



Dr. Mitchell Levy, Ph.D.

Expert Witness in Leadership Transitions and Governance

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Professional Summary

Dr. Mitchell Levy, Ph.D., has spent more than three decades advising founders, family business leaders, CEOs, executive teams, and boards regarding leadership transitions, governance, executive decision-making, succession, and organizational effectiveness.

His expertise is informed by public company board leadership, executive advisory work and executive practice, doctoral research, executive education, documented leadership interviews, and published works focused on leadership transitions, governance, executive effectiveness, organizational development, and executive decision-making.

His opinions are developed by integrating governance experience, executive practice, research, and leadership scholarship with the specific facts, evidence, and circumstances of each engagement.

Areas of Expertise

Leadership Transitions

- CEO transitions.
- Founder transitions.
- Executive succession planning.
- C-suite succession and leadership transitions.
- Executive onboarding and readiness.
- Forced executive departures.
- Leadership continuity during organizational disruption.
- Executive readiness for expanded leadership responsibilities.

Family Business Leadership and Succession

- Founder succession.
- Successor readiness and preparedness.
- Family governance structures.
- Ownership versus management role clarity.
- Leadership continuity across generations.
- Founder identity becoming inseparable from the business.
- Family disagreements regarding successor qualifications.
- Preservation of organizational values during leadership transitions.

Governance and Executive Leadership

- CEO-board alignment.
- Governance effectiveness.
- Executive leadership performance and effectiveness.
- Executive compensation governance.
- Decision-right clarity.
- Board and executive role clarity.
- Executive decision-making under pressure.
- Alignment between governance practices, executive decisions, and organizational values.

Board Leadership Experience

Rainmaker Systems (NASDAQ: RMKR)

Chairman of the Board (2012–2013)

Board Member (2003–2013)

Chair, Governance & Nominating Committee

Chair, Compensation Committee

Board responsibilities included:

- Governance oversight.
- CEO support and evaluation.
- Executive succession considerations.
- Compensation governance.
- Board-management alignment.
- Strategic guidance during periods of organizational transition.

CEO Networking

Co-Founder and Executive Peer Group Facilitator

Co-founded CEO Networking, a confidential executive peer advisory organization serving CEOs, founders, family business leaders, business owners, and senior executives.

For approximately ten years, facilitated confidential executive peer advisory groups in which CEOs, founders, family business leaders, business owners, and senior executives challenged one another's thinking, shared leadership experiences, and worked through governance, succession, strategic, and organizational issues.

Through this work, observed recurring leadership and governance patterns involving:

- Founder transitions.
- Family business succession.
- CEO succession planning.
- Governance challenges.
- Ownership versus management role clarity.
- Executive leadership performance and effectiveness.
- Leadership decision-making under pressure.
- C-suite succession and leadership transitions.

This experience provided repeated opportunities to observe how founders, family business leaders, CEOs, boards, and executive teams navigated growth, succession, governance challenges, organizational change, conflict, and leadership transitions across hundreds of leadership situations. Those observations continue to inform Dr. Levy's approach to evaluating leadership transitions, governance, and executive decision-making.

Executive Practice

THiNKaha, Inc.

Founder, Executive Advisor, Publisher, and Facilitator

Advises founders, family business leaders, CEOs, executive teams, and boards regarding leadership transitions, governance, executive decision-making, organizational alignment, executive communication, and leadership succession.

Representative activities include:

- Executive advisory engagements.
- Leadership transitions and succession planning.
- Executive team alignment.
- Strategic decision-making facilitation.
- Governance and board advisory support.
- Executive presence development.
- Leadership team facilitation.
- Collaborated with executives, founders, entrepreneurs, and thought leaders as a strategic thinking partner to develop, refine, and publish leadership ideas, translating practical leadership experience into frameworks, publications, and executive education.
- Reviewed, negotiated, and executed business agreements involving authors, publishers, strategic partners, intellectual property, executive education, and professional services.

Executive Coaching

Marshall Goldsmith 100 Coaches

Selected member of Marshall Goldsmith's global community of executive coaches and thought leaders.

Marshall Goldsmith Stakeholder Centered Coaching®

- Executive coaching focused on leadership effectiveness, executive presence, governance, stakeholder alignment, and behavioral change.
- Certified Stakeholder Centered Coaching® process emphasizing measurable behavioral change, with progress evaluated by the leader's stakeholders over time.
- Objective assessment of leadership behavior through structured stakeholder feedback rather than self-assessment.

Executive Education Leadership

Designed, developed, and led executive education programs that translated executive practice, governance experience, and leadership research into practical learning experiences for executives, founders, business owners, and senior leaders.

E-Commerce Management Program (ECM)

Founder and Program Leader

Designed and launched a university-based E-Commerce Management Program through San Jose State University Professional Development.

Representative accomplishments include:

- Created executive education programs generating more than 4,700 course enrollments.
- Developed and facilitated more than 50 executive education courses.
- Recruited, evaluated, developed, and managed faculty and subject matter experts.
- Programs addressed leadership, governance, strategy, organizational effectiveness, innovation, and business transformation.

Silicon Valley Executive Business Program (SVEBP)

Founder and Executive Education Leader

Developed and led executive education programming through San Jose State University Professional Development and subsequently expanded programming through the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Representative responsibilities included:

- Executive education program design and leadership.
- Curriculum development, faculty recruitment, and quality oversight.
- Executive leadership development programming.
- Collaboration with university leaders, executives, faculty, and industry experts.
- Programs addressed executive leadership, governance, business strategy, organizational effectiveness, innovation, and leadership development.

University of California, Santa Cruz

Executive Education Program Leadership

Led and expanded executive education programming for executive audiences.

Santa Clara University Leavey School of Business

Graduate Faculty

Taught within the Evening MBA Program.

San Jose State University

Faculty Member and Executive Education Contributor

Delivered undergraduate instruction and executive education programming through Professional Development initiatives.

Research Experience

Dr. Levy's doctoral research built upon more than three decades of governance experience, executive advisory work, executive practice, executive education, and documented leadership observations. His research formalized and extended recurring leadership and governance patterns observed through decades of executive practice.

Research informed by:

- Public company board leadership.
- Three decades of executive advisory work involving founders, family business leaders, CEOs, executive teams, and boards.
- More than 500 documented interviews with executives and thought leaders informing research on credibility, executive leadership, and organizational trust.
- Executive practice spanning executive advisory, executive coaching, executive education, and CEO peer advisory groups.
- Leadership observations across founder-led, family-owned, privately held, and publicly traded organizations.

Research focused on:

- Executive decision-making under short-term pressure.
- Leadership transitions.
- Governance effectiveness.
- Executive credibility and organizational trust.
- Durable value creation.

Education

Gateway University

Ph.D., Transformational Leadership & Organizational Development (2026)

Dissertation:

Executive Abundance: A Leadership Framework for Day-to-Day Executive Decisions Creating Durable Value Under Short-Term Pressure, a Qualitative Capstone.

The College of William & Mary – Mason School of Business

Master of Business Administration (1983)

University of Miami

Bachelor of Science, Stochastic and Deterministic Models of Operational Research (1982)

Publications

Representative books authored or co-authored include:

- Executive Abundance (2026).
- Credibility Nation (2020).
- Legacy: What It Means in Today's World (2019).
- C-Suite Executives' Guide to Success (2018).

Additional books relevant to specific matters are available upon request.

Executive Education and Speaking

Representative executive education and speaking engagements include:

- TEDx presentations.
- University commencement address.
- Executive education programs.
- Leadership development workshops.
- Executive advisory forums.

Representative topics have included leadership transitions, governance, executive decision-making, executive effectiveness, family business succession, organizational trust, and durable value creation.

Professional Affiliations

- Marshall Goldsmith 100 Coaches.
- Certified Marshall Goldsmith Stakeholder-Centered Coach®.
- Thinkers360 Global Thought Leader Recognition.

Expert Witness Experience

Retained as an expert in a business-related matter involving leadership and corporate governance.