

# Accelerating Progress Globally

An Interview with Douglas L. Peterson, President and Chief Executive Officer, S&P Global

**EDITORS' NOTE** Doug Peterson has served as President, Chief Executive Officer, and a member of the Board of Directors of S&P Global since 2013. He joined the company in 2011 as President of its credit ratings business. Peterson is a leading voice on ESG issues. He chairs the Bipartisan Policy Center's ESG Taskforce, and in 2021 he led a workstream of the G7's Impact Taskforce focused on mobilizing private capital for public good by advocating for globally consistent standards to measure, value and account



Douglas L. Peterson

for sustainability. At S&P Global, he created a new organization within the company, Sustainable1, to be a single source of intelligence for customers navigating the transition to a low carbon, sustainable, and equitable future. Before joining S&P Global, Peterson was the Chief Operating Officer of Citibank, N.A., Citigroup's principal banking entity. Over his 26 years at Citigroup, he served as Chief Auditor, CEO of Citigroup Japan, and in leadership roles in Latin America. Peterson chairs the U.S.-Japan Business Council and is a member of the Boards of Directors of the Japan Society and the National Bureau of Economic Research. He also is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the New York Stock Exchange Board Advisory Council. In addition, he serves on the Advisory Board of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's Systemic Resolution Advisory Committee and as a Trustee of Claremont McKenna College and the Paul Taylor Dance Company. Peterson received an undergraduate degree from Claremont McKenna College and an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

**COMPANY BRIEF** S&P Global ([spglobal.com](http://spglobal.com)) provides essential intelligence. It enables governments, businesses and individuals with the right data, expertise, and connected technology so that they can make decisions with conviction. From helping customers assess new investments to guiding them through ESG and energy transition across supply chains, S&P Global unlocks new opportunities, solves challenges, and accelerates progress for the world. The company is widely sought after by many of the world's leading organizations to provide credit ratings, benchmarks, analytics, and workflow solutions in the global capital, commodity, and automotive markets. With every one of S&P Global's offerings, it helps the world's leading organizations plan for tomorrow, today.

**Will you provide an overview of S&P Global's history and how the company has evolved?**

It's been a privilege to lead a company with such a deep history of innovation spanning more than 160 years. From our early beginnings, the founders of our businesses knew the value that transparency brings to markets and companies. In the 19th century, they sought to create more clarity for investors in the emerging railroads industry and demonstrate investment potential in the stock market and better project market trends. In the early 20th century, our commodities businesses helped to bring unprecedented transparency to that opaque industry.

In 2016, we rebranded as S&P Global to mark our renewed focus on becoming the leading information services company. This year, we completed our merger with IHS Markit and emerged with a unique portfolio of highly complementary data and analytics businesses. Our combined company now offers our global

customer base a wide range of insights across data, analytics, ratings, benchmarks, indices, commodities, transportation, and engineering, and we can offer a broader and deeper portfolio of unique solutions and increased scale.

**How do you define S&P Global's purpose and values?**

Purpose is one of our key drivers as a company. At the highest level, we are driven by a desire to accelerate progress globally. That means we push past expected observations and seek out new levels of understanding in a complex world so that we can help companies, governments and individuals make an impact. Our values are integrity, discovery, and partnership. We start with a foundation of integrity in all we do, bring a spirit of discovery to our work, and collaborate in close partnership with each other and our customers to achieve shared goals.

**Will you discuss S&P Global's capabilities and solutions?**

Following our merger with IHS Markit, our business divisions span Commodity Insights, Indices, Engineering Solutions, Market

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Intelligence, Mobility, and Ratings. Data and analytics are at the heart of all the products and services we offer, but we also provide the means to deliver them to the markets. We offer powerful software, advanced tools, and the ability to harness insights within a highly efficient workflow. It isn’t just about getting the right data – it’s about all the ways we empower action through that data. As we continue to integrate our offerings, we are going to focus on holistic solutions that streamline what’s most important to our customers.

**S&P Global has expanded internationally under your leadership. Will you highlight S&P Global’s global footprint?**

Our global footprint has grown because of organic investments and the merger. We’re now a team of over 35,000 people across 41 countries worldwide – so we’re able to understand local and regional nuances while also having a global perspective to serve customers in more than 150 countries. We believe that innovation thrives, and our company operates successfully when our people embody and reflect those ideals. We have a global customer base, and it is important for us to engage with our customers wherever they are.

**What are your views on the future of work?**

The future of work is inevitably going to be different to how it looked before the COVID-19 pandemic. We’ve become adept at taking advantage of technology to work productively outside of traditional offices, but there are still huge benefits to be found by being physically present in the same location for training, collaboration, and to get to know each other better.

There’s also another aspect to it, and that’s making sure that we don’t lose our commitment to seeing our customers and our colleagues

around the world. I think about social contacts, mentorship, sponsorship, apprenticeship – the intangibles that are valuable for us to maintain. So, the future of work will be hybrid – a combination of being at the office, maintaining social and professional interaction, and people working from home or remotely when it’s most efficient to do so. We’ll be able to strike a nice balance.

**How critical is it for S&P Global to build a diverse and inclusive workforce to bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the table when making business decisions?**

I want to reflect on my earlier comment about purpose. We believe strongly in having a people-first culture, and inclusion is critical to our business success and our understanding of the world around us. Our People Resource Groups are a key avenue to foster connectivity and community and help us to create opportunities for substantive interaction, both with and between our colleagues from diverse backgrounds.

Being people-first also means we support our people inside and outside the workplace, and across all life stages. Our core values emphasize caring for our people, investing in diversity, equity and inclusion, promoting career mobility, and building future leaders.

**What do you see as S&P Global’s responsibility to be a good corporate citizen and to be a force for good in society?**

Every year, we publish a comprehensive impact report that details the many ways in which we fulfill our responsibilities as corporate citizens. We disclose our responsible business practices, our sustainability performance as an enterprise, and our efforts to contribute and create value for the societies in which we live and work.

Our main philanthropic arm is the S&P Global Foundation, and it focuses on making a difference by engaging our colleagues and positively impacting the communities in which we operate. The Foundation has three focus areas: bridging the global skills gap, creating an inclusive economy, and promoting a sustainable environment. Additionally, the Foundation’s grantmaking supports disaster relief efforts with an emphasis on resiliency. The majority of grants target underrepresented and underserved communities. Last year, we broadened grantmaking in pandemic relief, racial justice, and climate change.

**What do you feel are the keys to effective leadership and how do you describe your management style?**

One of the most important aspects of effective leadership, in my view, is staying informed. I truly value visiting our offices across the globe and spending an extra day meeting colleagues across the organization. Building these relationships on a personal level means I have a network of knowledge and expertise across the firm, and by maintaining an open dialogue it helps keep me plugged in with developments large and small.

Maintaining a focus on strategy and direction is another key pillar of my approach to leadership. This is especially important during times of transformational change, when it can be easy to focus on the endless list of things that need to get done at the expense of the broader vision that is driving the change in the first place.

**S&P Global has achieved strong growth and success under your leadership. Are you able to enjoy the process and take moments to celebrate the wins?**

Thank you for calling out the success of the company. Our people are the driving force behind that success, and the hard work they do every day forms the core of how we deliver for our customers. We have built a strong culture of recognition across the company, which means we share and celebrate our wins as much as we can. We have a formal process to recognize different teams every quarter for their accomplishments. One of the things I love about leading is learning about the fantastic work of so many teams each quarter. I enjoy the process and I’m energized by learning about the innovation, transformation, and collaboration across all facets of our business.

**What advice do you offer to young people beginning their careers during this unprecedented time?**

One piece of advice I would offer to young people beginning their careers today is to pinpoint the activities that you enjoy and find fulfilling within your working day. Whether it’s working with people, or focusing on the technical aspects of the job, prioritizing the things you enjoy day-to-day will help you find a natural career path more successfully than chasing a specific job title, and it simplifies long-term decision-making and offers far more scope for happiness. ●