



LEADERS IN FOCUS

WITH JOSÉ MARÍA GALOFRÉ

Managing Director and CEO, Volvo Cars Spain



José María Galofré is the CEO and Managing Director of Volvo Car Spain. He joined Volvo Car Spain in 2000 as Commercial Director, was appointed CEO in 2005, and became President of the Board in 2014.

With more than 30 years of experience in the automotive and mobility sectors, he has played a key role in Volvo's growth and transformation in the Spanish market. His work has focused strongly on innovation, sustainability, and long-term value creation. He describes himself as a "humanist engineer", a perspective explored further in the interview.

In 2022, he was appointed President of the Swedish-Spanish Chamber of Commerce.

What have you learned about yourself through leading others?

To be reflective, to think everything through several times, avoiding being impulsive. And to be analytical, using data and evidence instead of relying on perceptions and clichés.

Leadership is...

"Auctoritas." Recalling Roman law, auctoritas or potestas. Potestas is the legal power to command and use force; auctoritas is authority based on knowledge and respect.

Choose a leader you admire and explain why in one sentence

Spiritually: Jesus Christ, for teaching us his ethics.

Secularly: Christopher Columbus, for teaching us globalization



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What achievement are you most proud of in your career, and why does it matter to you personally?

The ability to innovate and build teams with good relationships across the board, 360 degrees, with boss, colleagues, and direct reports. It's the result of my style, based on Knowledge and Humanism.

What feels more complex today compared to five years ago in your role as a leader?

There's always complexity, and the only real change compared to five years ago is that I now have new responsibilities, new positions that require greater capacity to manage the agenda: more efficiency and a stronger ability to prioritize.

In three words, how would you describe your leadership style?

If I didn't want to think for myself, I'd ask AI, and GPT's answer is "Vision, inspiration, and responsibility," but I think in its search it didn't ask me!! Because my style is more about "Knowledge and humanism," and I only need 2 words.



Over more than two decades at Volvo, you have witnessed major shifts in mobility, technology and customer expectations. What change has challenged you the most as a leader?

All changes require a strategy of encouraging the team, so that the reason for the change is understood, and also involving the team so they become the agents of change.

If you could give one piece of advice to young leaders, what would it be?

Understand the game theory of Nobel economics laureates Nash and Harsanyi, because in any human relationship or negotiation, it's key to understand each party's viewpoints and

interests, in order to find the solution that works for everyone. The solidary solution achieves the best results in the medium and long term.

Looking ahead, what is next for you personally, professionally, or for the sector you represent?

Never losing the ability to observe and the desire to innovate and improve. Applying Lean methodology in every area. "Kaizen" is a word of Japanese origin meaning continuous improvement through small, constant changes. It's used to optimize processes, increase productivity, and eliminate inefficient habits or tasks, both at work and in personal life.