



Mark Weinberger

**EDITORS' NOTE** Mark Weinberger began his career with EY in 1987 and has served in a variety of Americas and Global leadership positions including his most recent role as EY's Global Tax Leader from 2008 to 2012. He was appointed Global Chairman & CEO-elect in January 2012 and became Global Chairman & CEO in July of 2013. Weinberger serves as Chair of the Global Executive; the Global Practice Group; and the Global Public Policy Committee. He has previously served as the Assistant Secretary of the United States Department of the Treasury (Tax Policy) in the George W. Bush Administration. He was also appointed by President Clinton to serve on the U.S. Social Security Administration Advisory Board. Weinberger has also held other U.S. government positions including Chief of Staff of President Clinton's 1994 Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement and Tax Reform; Chief Tax and Budget Counsel to U.S. Senator John Danforth (R-Missouri); Advisor to the National Commission on Economic Growth and Tax Reform; and Commissioner on the National Commission on Retirement Policy. He holds a B.A. from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, an M.B.A. and J.D. from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, and a Master of Laws in Taxation from Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, D.C.

**FIRM BRIEF** EY (ey.com) is a leading global professional services organization that provides assurance, tax, transaction, and advisory services. With 190,000 people in more than 150 countries, EY is one of the largest professional services organizations in the world.

**How challenging is it to differentiate among the Big Four and how do you define what makes EY unique?**

They share the label, but the Big Four are very different in terms of approach, organization and strategy, and also face increasing competition from others, such as consultancies and law firms. At EY, we're really focused on three

# EY's Purpose

**An Interview with Mark Weinberger,  
Global Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, EY**

things that we believe set us apart: our purpose, our global integration, and our culture of exceptional client service.

Our purpose – “Building a Better Working World” – is also our tagline, and we're the only one of our peers that's explicit about purpose. A couple of years ago, when we were drawing up Vision 2020, which is our plan to be the leading professional services organization by 2020, we knew ‘purpose’ was the most important thing to get right. We knew that our clients and our colleagues wanted to understand our role in the world, and get beyond what we do to why we do it. It became clear, when we spoke with people around the world, that EY's sense of purpose, although up until then unwritten, was certainly present. When you look at everything we do – every audit, every tax return, every valuation, every interaction with a client or colleague – each contributes to building a better working world.

Furthermore, building a better working world acknowledges our part in building trust and confidence in capital markets and economies, and the important public policy and convening role we play. So it's really our higher calling – why we exist as an organization. It's the meaning behind the daily activities of our 190,000 people in more than 150 countries.

The second thing that sets us apart is how globally integrated we are. Most professional services firms are a collection of national practices, where each locally controlled firm has its own management and decision-making processes, and its own board and governance oversight. But today, that's outdated and not in keeping with what clients need. The world's become too fast and too complex. At EY we understand that, and over the years, we've realigned our previously country-focused organization into a more integrated global one – with a global leadership team and a global strategy. This means our clients get faster response, more tailored services, broader, more experienced teams, and deeper industry knowledge.

The third thing is our culture of exceptional client service. We know that, in a competitive environment, methodologies and services can be replicated – but how you deliver them and your culture can't be. Clients can really see the difference in how they're served. So we focus on the highest-performing teams delivering exceptional client service. Exceptional client service is about being connected, responsive, and

insightful. Being insightful means looking beyond the obvious to understand what the problem really is. Being connected means knowing how to ask the right person the right question to reach the right perspective on the problem. Being responsive means being deeply committed to using that understanding to achieve a relevant, practical, and precise solution. It's simple but powerful.

**EY is known for its entrepreneurial culture. How are you able to keep an entrepreneurial spirit in the firm and stay innovative in such a large, global organization?**

We have a long history of innovation that's kept alive by our spirit of partnership – every generation of partners wants to leave EY stronger than when they joined, and that means change – and our inclusive culture that encourages everyone to bring their ideas to the table, no matter how different or bold they might seem. You can't be innovative in a culture that inhibits.

Let me use the examples of our San Jose and Moscow offices to give an idea of the type of pioneering spirit that's at work at EY. Long before anyone had heard of ‘Silicon Valley,’ a couple of our partners saw the potential for the technology industry that was just starting around San Jose. So the two of them set up a little office above a drugstore – I guess it's our equivalent of two guys in a garage – and set about serving these tiny start-ups. Today, we are market leaders in serving tech clients and our office in San Jose has more than 700 people serving companies such as Apple, Google, Intel, and Facebook. We opened our Moscow office in 1989 – the first of the Big Four to go there, two years before the Soviet Union collapsed – because we saw how things were changing and the opportunities that were just opening up. We're still the leading firm across the Commonwealth of Independent States today. This is the kind of boldness and far-sightedness that typifies EY.

That said, it can be hard for a big organization to innovate. But the world is moving too fast to stand still – those who don't innovate won't survive. Encouraging “intrapreneurship” can be as simple as encouraging people to explore and share new ideas. We're in the process of setting up a global award for innovation, for example. We're also investing in where we see future growth. One example is our \$500-million investment in data analytics – something our

clients are increasingly using to drive their own innovations. This kind of investment is fundamental to meeting our target to double in size by 2020.

Finally, our commitment to entrepreneurship also extends to our support for others. Our Entrepreneur Of The Year™ awards, for example, are held in more than 60 countries worldwide and have been running for nearly three decades. We're really proud to have recognized the achievements of tens of thousands of entrepreneurs during that time.

**How critical is it to have a diverse and inclusive organization worldwide and would you highlight EY's leadership in this regard?**

It's vital. Today, about 18 percent of our revenue comes from emerging markets. Fast forward to 2020: we're predicting about 25 to 30 percent of our revenue is going to come from emerging markets. So we need to understand how people who are consumers and clients in those markets think. How do you do that if you don't have access to different cultural backgrounds and experiences? Increasingly, we need to have a workforce that mirrors our client base.

In addition, we know that bringing together the different skills, experiences, and perspectives of our people helps us to arrive at better answers for our clients and – going back to your last question – helps spark great ideas. Our clients come to us with incredibly complex challenges that no individual or team of similar people is going to be able to solve. So diversity and inclusiveness, or D&I, isn't just a nice-to-have – it's business critical.

We encourage D&I across our workforce through teaming and training, and by actively supporting internal networks that help encourage and support different groups of employees. We also promote D&I externally through the teams we pull together on client work, through our various networks like the Worldwide Women Public Sector Leaders Network, and through thought leadership. We just published a great paper called "Women on Boards: Global Approaches to Advancing Diversity," for example. We're really proud to be regularly cited by external organizations – such as DiversityInc – as being a leader in D&I. But we know that we have a lot more to do.

**EY places a major emphasis on corporate responsibility and community engagement. Why is this so critical and how do you decide which causes the firm should support?**

At the heart of "Building a Better Working World" is our belief in enlightened self-interest: that we are successful because we contribute to society and share value. In our local communities, we concentrate on areas that are most relevant to our services and our people's expertise because it's here that we make the greatest difference – this can be anything from building schools in India to helping get more

kids into math in Australia. We particularly focus on entrepreneurs because they drive innovation and economic growth, and create jobs. We also focus on the future workforce, from employees to young entrepreneurs, because we know that the next generation is critical to global progress. This enables us to put our skills to good use in addressing global challenges such as youth

## Our purpose

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unemployment, for example, where we help young people gain work experience and work readiness skills, and support young entrepreneurs. Enabling our people to volunteer and providing funding is key, but increasingly important is working out how we can use our intellectual capital to drive social change.

**You assumed the role as Chairman and CEO of EY a little more than a year ago. What made for such a smooth transition and has it been what you expected?**

I enjoyed a good hand-over period with my predecessor, which enabled me to speak with thousands of people across the organization and start thinking about my senior leadership team and EY's future strategy early, so I could be ready from day one. Second, having put in place a fantastic leadership team, which is now much more diverse than it's ever been, we're certainly feeling the benefits of better representation of the emerging markets and women leaders already. Third, the receptiveness and positivity of our 190,000 people around the world is wonderful. The fact that in just over a year, our people have rallied behind a new purpose and plan for the future, Vision 2020, shows me what a flexible and determined organization EY is. This was the biggest surprise – just how much you can achieve in a relatively short span of time if you all pull together.

**You have always focused on the client relationship. How critical is it for you to still have time with clients and has this remained a focus for you in your new role?**

As Global Chairman and CEO, I'd say the nature of my client work has changed, but it's

still as important – if not more so – than it's ever been. I'm Global Senior Advisory Partner for a number of clients. It's important for any business leader to foster those relationships and remain plugged into business trends around the world – and my client relationships are a vital part of that. As CEO of a global company, I can't limit my knowledge to what's happening in my backyard, or to any one region of the world. I need to have an up-to-date understanding of geopolitical and macroeconomic forces, which can at any moment affect our clients and our businesses.

**What are your key priorities for EY in order to ensure that you maintain your industry leadership in the future?**

The world is changing fast, driven by globalization, technology, demographic shifts, and the rise of the emerging markets – issues that affect not only us but our clients too, and so are factored into our plans under Vision 2020. Another important consideration when we were drawing up Vision 2020 was to focus on the growth industries, markets, and regions – no organization can lead in everything or everywhere.

Our ambition is to be the leading professional services organization by 2020 – with the

best brand and number one or two market share in our chosen services. This requires an unwavering focus on quality – vital in how we build trust and confidence in capital markets around the world.

Our strategy to reach our ambition has three pillars.

The first is 'relentless focus on winning in the market.' Winning comes down to exceptional client service, which means being connected, responsive, and insightful with our clients. It means always thinking ahead about the challenges our clients face or the opportunities they have to grow.

The second is 'create the highest performing teams.' This comes down to hiring the best people and putting them in the best teams, so they perform better at EY than they would anywhere else – because a great team will always win over a collection of individuals. Our culture of world-class teaming is really resonating with people. Just last month, Universum released the World's Most Admired Companies student survey results. We've retained our first place among professional services firms – and were second overall, behind Google, which is a great result.

The third is 'strengthen global, empower local.' We know that in today's connected world, a strong global brand has enormous power, but we also know that you can't underestimate the power of local. You need to deliver locally, you need to respect cultural differences, and you need to know how to get things done on the ground. This is vital in a market where competition and pricing pressure is immense, so getting the balance right is key. Those that get it right will be tomorrow's best companies. ●