

COSTAMAGNA HELP & ADVICE TOP MANAGER

Costamagna – banker and mentor with London-based CMi. Developing a different brand of business ruling class with a European perspective: “It’s also useful for smaller companies because, at the end of the day, even large organisations start off as family firms”

by Daniela Polizzi

Another playing card to help Italy’s business leaders develop. And also to support family firms, the backbone of national industry, in the career choices and path of its advocates. This is the latest wild card that Claudio Costamagna will play in his bid to support companies. And he’ll do this through the CMi, which stands for Chairman Mentors International, a company based in London but with a presence all over Europe thanks to its close mentoring network. Costamagna is set to be one of the mentors in this network of experts. And even though the scope is international, his eyes will be firmly fixed on Italy.

CMi is a treasure chest of a company, bringing together 70 former senior executives and chairpersons of large multinationals who made a name for themselves over the years and have now started working with the business ruling class. At the helm of this network of super-experts is Norwegian chairwoman, Elin Hurvenes. One of its clients in Italy is Snam and its management team, a company deeply involved in the challenges of energy transition.

Their job is to act as a mentor to front-line business managers as they progress along their career path, from chief financial officers to CEOs to company presidents themselves. Costamagna is to be part of this network of mentors on hand to help companies. That means companies that already have a professional management structure as well as family-run businesses where managers want to learn to interact more productively with members of the dynasty.

“Experience in large organisations, built up by mentors over their career on the international stage, can also be useful for smaller companies because, at the end of the day, even large multifaceted organisations start off as family firms. The keyword is modernising”, says Costamagna. “There’s nothing academic about it; it’s almost a psychology session. We meet up, we discuss matters and everything we say is purely off the record. In short, none of us goes and tells the boss. It’s all based on a relationship of trust, free from the shackles of the organisation. Simply put, the mentor has your well-being at heart. At a time when there’s so much talk about the need to develop a new business ruling class, this is intended to be an initiative with a strong European dimension as well”.

A new front

For the former banker at Goldman Sachs, “where I myself was mentor to three women who didn’t work with me in investment banking”, and then Chairman of Cassa Depositi e Prestiti, this is yet another string to his bow. Three years ago, he took off his top manager and chairman’s hat and rolled up his sleeves helping companies to develop. And he approaches this from a different angle than business. He sits on the boards of well-known holding companies for the likes of Arvedi, Salini, Ferragamo and api, involved in delicate stages such as growth, share reorganisation and management changes.

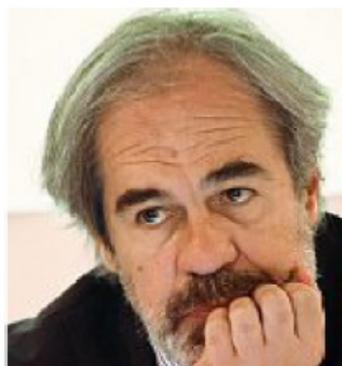
For a long time now, he has worked closely with groups and companies such as Ariston, Moncler and Technogym in his role as advisor. And again as an advisor, he monitors giant takeovers such as the one in full swing for motorway operator Autostrade per l’Italia, involving investment funds Blackstone and Macquarie. Lastly, he is an investor in his own right, through his company CC & Soci, in companies such as Tiscali, Expert System and Brescia-based New Oxidal.

Profiles

Costamagna joins a prestigious team that includes big business names such as Franz Humer, former Chairman of Swiss company Roche Holdings and now board member at Allogene Therapeutics, one of the pioneers in the pharmaceutical industry. Then there is Paul Bulcke, long-time head of the Nestlé Group, Michael Diekmann, current Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Allianz and the manager credited with the growth of the German company, and Tony Hayward, Chairman of mining company Glencore and with a previous career at BP where he was CEO. Added to this is a list of illustrious clients – BT, Ericsson, Suez, S&P Global and the London Stock Exchange, to name but a few.

“In practice, we want to transform, in a structured fashion, the relationship that first emerged from casual meetings in the life of a manager with professionals or more senior managers who gave good advice”, Costamagna concludes. His appointment diary is already starting to fill up.

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At the top: Claudio Costamagna



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