



7 questions to ask of business leaders



The last few years have been challenging and while 2022 is all set to see continued volatility and uncertainty there is also opportunity. Audit leaders need to keep pace on all fronts to provide relevant advice and assurance.

In their article, [The CEO agenda in 2022: Harnessing the potential of growth jolts](#), thought leaders McKinsey suggest that the pandemic triggered growth in some sectors and a further two growth jolts are possible for organisations that respond positively to current uncertainties and shape strategy to adapt to post-pandemic normality.

Whilst some findings in the report relate to the United States, the same observations are true here as well (in the UK and Ireland).

In the following piece, we give you 7 questions to ask of business leaders.

Management of current uncertainties and how to tackle them

Before we jump into the 7 questions to ask of business leaders, here are some considerations around the management of current uncertainties how to tackle them:

- **Inflation:** Highest levels for decades and outside the experience of the majority of leaders
 - **What to do:** Leverage procurement, pricing, or balance sheet strategies
- **Labour mismatch:** A high proportion of the workforce is seeking to change roles
 - **What to do:** Focus on developing talent and consider productivity tools including automation

- **Supply chain shortages:** Widespread issues across industries are impacting availability and costs
 - **What to do:** Successful companies use advanced analytics
 - **Pandemic impacts:** New variants and short-notice suppression measures (disruption)
 - **What to do:** Bolster resilience both operational and emotional, demonstrate support and purpose
 - **Geopolitical concerns:** Rising tensions around the world heighten a variety of risks
 - **What to do:** Understand geographic risk profile and collaborations for trade, etc
 - **Energy market volatility:** Cost pressures and potential infrastructure breakdowns
 - **What to do:** Focus on energy transition opportunities and targets, balance threat with opportunity
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7 questions for internal auditors to ask of business leaders

As audit leaders, there are 7 questions we can ask of our business leaders:

1. Is our organisation adopting a strong growth mindset in its medium-term strategy as the pandemic evolves?
2. Is the board spending as much time creating new businesses as you are improving your business?
3. Is our organisation ready for the energy transition – and the immense economic impact it could carry?
4. Is our organisation embracing new technology as quickly and holistically as it did new ways of working at the start of the pandemic?
5. Is our organisation investing in human capital with the same discipline and intensity as capital expenditures?
6. Is our organisation remapping its global footprint in response to outside stressors?
7. Is the board and senior management demonstrating a strong growth orientation in its leadership?

You need to keep pace with the risks to audit at the speed of risk.