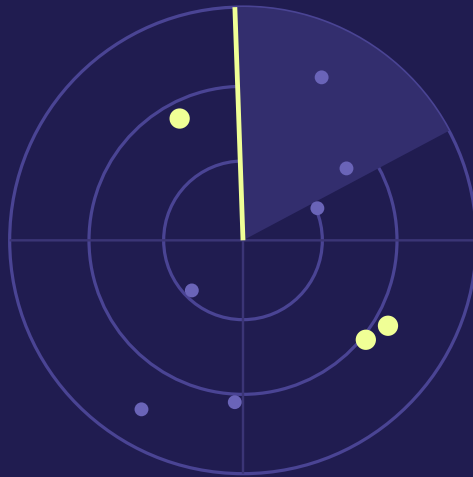


The Executive Reputation Exposure Report

When the leader becomes part of the risk environment



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Campaign Intelligence + Strategic Communications

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HOW TO READ IT

A briefing, not a report: the executive brief carries the argument, the numbered sections carry the evidence and the method, and every external figure is attributed to its source.

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Executive Brief

Executive visibility creates leverage and exposure at the same time. A leader can humanize an institution, accelerate trust, explain difficult decisions and carry authority through uncertainty. The same leader can also become a concentrated point of reputational failure.

The issue is not whether executives should be visible. It is whether the institution understands the conditions under which executive visibility adds credibility, creates vulnerability or changes the category of a controversy.

The 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer illustrates the fragility of leadership trust. Across 26 markets excluding China and Thailand, trust in CEOs was 64 among people with low grievance, 50 among those with moderate grievance and 30 among those with high grievance. Trust in one's own CEO among employees also fell as grievance increased. Executive reputation therefore cannot be managed independently from the environment in which audiences interpret leadership.

SECTION 01

Executive Reputation Is an Institutional Asset — and Liability

The executive's public identity now exists across:

- speeches and interviews;
- social media and historical posts;
- internal messages that can become public;
- search engines and AI-generated answers;
- employee commentary;
- investor and stakeholder networks;
- photographs, video and synthetic media;
- litigation, regulatory records and public filings;
- third-party profiles and news archives.

A leader can be exposed by something said today, something said ten years ago, something an employee attributes to them, or something an AI system incorrectly summarizes.

SECTION 02

The Artefact91 Executive Exposure Map

Assess exposure across six domains.

POSITION — What decisions, sectors, jurisdictions and contested issues are attached to the executive's role?

HISTORY — What prior statements, affiliations, disputes or decisions remain discoverable?

AUDIENCE — Which groups actively monitor, support, challenge or interpret the executive?

DEPENDENCY — How dependent is the organization's identity on this one person?

DISCOVERABILITY — What appears in search, news, social platforms and AI answers?

RESPONSE CAPACITY — How quickly can facts be established and a credible response activated?

Exposure is highest when dependency and discoverability are high but response capacity is weak.

SECTION 03

The CEO Should Not Always Speak

Executive participation should be a strategic choice, not a reflex.

Use the leader when:

- accountability sits clearly with them;
- the decision requires institutional authority;
- stakeholders expect direct leadership;
- they can credibly explain both the decision and remedy;
- their intervention is likely to reduce uncertainty.

Use another messenger when:

- technical expertise matters more than hierarchy;
- affected stakeholders need to hear from an operational owner;
- the leader's presence would unnecessarily escalate the issue;
- credibility rests with an independent or external authority;
- facts remain too uncertain for executive-level commitment.

SECTION 04

Build the Executive Evidence Layer

Executive reputation management is often treated as profile building. It should also be evidence building.

Maintain:

- an authoritative biography;
- verified role and career history;
- current policy and issue positions where institutionally relevant;
- searchable transcripts and speeches;
- evidence supporting public claims;
- clear correction routes for factual errors;
- a map of recurring questions;
- an AI/search answer audit;
- documented governance around personal and institutional social channels.

This makes the executive more legible to people and machines.

SECTION 05

Model Executive Scenarios Before They Happen

Test scenarios such as:

- an old post resurfaces;
- a private internal message leaks;
- a public statement is clipped out of context;
- an executive is personally targeted during an institutional controversy;
- a deepfake or manipulated image circulates;
- an employee publicly contradicts leadership;
- a regulator or journalist challenges a claim;
- the executive becomes more visible than the underlying issue.

For each scenario identify evidence, decision rights, messenger options, escalation thresholds and recovery actions.

SECTION 06

The Executive Exposure Dashboard

A useful dashboard should track:

DISCOVERABILITY — what appears first and repeatedly;

NARRATIVE CONCENTRATION — how much discussion centres on the person rather than the institution;

AUTHORITY — which sources shape the narrative;

STAKEHOLDER MOVEMENT — whether employees, partners, customers or regulators change behaviour;

CONTRADICTION — gaps between executive statements and organizational evidence;

LATENCY — how long leadership takes to establish facts and make decisions.

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Artefact91 Point of View

Executive reputation is not executive publicity. It is the management of concentrated institutional exposure around a human decision-maker.

The objective is not maximum visibility. It is credible visibility under the conditions where leadership matters.

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Questions for Leaders

If someone asked an AI system whether our executive is trustworthy, what evidence would it retrieve?

Which three historical issues could resurface?

Where is our organization over-dependent on one personality?

Who should speak when the CEO should not?

What would we need to prove—not merely say—during an executive controversy?

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Sources & Research Base

Edelman (2025), Trust Barometer Global Report — trust in CEOs by sense of grievance.

Edelman (2025), Trust Barometer — global institutional trust and grievance findings.

Artefact91 analysis of executive reputation as a decision, evidence and discoverability system.