



CRITICALEYE

The Peer-to-Peer Board Community

CHAIR & NED RESEARCH 2025

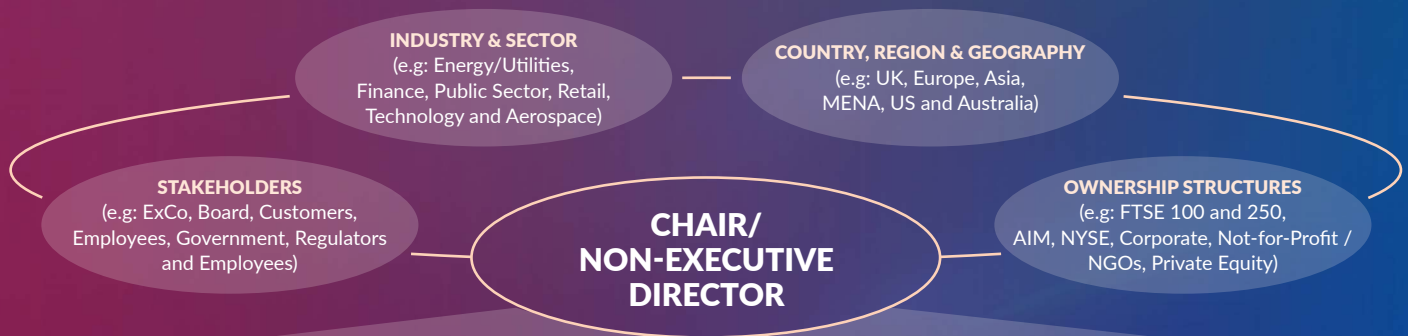
New Waves of Growth

OVERVIEW

Criticaleye has over 21 years of experience transforming global leaders including Chairs, NEDs and SIDs. Through a combination of strategic guidance and immersive learning experiences, Criticaleye empowers independent directors with the skills, insights and connections to become world-class Board members. Based on our Chair & NED Research, key areas of support include but are not limited to the following:

- Building alignment in the Boardroom
- Improving the quality of strategic debate
- Stepping up as first-time Chair
- Adapting to technological change
- Remaining relevant and staying current and connected
- Effective risk management and corporate governance

Our 360-degree support is designed to support and nurture high-performing Board members. We do this by providing them with exposure to diverse perspectives from fellow Board-level peers, enabling them to broaden their skills, knowledge and network. This is accomplished through tailored access points into the following key areas:



A Relationship Manager will coordinate all the elements of your Membership and ensure your individual goals and priorities are identified and delivered

Network & Connections: Peer connections will accelerate your impact by connecting you to the right person at precisely the right time, e.g: *Navigating your first 100 days as a NED / Chair.*

Chair & NED Retreat: Two-day immersive Retreat bringing together Chairs, NEDs and SIDs to share, interact, reflect and learn about best practice in the Boardroom.

Events: Virtual Roundtables and Forums for Board leaders to access global knowledge and insight from anywhere in the world, e.g: *Creating a High-Performing Board.*

Chair Ready Programme: Supporting NEDs who want to transition to Chair, empowering SIDs with the knowledge and confidence to step in when duty calls and helping those who have recently taken on a Chair role for the first time to benchmark and develop Chairing instincts and capabilities.

Pop-up Boards: Engage an external panel of relevant Executive and Non-executive experience to validate strategic plans or externalise key challenges, e.g: *Navigating Difficult Board Dynamics.*

INTRODUCTION

Chairs, non-executive directors and senior independent directors realise the vital importance of aligning with their executive team in our latest research with Board members. As organisational leaders continue to face seismic challenges, our latest statistics show that Boards are focused on improving debate around the organisation's strategic direction. They also highlight a lack of leadership capability as the biggest risk to businesses operating in the current climate.

With only 23 percent expressing complete confidence in the ability of

their leadership team to navigate strategic uncertainty, it's clear Board members have concerns about capability gaps around the top table. NEDs anticipate big changes across the business in response to external pressures. Indeed, improved organisational agility and investment in new technology were identified as the most significant shifts, so it's vital senior executives are up to speed and aligned with their Boards to drive change successfully.

Leadership capability was also cited as the biggest obstacle to creating a culture of high performance, with 71 percent of

Chairs and NEDs highlighting this above other hurdles, followed by a lack of trust which came in at 15 percent.

Thinking about the future, new technology, including AI and machine learning, followed by improved business performance, were identified as the top priorities for Boards over the next 12 months. Encouragingly, recognising the need for external reference points to help benchmark best practices and honing their ability to influence others were the top areas of improvement for NEDs, both of which will be crucial to their roles in the difficult months ahead.

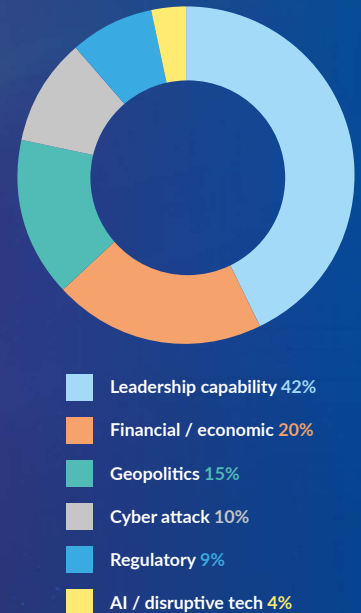


JAMIE WILSON, MANAGING DIRECTOR, GROUP SERVICES, CRITICALEYE

What top five areas do you intend to prioritise over the next 12 months?



What do you see as the biggest risk to your business?



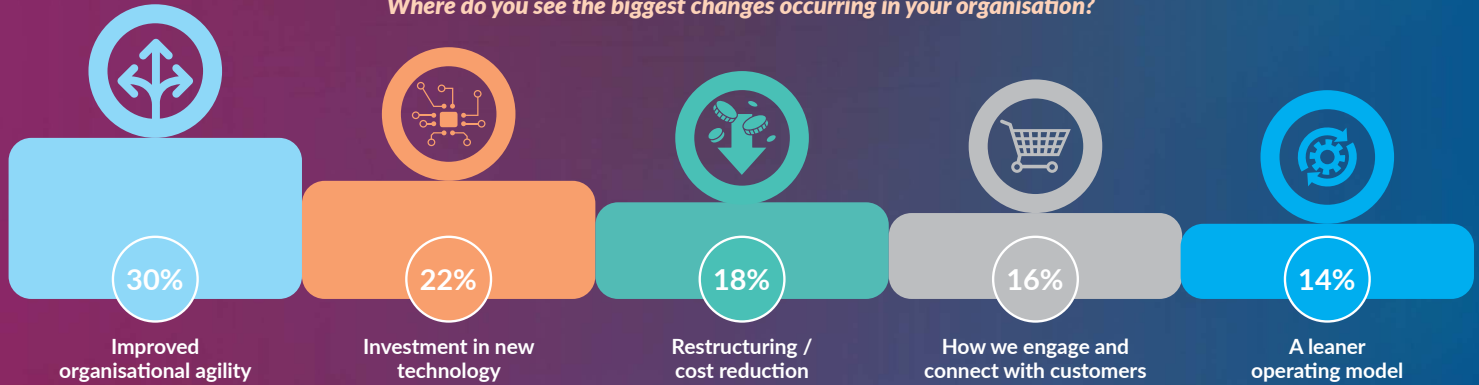
"IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO HOLD OUR NERVE IN THE FACE OF GEOPOLITICAL CHANGES AND CHALLENGES."

NED Research Participant

LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

WE ASKED CHAIRS AND NEDS IF THEY HAVE THE RIGHT SKILLSETS TO LEAD EFFECTIVELY AND WHAT CHANGES THEIR ORGANISATIONS ARE UNDERTAKING.

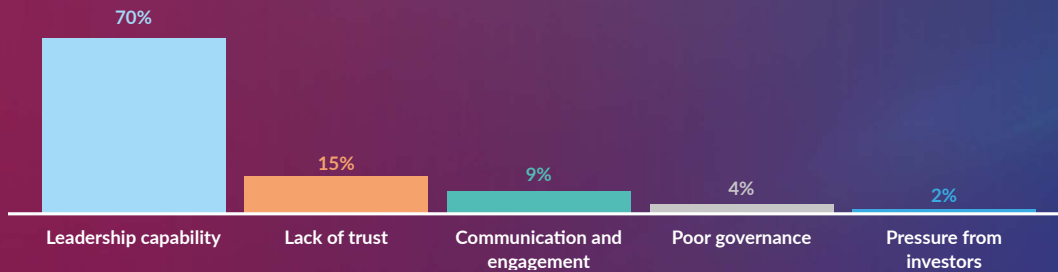
Where do you see the biggest changes occurring in your organisation?



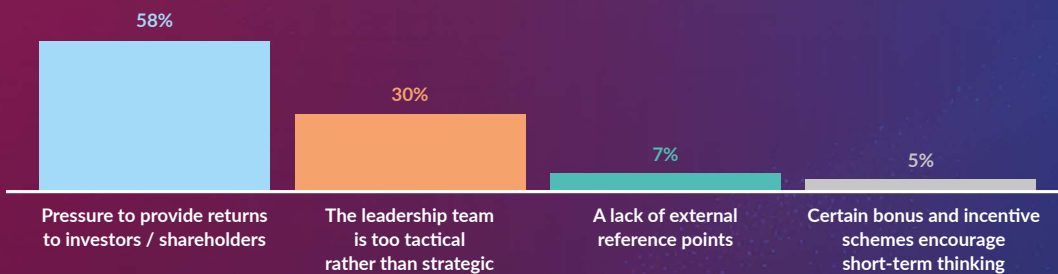
“THERE’S LOTS OF FOCUS ON COST CONTAINMENT AND MARGIN REDUCTION IN A VERY CHALLENGING ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT.”

NED Research Participant

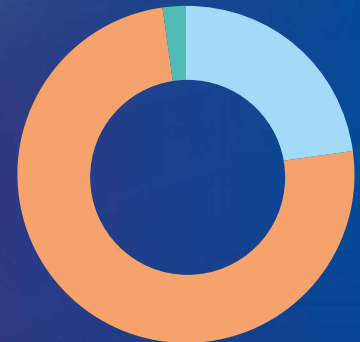
What do you often see as the biggest obstacle to creating a high-performance culture in an organisation?



Why do senior leadership teams become too focused on short-term goals?



Does your senior leadership team have the right skills and capabilities to navigate strategic uncertainty?



- To a great extent 23%
- To some extent 75%
- To a minor extent 2%
- Not at all 0%

THE INSPIRING LEADERS PODCAST: THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR IN SUCCESSION PLANNING

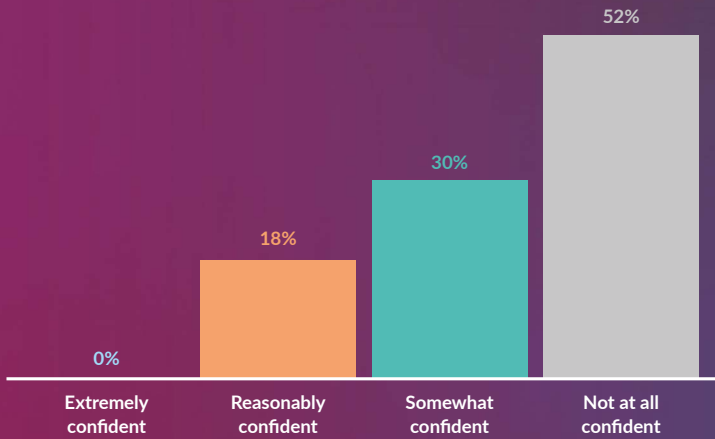
Click [here](#) to listen to Adam Warby, Chair of Ocado Group and Andrea Gisle Joosen, Chair of Bilprovingen and Board Mentor at Criticaleye, examine how Chairs can play a pivotal role in ensuring their Boards are equipped with the right skills and capabilities to navigate the challenges of today.



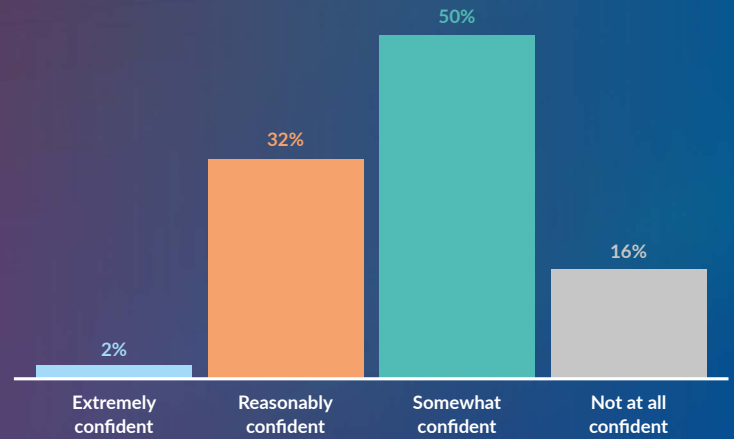
ECONOMY AND GROWTH

CHAIRS AND NEDS GIVE US THEIR PREDICTIONS ON THE ECONOMY AND PLANS FOR BUSINESS GROWTH OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS.

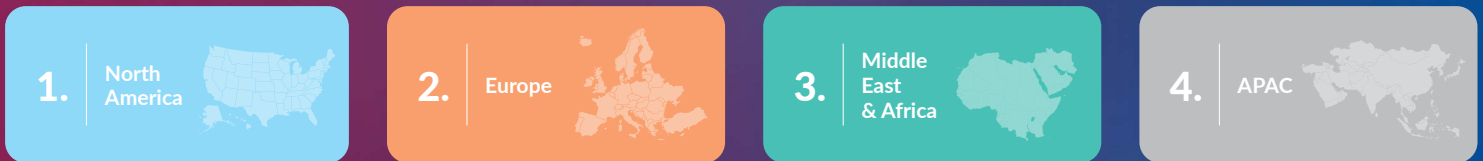
How confident are you that the rate of economic growth in the UK will increase over the next 12 months?



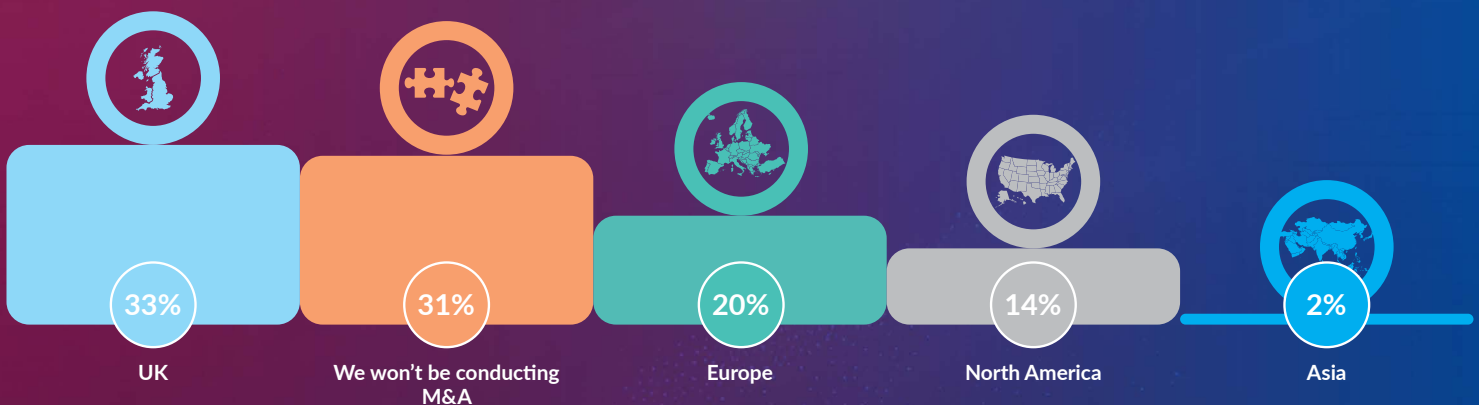
How confident are you that the rate of global economic growth will increase over the next 12 months?



In which regions do you expect to see a strong geographical performance in your organisation over the next 12 months?



Where do you expect to conduct M&A over the next 12 months?



CRITICALEYE INSIGHT: DRIVING STRATEGIC GROWTH THROUGH TRANSFORMATION

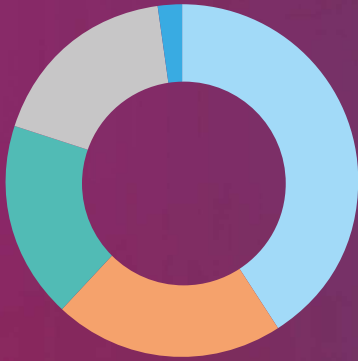
Penny Goh, Non-executive and Independent Director and RemCo Chair at Keppel and Independent Non-executive Chair of HSBC Bank (Singapore), talks to Criticaleye about the crucial role of Boards in driving strategic growth and supporting organisational transformation. Click [here](#) to read the article.



STAKEHOLDERS

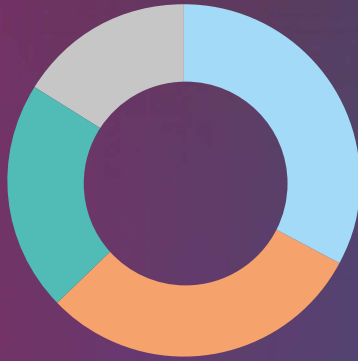
CHAIRS AND NEDS REVEAL THE CHALLENGES OF SUCCESSFUL STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT AND ASSESS THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE EXECUTIVE TEAM.

Who is your most challenging external stakeholder?



- Shareholders / investors 41%
- Regulator/s 21%
- Customers 18%
- Government 18%
- Media 2%

Who is your most challenging internal stakeholder?



- Fellow Board members 33%
- CEO / CFO 30%
- Senior leadership team 21%
- Workforce 16%

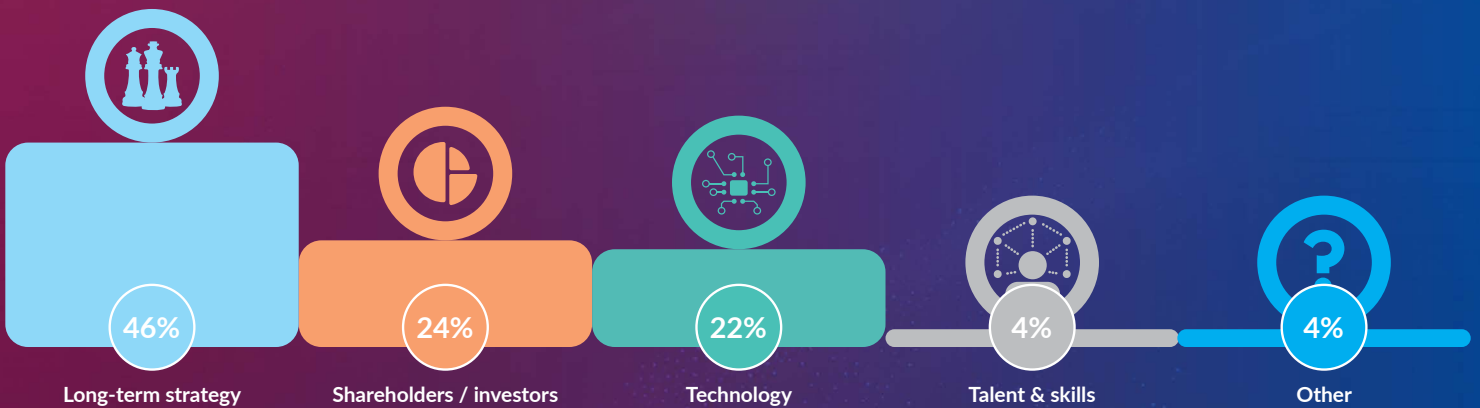
In which of the following areas does the quality of debate on the Board need to improve?



“BUILDING A STRONG BOARD TEAM IS ALWAYS HARD WORK.”

NED Research Participant

What do you think might cause gaps in alignment between the executive and non-executive directors in 2025?



CRITICALEYE VIDEO: ALIGNING STAKEHOLDERS: BETTER DEBATE IN THE BOARDROOM

Click [here](#) to watch leaders explore ways to enhance debate in the boardroom.

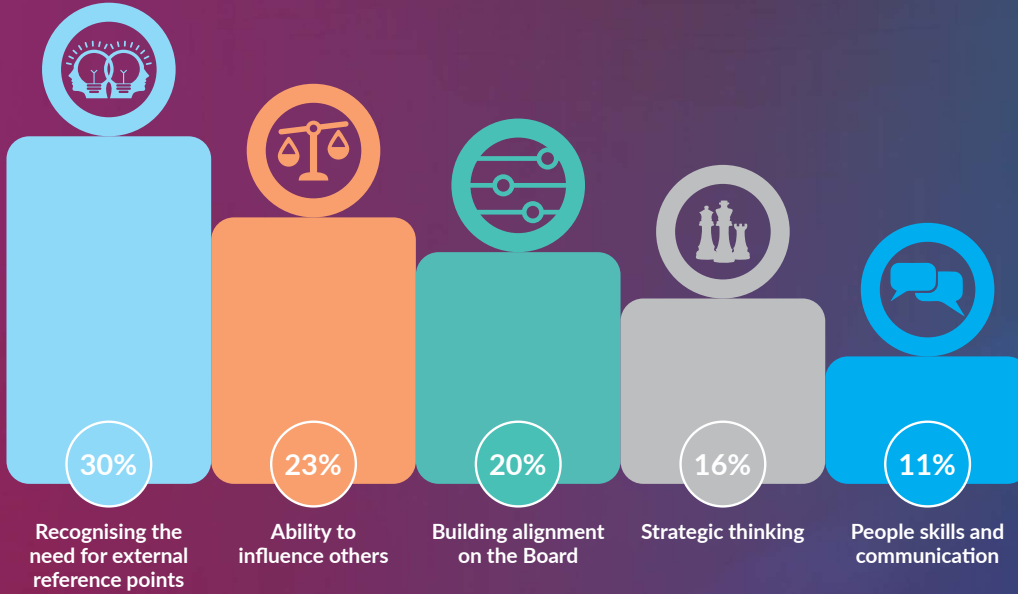
Featuring comments from Heather Benjamin, Chair, Air Ambulance UK and Mark Winlow, Chair, Redwood Bank.



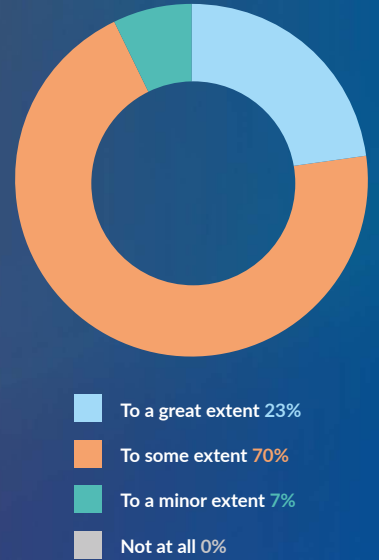
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

WE ASKED CHAIRS AND NEDS WHAT THEY FIND IS MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN BUILDING SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING THE EXTERNAL LANDSCAPE.

Where do you need to improve as a leader?



To what extent does your Board/s require external reference points?



“YOU NEED TO LOOK EXTERNALLY TO SEE BETTER QUALITY THINKING AND EXECUTION.”

NED Research Participant

SOME OF OUR INSPIRING BOARD MENTORS

Our global group of over 100 Board Mentors are selected to support the unique needs of each Criticaleye Member. They provide a trusted, independent and impartial reference point.

 KEITH COCHRANE CHAIR QLAR GROUP	 ELISABETH STHEEMAN CHAIR EDINBURGH INVESTMENT TRUST	 SHATISH DASANI CHAIR UNICEF UK	 DENNIS MILLARD NED PETS AT HOME	 MARIA DARBY-WALKER NED ECCLESIASTICAL INSURANCE GROUP
 ALAN BANNATYNE CHAIR XPS GROUP	 FEIYU XU NED AIRBUS GROUP	 YEN YEN TAN NED OCBC BANK	 JOK TIN TAN CHAIR CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY	 SANGEETA DESAI NED BOAT ROCKER MEDIA

To discuss the Chair & Non-executive Director Programme in more detail please contact:

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“What **Criticaleye** offers is a safe space for NEDs to ask questions and listen to how other Boards are tackling common issues. Now more than ever, organisations need their NEDs to bring new thinking, challenge and diversity of thought, so non-executives must actively find ways to **bring the outside in to their Board discussions.**”

YETUNDE HOFMANN
INDEPENDENT NED, CRANSWICK COUNTRY FOODS
& CRITICALEYE BOARD MENTOR