiet voices heard – diversity has no impact without inclusion

3 Cultural compatibility

- Formulate an attractive shared identity outside of departments – community creates a sense of purpose and reduces silos
- Use rituals and symbols that create a tangible sense of belonging – culture functions through repetition and storytelling

4 Conduct value discussions

- Plan regular discussions about values based on real dilemmas – dialog sharpens reasoning and reduces moralizing
- Reference the values when documenting key decisions – this trains organizational memory

5 Cultural strength as a competitive advantage

- Link culture-related metrics to business targets and customer feedback – doing so makes culture quantifiable and strategically relevant
- Invest in leadership development as cultural leverage – leadership behaviors determine the practiced standards

***“You only get
to know the
good helmsman
by storm.”***

Seneca



Food for thought

Crises expose empty phrases and reveal your true character.
Leadership proves itself in a storm, not in the harbor.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Develop crisis management skills

- Establish clear roles, situational overviews and decision-making logic – structure reduces stress and increases speed
- Practice crisis scenarios in advance and analyze your experiences afterwards – preparation trumps improvisation

2 Display composure in the face of uncertainty

- Remain approachable and determined, even if you lack answers – presence creates trust in leadership rather than in certainty
- Specify what you know, what you don't know and what you'll do next – transparency eliminates speculation

3 Transparency and authenticity

- Communicate facts, assumptions and risks separately – this clarity strengthens a team's judgment
- Admit mistakes and correct them publicly – integrity is visible when it comes at a cost

4 Strong decision-making in turbulent times

- Use decision-making windows and stop-loss points – these keep you flexible while ensuring that you do not lose sight of your goals
- Prioritize stakeholder support over perfect planning – effectiveness comes before elegance

5 Learn from crises

- Collect metrics about response times, information quality and impact – data make resilience controllable
- Share your insights throughout the organization and firmly establish any changes made as a result – learning is the final stage of any crisis



“To solve a problem means to detach yourself from the problem.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Food for thought

Solutions require distance, not proximity to the problem. Leaders redirect attention to the impact and the next steps.

**Five topics for
personality and leadership development**

1 Encourage a change of perspective

- Consciously switch between customer, process and capital perspectives – new points of view open up new options
- Use opportunities for external sparring and shadow boxing – an outsider’s perspective reduces organizational blindness

2 Use creativity techniques

- Formulate problematic questions as “How can we...?” instead of “Why isn’t it working?” – language guides thinking and expands the solution space
- Use sketches or prototypes to visualize options – visibility speeds up comprehension and decision-making

3 Solution-oriented communication

- Steer discussions toward your target, options and first steps – a focus on impacts eliminates finger-pointing
- Document decisions in writing and assign responsibilities – clarity prevents the problem from recurring

4 Distance yourself from the problem

- Clearly differentiate between person, process and issue – this makes it easier to analyze a situation with a cool head and remain fair
- Use timeboxes and breaks whenever emotions blow up – distance enables you to think more clearly

5 Focus on impact, not causes

- Evaluate solutions based on their expected effects and side effects – impact is key, not elegance
- Start small, measure the benefits and then scale it up – evidence trumps intuition as soon as data become available

***“ We have
enough critics.
What our time needs
are people
who encourage.”***

Konrad Adenauer



Food for thought

Encouragement is a productivity multiplier. Appreciation creates courage, courage creates motion.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Encouragement as a leadership tool

- Describe progress accurately and promptly – positive resonance strengthens desired behaviors and promotes ownership
- Replace general assessments with specific acknowledgments – this triggers pride in an accomplishment without overhyping it

2 Develop a positive basic attitude

- Cultivate realistic optimism: see risks and highlight opportunities – this balance makes you credible and capable of taking action
- Declare challenges as development opportunities – the language we use affects our energy and stamina

3 Promote psychological security

- Show that questions, doubts and contradictions are welcome – a sense of security is a prerequisite for learning and innovation
- Do not employ humiliation when responding to mistakes; focus on learning instead – this lessens avoidance behaviors and increases investment

4 Cultivate constructive feedback

- Use the “observation – impact – suggestion” formula – this keeps feedback specific, respectful and actionable
- Actively request counter-feedback and visibly act on it – reciprocity increases acceptance

5 Create trust by showing appreciation

- Also acknowledge hidden contributions – people contribute more if they feel seen
- Make the team’s success outwardly visible – visibility strengthens the sense of identity and team spirit



“The idea is not a substitute for work.”

Max Weber

Food for thought

Ideas inspire, work puts them into practice. Leadership combines creativity with consistency – it turns impetus into results.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Transform ideas into results

- Derive three concrete steps from each idea, set a deadline and assign responsibility – structure transforms an idea into results
- Secure resources before you start and agree clear review points – this will keep implementation on track

2 Set priorities and stick to them

- Limit parallel efforts and concentrate talent on the one to three most important levers – focus is the currency of impact
- Make progress visible: clearly, simply and comprehensibly for all – visibility simplifies decision-making and speeds up the pace

3 Discipline leads to success

- Structure your work in clear time blocks with defined objectives – rituals transform intentions into consistency
- Protect periods of focused work against distractions – concentration is the most important resource of modern knowledge work

4 Take responsibility and deliver

- Clarify roles and responsibilities prior to a project's start and keep your promises – ownership stops people from passing the buck and making excuses
- Conduct review meetings based on facts, not opinions – transparency engenders trust and reliability

5 Act and learn iteratively

- Start with a minimum viable product, measure its benefits and make adjustments – speed gives you a learning advantage
- Be rigorous about terminating ineffective initiatives – resources belong in the areas where progress is being made

***“A man without
a smiling face
must not
open a shop.”***

Chinese proverb



Food for thought

Emotional intelligence isn't merely nice to have; rather it lays the foundation for trust, cooperation and impact. It speeds up decision-making, reduces friction and strengthens both the culture and business success.

Five topics for personality and leadership development

1 Strengthen emotional intelligence

- Recognize and control your own emotions to keep your head clear, even under pressure
- Read and identify the signals sent by others – this creates clarity, trust and mutual respect

2 Embrace empathy in customer interactions

- Listen, mirror, clarify – understand first, then offer
- Ask targeted questions about needs, budget and success criteria – transparency shortens the path to a “yes”

3 Embrace a service mindset

- Define binding standards regarding tone of voice, response times and next steps – consistency creates trust
- Go the extra mile: people remember small gestures and reliable deliveries

4 Be authentic

- Be friendly without putting on a facade – clearly state what is possible and keep your promises
- Adjust your style and tone of voice to the situation, keep your composure – this makes you seem approachable and professional

5 Shape leadership culture with conviction

- Establish and practice guidelines for respectful communication
- Regularly reflect on how a service and team culture are experienced – this makes convictions controllable and effective

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Partner



Roman Huber
Managing Partner

- C-suite and board recruiting
- ICT/technology
- Services
- Healthcare market



Dr. Alexander Zinser
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- Chief Compliance Officer
- Legal, compliance
- Risk, governance, regulatory

//
*We are aware
that our work
can impact not only
candidates' careers
but also
their lives.*
//

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Dr. Patrick Dümmler
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- Life sciences
- Associations



Dr. med. Sacha Geier
Knowledge Partner

- C-suite and board recruiting
- Healthcare market

Thank you

This anniversary publication brings us full circle – four decades of partnership, dialog and learning side by side with people who bear responsibility. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for this faith and loyalty.

At the same time, however, this publication specifically looks to the future. Far-reaching changes will shape the coming years. Artificial intelligence, robotics, data-based decision-making models and new work structures will not only challenge entire industries, but also the way we think about and practice leadership.

In this environment, leadership will become a more actively creative role than ever before. This calls for people who never lose their sense of curiosity and who courageously explore uncharted territory. People who replace complexity with clarity and radiate tranquility while everything around them is moving at breakneck speed.

Leaders who provide guidance where answers are lacking and create psychological security when change triggers uncertainty. And people who promote progress – not through perfection, but through a proactive approach, a willingness to learn and the ability to recognize opportunities in new situations.

We stay on the ball – professionally, technologically and personally. We invest in new knowledge, expand our methods, use state-of-the-art tools and combine tried-and-tested approaches with a focus on the future.

May the thoughts contained in this publication give you ideas on how to develop your own role as leader and shape the years to come with confidence. We look forward to continuing along this path together with you.

Sincerely,

The team at
Roy C. Hitchman Executive Search AG

*“ We treat our clients
and candidates with
courtesy and respect,
without exception –
we take our
responsibility seriously. ”*

ROY C. HITCHMAN AG
EXECUTIVE SEARCH

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