



## Introduction

### Kevin Helliker, Editor in Chief

ONE AFTERNOON, A GLASS WAS to be raised for me in the Chicago newsroom of *The Wall Street Journal*. At the ready sat a case of cold champagne, but no alternative. A longstanding teetotaler, I was resigned to tapping a mug of tap water against the bubbly flutes of those honoring me—until there arrived a delivery of cheery green bottles. *Non-alcoholic beer!* Back then it was a new thing.

The sender of those bottles was Nik Deogun, then a top *WSJ* editor, now Brunswick CEO of the Americas. I have no idea how Nik knew back then that I didn't drink. But the thoughtfulness of his gesture stuck with me, and it came back to me again as I read his interview in these pages with Laxman Narasimhan, the CEO of Starbucks. To know Nik is to appreciate the brilliance of Narasimhan's strategy at Starbucks (p. 50). As a currency, human connection is wildly underestimated, and it can be made in a second.

Katy George can't imagine a better moment to serve as McKinsey's Chief People Officer. "I feel really privileged to be in the talent space during this once-in-a-multi-generational kind of disruption in talent models," she tells us. (On page 46, George reveals what

percentage of in-office attendance works best.)

In discussing risk, Moody's CEO Rob Fauber suggests that one way to improve outcomes is to prioritize employee welfare, a lesson the pandemic drove home. "The first and most important thing is the health and safety of all of our employees. You say that for a year and a half and it leads to decisions that truly are guided by that principle" (p. 36).

Our coverage of industrials includes interviews with Suzy Welch (p. 80), the head of the Port of LA (p. 105) and Daniel Yergin, "oil's oracle" (p. 76).

Our health section includes an interview with Dr. Amy Abernethy, Chief Medical Officer of Alphabet's Verily (p. 86), and a Stanford Medicine examination of the health impacts of climate change (p. 94).

On economics, Brunswick speaks with two economists, Dambisa Moyo on the state of the world (p. 22), and Tao Wang on China (p. 110). A Saudi native cites example after example of recent progress there toward gender equality (p. 98). And on page 16, a flight attendant union leader credits former United Airlines CEO Oscar Munoz with saving the airline. There's hope in that. ♦

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