



LEADERS IN FOCUS

WITH GORKA TAMAYO
CEO, EuroMaint Gruppen AB



“FOCUSED. PEOPLE-CENTRED. CUSTOMER-DRIVEN”

Gorka is an international industrial leader with experience across the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Oceania. An engineer with an MBA and a graduate of the CFO Program at Deusto Business School, he combines strong analytical foundations with strategic and financial leadership. He became Managing Director at the age of 34, leading complex organisations through demanding transformations with a clear focus on customers, execution, and value creation.

As CEO of EuroMaint Gruppen AB, the Swedish based market leader in rail services in Nordics, he led the successful “OurWay Turnaround”, resto-ring profitability, strengthening customer trust, and improving operational and financial performance across all the 23 sites. Under his leadership, the company delivered sustained EBIT and FCF improvement, higher productivity, and reinforced market competitiveness in a challenging industrial environment.

Gorka is also a husband and father of two, with a strong passion for travelling, running 15K distances, hiking, and exploring gastronomy.

These interests keep him grounded and energised, complementing his leadership approach and shaping the balance he brings to his professional life.

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

Focused. People-centred. Customer-driven.

What advice would you give to someone leading across cultures for the first time?

Listen first, assume nothing, and build trust through consistency. Leading across cultures requires respect for context, curiosity for different ways of working, and a disciplined approach to communication. Diversity brings better decisions—especially when you stay close to customers and ensure that cultural differences become strengths rather than obstacles.

Swedish fika or Spanish picoteo?

Both—fika for reflection, picoteo for connection.

Navigating Leadership and Transformation



Choose a fictional character or historical figure you admire as a leader, and explain why.

I admire Juan Sebastián Elkano, the first person to successfully circumnavigate the globe. Born near my hometown of Pasai Donibane, he demonstrated exceptional leadership under extreme uncertainty. Elkano embodied courage, adaptability, and strategic navigation—qualities essential in modern organisational turnarounds. Like in a complex transformation, his success depended not only on technical skill, but on earning trust, uniting diverse crews, and keeping focus on the mission despite adversity.

What has been the most challenging change you've led in recent years, and what did it teach you about leadership?

The EuroMaint turnaround was the most demanding and rewarding challenge. Transforming a company in a high-pressure industrial environment required tough prioritisation, transparent communication, and a deep cultural shift with customers at the centre: Swedish business culture is structured, punctual, and consensus-driven, while Spanish business culture is more flexible, relationship-oriented, and founded on personal trust. Bringing these two worlds together creates a powerful dynamic—successful change happens when people understand the destination, feel trusted to contribute, and witness real improvements for customers every day.

How do you protect your energy and focus as a leader?

By staying close to purpose and to customers. I prioritise what creates real value, avoid unnecessary complexity, and protect time for reflection and deep work. A strong, empowered team is essential—it allows me to focus on the decisions and relationships that truly shape the organisation.

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What way of thinking has been most important for you when making leadership decisions that shape the organisation for years to come?

Long-term thinking paired with disciplined execution. I like to look beyond the next year and ensure that decisions strengthen the organisation structurally—by developing people, investing in operational and financial excellence, and building a culture that listens to customers and adapts quickly. Strategy is important, while daily execution and customer proximity determine success.

Which leadership skills will be most important for strengthening Europe's industrial competitiveness in the coming years?

Operational excellence, digital fluency, and strong customer orientation. Europe's competitiveness will depend on leaders who can modernise industry, adopt technology at pace, and foster cultures that attract skilled talent. Collaboration across borders, ecosystems, and customer segments will also be critical to drive sustainable industrial performance.

Looking back, what advice would you give your younger self?

I would tell my younger self to focus earlier on people and change management, not only on delivering results. Strong execution is important, but lasting transformation happens when you invest time in understanding people, building alignment, and creating the conditions for change to take root. I would remind myself that results accelerate when teams feel supported, engaged, and part of the journey from the very beginning.

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

Looking ahead, I want to continue strengthening European industry through sustainable, technology-enabled, customer-focused operations—but also to contribute more directly to improving mobility and expanding CAF's influence in the global market. Personally, I aim to keep learning and engaging in transformations that create long-term value. Professionally, my ambition is to help build organisations where people thrive, execution is disciplined, and our impact on customers and the mobility ecosystem grows year after year.