

A Shared Purpose

An Interview with Carmine Di Sibio, Global Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, EY

EDITORS' NOTE Prior to being elected to his current post, Carmine Di Sibio served as EY Global Managing Partner – Client Service, leading the execution of the organization's global strategy and its four geographical areas and four service lines. He spearheaded EY's innovation efforts, including leading a \$1 billion investment in new technology solutions over a two-year timeframe announced in August 2018. He helped to create the Global Innovation team to redefine how EY



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uses technology to both transform existing services and create new solutions. As a leader of the organization's acquisitions and alliances strategy, he has helped expand EY offerings in a wide range of new and emerging fields. Di Sibio co-chairs the EY Global Diversity and Inclusiveness Steering Committee, which works to maximize the power of different opinions, perspectives, and cultural references within the organization. Since joining EY in 1985, he has served as an Advisory and Assurance partner for many of EY's largest financial services accounts. He previously served as Chair of the Global Financial Services Markets Executive and Regional Managing Partner for the Americas Financial Services Organization (FSO), where he started EY Risk Management and Regulatory Services. He has a foundation in audit and is a practicing Certified Public Accountant. Di Sibio is a member of the board of Focusing Capital on the Long Term (FCLT) to encourage

a long-term focus in business which can drive inclusive growth. He plays an active role in the World Economic Forum (WEF), serving as a member of its International Business Council. Di Sibio is a member of the International Business Leaders Advisory Council (IBLAC) to the Mayor of Shanghai, and is a member of the Washington, D.C.-based Business Roundtable. He also serves on the boards of the Foundation for Empowering Citizens with Autism and Family Promise and is a member of the Board of Trustees of Colgate

University. Di Sibio is originally from Italy and emigrated with his family to the United States when he was three years old. He was the first in his family to graduate from college, earning a BA in chemistry from Colgate University and an MBA from New York University's Stern School of Business.

FIRM BRIEF The global EY organization (ey.com) is one of the largest professional services organizations in the world. EY's global member firms employ 365,000 people across 150 countries and generate \$40 billion in revenues.

How do you define EY's purpose and how is purpose engrained in EY's culture?

Our purpose is "Building a better working world," and it reflects our "why." It is why we do the work we do. It is why we are committed

to investing in EY people, working with clients to address key challenges, and contributing to the communities we operate in. Our purpose reflects our mission to make every audit, tax return, consulting opportunity, question asked, and project delivered a chance to make the working world better than it was before.

Defining our purpose was never just about putting nice words on our website. It was about giving us a solid foundation to guide our organization's strategic vision, and we've seen that this has grounded us and helped us to stay the course through the uncertainties of the global pandemic, economic volatility, and geopolitical challenges.

How does EY's workforce at all levels live its purpose?

Our organization is vast. We have over 365,000 employees, working across geographies and service lines. Having a shared purpose unifies our culture and helps people connect their day-to-day work to something bigger than themselves. But we also get specific. Purpose is where we start, but we activate it through our strategy – to create long-term value for our clients, people, and society. We believe that focusing on stakeholders in this way leads to sustained financial returns – and it has. We've had our strongest growth in decades. We are now a \$45 billion company, growing at an impressive rate, and attribute that to our stakeholder-focused strategy, as well as the ability of EY people to adapt, innovate and deliver value in new and different ways.

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Will you discuss EY’s commitment and leadership in supporting entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, including the power of its EOY program?

Entrepreneurs are integral to economic vitality. That’s always been the case, but it’s even more true today, as pressing societal issues and geopolitical challenges touch every business. We are committed to supporting their optimism, critical problem-solving skills, and innovative thinking. We do this through EY Ripples, our corporate responsibility program, where we pair EY people with impact entrepreneurs to share expertise, insights, and time. During FY22 we worked with over 14,000 impact entrepreneurs in pursuit of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Of course, the Entrepreneur Of The Year® program is our most recognized program to support entrepreneurs. The competition operates in 60 different countries, honoring those who are building game-changing and sustainable businesses. Winners gain access to EY alumni, resources, and a platform to grow their business and inspire the next group of upcoming entrepreneurs. We see entrepreneurs as the spark for creating exponential change – from small communities to large companies – and I am continuously wowed by their commitment, ingenuity, and integrity.

What have been the keys to EY’s ability to build long-lasting client relationships and client loyalty?

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technological, economic, and geopolitical change. Our ability to serve our clients depends on our ability to move as fast as this environment. We are consistently trying to stay one step ahead and to be seen as a partner invested in our clients’ success.

We are a client-centric business, and committed to bringing the right global expertise, technology, and resources to every engagement we have. Our clients know we are focused on innovative solutions, transformative support, and collaborative teamwork. They see EY’s commitment to investing in the latest technologies, supporting our workforce, and contributing to the communities we operate in. It’s a relationship built on more than selling and providing services. Our goal, at the heart of our strategy, is to deliver value to our clients so that they can find success whether it is next quarter, next year, or five years from now. We want clients to know that we have their long-term, sustainable success as our primary interest, and that creates trust and loyalty.

How critical is it for EY to build a diverse and inclusive workforce to bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the table when addressing client needs?

We are committed to building a workplace where all people are valued, respected, and heard – because it’s the right thing to do, and it’s the right thing for our organization. We deliver better service when we draw on people from

diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, and experiences. We’ve done research on this, and diverse teams deliver higher-quality results. Our clients come to us with complex challenges, and to bring the best we have to them, we need EY people who feel they can bring their full selves to work.

That’s why I am the Co-chair of the Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DE&I) Committee, and DE&I is part of our broader strategy. We monitor our progress through our Global DE&I Tracker, which measures our performance on engagement, mobility, and inclusion. We’re committed to getting better and holding ourselves accountable.

What do you see as EY’s responsibility to the communities it serves and to being a force for good in society?

We realize that our significant size, talent, and resources put us in the position of being able to make a positive impact on a global scale – and we know we have a responsibility to do just that. Our corporate responsibility program, EY Ripples, expanded this year to include over 2,600 new projects and initiatives with over 91,000 EY people participating. Our goal is to positively impact one billion lives by 2030 – and we’re well on our way. We are also doing a lot of this work with clients through collaborative initiatives to upskill the workforce, create a low-carbon future, and address social and economic inequality.

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But creating long-term value for society is core to our strategy; it's not just about corporate responsibility. We are committed to be a force for good in all that we do. This gets back to our purpose. Through audit, we are committed to creating confidence and transparency in the capital markets. Through consulting, we are committed to helping our clients transform – often in ways that positively impacts society. We want the imperative to be a “force for good” to run through the fabric of our organization. I don't think you can be successful any other way in the world we live in today.

EY places a major emphasis on ESG. How critical is it for ESG to be built into a company's corporate strategy to be effective?

ESG is confronting a lot of push back right now, and I understand some of the frustration with the many demands on companies and competing interests, but corporate CEOs know that to be successful, you have to align your goals with the goals of society. ESG needs refinement, but it is here to stay for good reasons. According to our 2022 EY CEO Survey, 82 percent of chief executives “see ESG as a value driver to their business.” Companies want to show the impact that their operations are having broadly – the prosperity they create, the investment in their people, their commitment to diversity, and their efforts to be good stewards of the planet. They don't see ESG as just a way to manage risk. We've also seen that organizations, including EY, are committing to increased ESG disclosure – not just because they are focused on compliance, but because they know ESG issues are core to strategy, and as such, need to be measured.

EY is headquartered in New York. What are the keys to New York's economic recovery and rebuilding from the pandemic and how critical is a strong public/private partnership to New York's future success?

I'm deeply invested in the city's recovery – both as the EY CEO and a proud native of the New York metropolitan area. To help our region thrive, we need to address one of the biggest issues holding us back: Too many New Yorkers are working in low-wage jobs, even though they have college degrees – and

far too many come from communities of color and other underrepresented backgrounds. There is a gap between the talents they have and the opportunities they are offered.

That's why I'm a proud member of the New York Jobs CEO Council and the Future of Workers Task Force. As part of these initiatives, we're equipping workers with the right skills and helping them get good jobs that turn into long-term careers. Our goal is to hire 100,000 New Yorkers from low-income backgrounds by 2030, and we're working with Mayor Eric Adams and other government officials to get this done.

What are your views on the future of work and the role of the office of the future?

It's clear that workplace flexibility is here to stay; new research has found that employees value it as much as a 10 percent pay raise. At the same time, 60 percent of workers who have switched to doing their jobs remotely feel less connected to their co-workers. On the surface, it can seem like flexibility and collaboration are at odds with one another – but the opposite is true. An effective strategy should strike the right balance between the two, and that's what we're striving to do. As leaders build the office of the future, they will need to preserve the best of both worlds.

Do you feel that the industry has done an effective job of telling its story to attract the next generation of leaders to the profession?

In my opinion, there's never been a more exciting time to be in this profession. Technology is fundamentally changing the way we do business, and the opportunities to be on the leading edge of transformational change are growing, whether that is in accounting, consulting, or tax. We are telling this story, and we have a lot of demand for jobs at EY. Last year alone we had over three million people apply to EY globally.

For accounting in particular, the profession is well placed to help mature approaches to sustainability and ESG – areas so many new employees are interested in. Our work on reporting and assurance can help instill confidence in ESG disclosures and carbon accounting. Sustainability is also increasingly integrated into each of our service offerings,

including exciting opportunities in sustainability strategy setting, system implementations to track carbon emissions, calculating the economic value of social impact programs, among many others.

I am not worried about drawing the next generation of leaders to the profession – these are exciting, yet challenging, times and we have a lot to contribute.

What has made the profession so exciting and special for you?

I never planned to become an accountant. In college I studied chemistry, not business. Yet when I came to EY, I found opportunities to learn and take on new challenges. Some 37 years later, I'm proud that's still the case. There is no typical employee or typical experience, and that diversity is core to our strength. We are lucky to touch every aspect of a business – across all sectors – and that creates tremendous potential for a vibrant career full of teaming, learning, and contributing. And that's what I have been able to have, thanks to EY and the profession. I have also appreciated that we are not afraid to change and adapt and are always looking for the next opportunity. I find that kind of dynamism exciting, and EY has never failed to deliver on that front.

It sounds as though there may be real changes to EY around the corner. What are they and why now?

As has been covered in the media, we are considering evolving into two distinct multidisciplinary organizations – an assurance organization and a consulting organization. While it is really exciting to see the exceptional growth EY has achieved so far, we think there is more we can do, as two organizations, to better serve our stakeholders – and to create an even better working world.

The world is changing very fast, and so too are the expectations of our stakeholders. We've decided to propose this now because we think this evolution can bring about increased investment in the future, more opportunities and mobility for EY people, and enhanced services for our clients. What won't change is the focus on purpose-led growth, diversity and inclusion, and teaming – whether we are one organization or two. There are a lot of discussions to be had, but I am optimistic, and excited, about this bold new vision for the future. ●