

Conversations for tomorrow

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The CEO Corner



Shayne Elliott
Chief Executive Officer,
ANZ



Aiman Ezzat
Chief Executive Officer,
Capgemini







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Chief Executive Officer,
ANZ

Shayne Elliott has over 30 years' experience in all aspects of banking, both in Australia and overseas. He joined ANZ as CEO Institutional in June 2009, was appointed chief financial officer in 2012, and chief executive officer in 2019.

Prior to joining ANZ, Shayne held senior executive roles, including chief operating officer, at EFG Hermes, the largest investment bank in the Middle East. He started his career with Citibank New Zealand and worked with Citibank/Citigroup for 20 years, holding various senior positions across the UK, the US, Egypt, Australia, and Hong Kong. Shayne is a director of the Financial Markets Foundation for Children and a member of the Australian Banking Association, the Business Council of Australia, and the Customs Advisory Board.



Aiman Ezzat
Chief Executive Officer,
Capgemini

With more than 20 years' experience at Capgemini, Aiman Ezzat has a deep knowledge of the Group's main businesses. He has experience of working in many countries, notably the UK and the US, where he lived for more than 15 years. Aiman was appointed chief executive officer in May 2020. Before that, he served as chief operating officer, from 2018 to 2020, and chief financial officer from 2012 to 2018.

Aiman is also member of Air Liquide Board of Directors and member of the Business Council.

The Capgemini Research Institute spoke to Shayne and Aiman to understand the impact of the pandemic on their roles as CEOs; their companies' strategies and priorities; and the opportunities they see in the new ways of working post-pandemic.

LEADING DURING THE PANDEMIC

What have been your key takeaways as CEOs leading global organizations during the pandemic?

— **Shayne:** I believe the flexibility and resilience shown by ANZ and our employees stood out. It not only exceeded my expectations, but also set us apart from our competitors. From a managerial perspective, the past year reinforced the importance of clarity in communication. In a period of crisis, people are constantly looking for direction and reassurance. I needed to ensure that what is most important to our business and to our people remained top of mind for all our employees around the world.

— **Aiman:** Like Shayne, our employees' agility and their ability to maximize remote working exceeded my expectations. Our people around the world displayed tremendous solidarity because they understood that this crisis is human, before being economic, financial, political, or social.

Across industries, we have witnessed change taking place in weeks that would have normally taken months or even years. I've been deeply impressed by the speed at which our societies have evolved and adapted. For example, new investments and innovations for health, like vaccines, telehealth, and contact tracing. And, in retail, a massive acceleration in the adoption of contactless payments and ecommerce.

How has the pandemic impacted the short-term priorities and long-term visions of your organizations?

— **Shayne:** The pandemic brought about a shift in our decision-making process. We needed to make quick decisions in real time; therefore, decision-making was delegated. For example, employees working directly with customers and partners were enabled to make decisions. Our short-term priorities are summed up in our four-point plan: protect,

adapt, engage, and prepare. Our first priority focuses on protecting our people and customers; our second priority focuses on adapting rapidly to operating in these uncertain times; thirdly, our focus is on engaging with our customers because they are also looking for guidance; and our fourth point is about the need to shift our focus towards preparing for, and investing in, the future.

The move away from bricks-and-mortar and cash has been part of our long-term strategy but the pandemic has accelerated this exponentially. For example, in 2020 at ANZ we saw digital-wallet payments increase by 92% in terms of value and 68% in terms of transaction volume. Meanwhile, in-branch transactions decreased by a further 25%, accelerating a multi-year trend.

— **Aiman:** All businesses, including Capgemini, have been disrupted in the short term as they have focused on their immediate crisis response. One major long-term impact of the pandemic is seen in the evolution of our operating model towards a borderless hybrid working model. In addition, the pandemic has brought our sustainable ambition into greater focus. We see an even more urgent need to be a responsible leader and play a key role in educating our clients and partners about their impacts on the environment.

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IMPLEMENTING NEW WAYS OF WORKING

How do you see a hybrid model evolving and being adopted in your organizations?

— **Shayne:** I think the hybrid model is here to stay but it is going to continue to flex and change. At ANZ, we have always had flexibility around working hours. Employees could come in and go home early, or even work part-time. But, over the past year, flexibility has been the focus. So, there are two dimensions to flexibility of the workforce now: time and place. We allow teams to access the quadrant of these two dimensions they naturally fit into. We realize that the number of people in each of those quadrants will shift and change over time. Our focus is now on assessing how productivity will be defined in terms of hybrid working. Furthermore, instead of adopting a hybrid model of work in order to survive, we are viewing it as a source of competitive advantage.

— **Aiman:** Our “new normal” is a borderless, digitally enabled, hybrid working model. We are focused on three dimensions: first, it’s about providing our employees with autonomy in where and how they work, ensuring a work-life balance while still being physically anchored in a Capgemini location where they go on a regular basis. Second, we are focused on connected spaces and designing digitally enabled offices, while ensuring we have the digital tools that our hybrid workforce needs. And third, we are implementing a global resourcing model that allows anyone, anywhere to work on an engagement, regardless of location. This model will eliminate geographic boundaries to make our business more resilient and more attractive to future employees. I also believe our clients will benefit from these changes, giving them access to an even larger and more diverse pool of talented people, independent of geography. Our offices will continue to play a key role in this model enabling our colleagues to reconnect but also facilitating these chance encounters that are so valuable to collaboration and innovation.

Do you believe a hybrid model can have a positive impact on your client relationships and the attractiveness of your organizations for future employees?

— **Shayne:** Yes, definitely, and we are seeing some positive impact already. For example, calling rate is a metric used to quantify the level of customer engagement by measuring the number of times our employees call clients and engage with them. The calling rates have actually increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Working from home has given employees more time, more flexible hours, and they are actually engaging more with our customers.

I think it has actually broadened our perspective on geographic diversity. Remote working has opened up the possibility of hiring more from regional and remote Australia and other parts of the world. It goes hand-in-hand with diversity and inclusion because the talent pool is no longer restricted to the people who can come into our offices regularly. However, hybrid working does result in some challenges in terms of collaboration and company culture because of reduced in-person interactions.

— **Aiman:** At Capgemini, remote working has broadened the talent pool available for hiring by significantly reducing geographical barriers. For example, in 2020, we set an ambition to offer remote-work opportunities to educated women in small towns and villages across India. To that end, we launched Sakhi Drishtikon, a program targeting women from economically weak backgrounds in rural India. Our goal is to bring them into the mainstream workforce through career development and training initiatives. By the end of December 2020, 500 women from across rural India had joined our workforce in security, cloud, and data roles.

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How do you think you can preserve ANZ’s culture in this hybrid setting and especially with respect to new joiners?

— **Shayne:** I think it is one of the biggest challenges and it is something we are thinking about actively. Physical interaction is important to preserve a culture of collaboration and creativity. So, it is important that the model of working is hybrid and not completely remote; I believe an in-person experience is vital for new joiners to understand and absorb company culture. To this end, we are analyzing which pieces of work can be accomplished from a remote location, and in which tasks culture, creativity, and physical proximity would be necessary.

What would be your advice to your CEO peers about sustaining the benefits of new ways of working?

— **Shayne:** There has been a narrative about enduring the pandemic and returning to normal. I believe it is unfortunate, as the normal was not a great state to be in, either! Our motive should be to move forward. Change is a constant, but the rate of change is not. As CEOs and leaders, we must embrace the change that has been achieved in this period and aspire to

move ahead. I believe our experiences during the pandemic will shape organizations for the coming 20 years.

— **Aiman:** We have a unique opportunity today to reimagine the way we do business, the way we work, and the way we live. We also have an opportunity to crack the real fight of our generation: the fight against global warming.

THE IMPACT OF HYBRID WORKING ON URBAN LIFE AND CITIES

How do you see the new hybrid model impacting urban life?

— **Shayne:** What we have observed in Australia is that there has been a move away from the city. A lot of people have moved to the country from the big cities for lifestyle choices. But I think it is way too early to say whether this is a permanent shift or not. Cities have continued to attract people for hundreds of years because they are exciting and provide exposure to cultural diversity. So, I believe cities will continue to attract people and be central to all human activity. Although the definition of a city as a sustainable, great place for living is going to change and we would need to adapt accordingly.

Further, I think some small towns and areas will have to innovate and build a competitive advantage to attract people who might be moving out of the cities, which would vary for different parts of the world. Also, people might continue to prefer cities owing to better healthcare, education, and work opportunities. I think the important issue here is that cities, villages, states, and countries will all have to adapt to a post-COVID-19 world.

— **Aiman:** A similar trend is observed in the US, with large metropolitan areas showing the greatest economic downturns during the pandemic, reflecting people moving to smaller areas, and from cities to suburbs. This trend reflects a desire to be in less dense areas, as well as greater capabilities to work remotely. I fully agree that smaller towns and cities will need to think creatively about their futures. For example, some smaller



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cities in the US, such as Baltimore and Tulsa are offering tax rebates as a way to lure remote workers. Even so, I am convinced that global metropolitan cities like New York, London or Paris will never lose their appeal, for the reasons Shayne mentions.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY IN THE NEW NORMAL

How has the pandemic influenced your commitment to sustainability and how will hybrid working impact sustainability initiatives?

— **Shayne:** The COVID-19 pandemic has broadened our perspective on sustainability. We have always been committed to sustainability and prerequisites for that are a sustainable economy and environment. In the past, the focus was mostly on greenhouse gases and carbon emissions, but the pandemic has brought into focus the dangers of not working in harmony with the environment on a broader scale.

I view new ways of working as a manifestation of agility and adaptability, which are key to sustainability initiatives. Only the companies that can

rapidly adapt will be able to survive. The role of banks will be to finance change. Sometimes, banks lead a change and bring the customers along; sometimes the customers take us along with them. After successfully overcoming a huge crisis over the past year, and given our resilience, agility, and ability as an organization, we feel confident in leading the way and facing big challenges.

— **Aiman:** I believe the pandemic has intensified the focus on sustainability of organizations across industries. Our research revealed many global companies accelerated their sustainability journey even during the pandemic.

Sustainability is a key focus area for us, too. We will achieve carbon neutrality no later than 2025 and become a net-zero business by 2030. The pandemic has directly impacted our sustainability initiatives when it comes to business travel. Prior to the pandemic, we had thousands of employees flying around the world on any given day but, because of the move to remote working, the amount of travel we do as a company was drastically reduced. We are now working to keep these benefits of reduced carbon footprint and to ensure that travel does not exceed more than 50% of the pre-COVID levels, going forward.

We are also committed to supporting our clients in their decarbonization efforts and helping to reduce their emissions by 10 million tons of carbon by 2030. For example, at a large automotive manufacturer, we implemented modern technology, APIs, and a shared-services approach to halve the CO2 footprint of a widely used backend application.

25%

of global companies accelerated their sustainability journey during the pandemic.



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