

"Mid market CEOs gain valuable insights from prominent business leaders at The Board of Veteran CEOs forum"

Once again, prominent business leaders headlined the recent Board of Veterans CEOs' forum held on January 22nd. Bill Nuti (Chairman and CEO of NCR Corporation) and John Bruno (Executive Vice President, Industry Solutions Group at NCR Corporation) led an enlightening discussion on how to make change a core value.

Participants had an opportunity to ask penetrating questions about what it really takes to make significant changes in an enterprise. In the discussion, Bill Nuti and John Bruno did not pull punches. Bill shared insightful experiences from NCR as well as when he served as CEO of Symbol Technologies.

When asked about the biggest obstacle he faced while driving change, Bill explained that "change management is people. You have to get people aligned. Also, if you do not change the underlying management system, the changes will not stick."

John stated, "Getting people motivated and involved in the change is the biggest challenge. The biggest lesson was that it is imperative to work on the environment first. If you do not, you will witness a collision between culture and strategy." In John's words, "culture always wins."

As the conversation progressed, participants asked questions about managing the inherent risks when driving change. Bill made it clear that you have to expose the risks to your leadership team. If you do not, they will not be aligned. He talked about practical strategies for exposing the leadership team to risk and the environment necessary for senior management as well as the board of directors to support the CEO's decision-making process. He also shared how he is able to get his senior management team more involved in decision-making.

Both Bill and John commented on the monumental effort it took to turn around Symbol Technologies while they were both there. They commented on the necessity of changing (removing) people in the company in order to successfully drive change. They also talked about the importance of constantly bringing in new thinking to avoid stagnation.

The roundtable discussion ended with comments on how the current economic downturn has forced businesses to change the way they engage the customer. John talked about how many companies focus internally. John provided practical advice on how their commitment is to always focus on the customer as well as other stakeholders.

As usual, the feedback from the forum was overwhelmingly positive, emphasizing the tremendous value there was to discussing critical business issues with such experienced and accomplished business leaders. As a result, several new CEOs have joined the Board and interest is growing for the next forum (scheduled for April 23rd).

The Board Chairman, Ted Santos commented, "The quality of the roundtable discussions have remained high. Because of that, the caliber of our members has increased. For us, that creates a welcomed challenge if we are to continue to exceed the expectations of our members".

For more information on The Board of Veteran CEOs, please call 888 471-3660.