



Futureproof Leadership

8 AI Considerations for Company Boards



Daniela Sozzi



Barbara Cresti



Barbara

Reflecting on your extensive consulting experience, how would you assess the strategic maturity of your clients in embedding AI and Generative AI into their business practices?



Daniela

Some clients have been **deploying AI-based tools**, before GenAI became broadly accessible.

Others who lagged are rapidly accelerating the upgrading of their infrastructure and processes to remain competitive, starting by introducing GenAI.



Daniela Sozzi



Barbara Cresti



Daniela

With experience in both small & mid-size enterprises (SME) and Big Tech, what's your top advice to Boards navigating AI?

Barbara



In **Big Tech** AI is the air they breathe. They're AI-native, experiment early, and educate their teams at scale, relentlessly.

SMEs often wait or over-rely on external vendors. My advice: build AI literacy at the top to ask the right questions, spot opportunities, and challenge vendors.



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Daniela

What's a smart, low-risk way to start with GenAI in a SME?

Barbara



Start where GenAI can drive **productivity at scale**, automating simple tasks. Set guardrails, track impact, and educate teams.

In parallel, **identify the use case** that matters most, whether it's process optimisation, business growth, or value differentiation. This approach builds readiness, protects reputation, and positions executives to lead with clarity and control.



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Barbara

How do you influence/guide your clients' approach to innovation and experimentation with AI?



Daniela

Many clients find it tough to visualise how cutting-edge tech can really impact their business.

I bridge that gap by digging into their specific problems, **identifying practical solutions**, and then backing it up with clear **cost-benefit analyses** and **solid financial projections**.

I always involve Tech and Product teams to quickly prototype ideas for review.



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Daniela

How should European companies approach AI while maintaining digital sovereignty?

Barbara



EU firms should **embed EU values** — transparency, accountability, and data protection — into their AI strategies from the start.

Choosing tech partners aligned with these principles helps ensure digital sovereignty and **builds trust** with regulators, customers, and employees in an increasingly polarised world.



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Barbara

What are key barriers to effective adoption of AI in fintech?



Daniela

The key one is regulation.

Not all the potential use cases for AI are allowed by local regulations. Fintechs need to make sure regulators in all jurisdictions in which they hold a licence are satisfied.

Some regulators are more “open minded” than others, so a **regulatory risk assessment** needs to be carried out. Often technology moves quicker than regulation and therefore greater effort needs to go into engaging with local authorities than into liaising with tech vendors.



Daniela Sozzi



Barbara Cresti



Barbara

Which specific AI initiatives or use cases particularly excite you and why?



Daniela

I see tremendous potential in applying AI to transform credit and lending decisions for consumers and small businesses - truly the lifeblood of economic growth.

Also, I've been following closely the more complex challenge of using AI to combat payments fraud, terrorism financing, and money laundering.



Daniela Sozzi



Barbara Cresti



Daniela

To wrap up, what mindset shift do you believe is most crucial for leaders to navigate the AI era with confidence?

Barbara



Leaders need to shift from fearing disruption to actively shaping it. That means staying curious, asking better questions, and seeing AI as a strategic lever to rethink value, talent, and trust.

Confidence comes from clarity, and clarity starts with learning, exploring and seeing the glass half full - AI as an opportunity, not a threat.



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