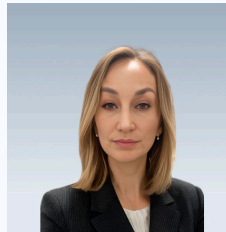




Leadership Insights: A Conversation on Innovation, Empowerment & Purposeful Growth



Thomas Klofac
Former President
Consumer Healthcare Division
Aptar Pharma



Elena Schreivogel
Principal
Pedersen & Partners

Recently we had the privilege of hosting **Thomas Klofac**, the former President of Aptar Pharma's Consumer Healthcare Division, as our guest speaker. With over four decades of international leadership experience across the healthcare and packaging sectors, Thomas shared not only his personal journey but also timeless lessons on navigating complex organizations, managing change, and cultivating high-performing teams.

Moderated by **Elena Schreivogel**, Principal at Pedersen & Partners, the conversation offered a behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to lead at scale while maintaining agility, purpose, and long-term strategic focus.

A Global Career Built on Innovation and Entrepreneurial Mindset

From founding two companies in the packaging space to holding leadership roles across the U.S., Germany, and Argentina, Thomas's career has spanned both entrepreneurial ventures and corporate transformation. His reflections offered practical insights for leaders navigating dynamic, cross-cultural environments.

One of his key messages was the critical importance of fostering innovation at every level of the business. In industries that are increasingly commoditized, innovation becomes the primary source of differentiation—not only through technology, but through process design, client engagement, and organizational thinking.

"Innovation is key. If you become a commodity, you're no longer relevant."

This principle applied throughout his leadership, whether managing product lifecycles, entering new markets, or redesigning internal structures to better support growth.

Five Core Leadership Lessons for Sustainable Growth

Rather than focusing on past successes, Thomas shared a forward-looking framework for leadership—built on agility, empowerment, and disciplined execution. The following five themes emerged as pillars of his philosophy:

1. Drive Innovation with Intentionality

Innovation must be a continuous process, not a sporadic initiative. Thomas encouraged leaders to build innovation into the DNA of the business—across R&D, customer engagement, operations, and sustainability. For mature companies, this means resisting complacency; for scaling firms, it means balancing speed with strategic alignment.

He noted that innovation is not always about breakthrough inventions—it's just as much about making pragmatic improvements that deliver value and address evolving customer needs.

2. Empower People Closest to the Action

Thomas strongly believes in pushing decisions as close to the front line as possible. This decentralization fosters speed, accountability, and a sense of ownership that fuels engagement. Leaders, he argued, should create clarity, remove barriers, and then step back to let empowered teams lead.

"Push decisions to the lowest possible level. That's where real ownership and speed happen."

By doing so, organizations can remain agile—even as they scale.

3. Invest in Human Capital as a Strategic Asset

One of Thomas's most consistent messages was the centrality of people in driving sustainable performance. More than systems or strategy, it's the engagement, creativity, and motivation of teams that determine outcomes.

He encouraged leaders to invest in team development, foster cross-functional collaboration, and build cultures that reward curiosity and trust.



4. Align Strategy with Execution—Then Stay Disciplined

Having led through both growth and restructuring phases, Thomas underscored the need for a clear, long-term vision paired with disciplined follow-through. A strategy is only as strong as its execution. This requires translating high-level plans into tangible goals, aligning teams around shared KPIs, and holding leaders accountable for consistent delivery.

His “recipe for success” included:

- Proper utilization of capacity and resources
- Team alignment between sales and global markets
- Deep expertise in regulatory and lab services
- Rigorous but flexible processes
- Clear objectives and communication across all levels

5. Embed Sustainability into Core Business Models

Sustainability was not treated as a side-topic in Thomas’s talk—it was presented as a core business imperative. Customers expect sustainable solutions, and companies that act early and proactively will gain a competitive edge.

He described initiatives such as the use of recyclable materials, collaboration with clients on sustainability goals, and the integration of eco-design into product innovation as essential—not optional.

Bringing the Lessons Home

Beyond frameworks and strategy, what stood out most during the session was Thomas’s emphasis on practical wisdom and grounded leadership. He acknowledged the challenges of cultural complexity, organizational silos, and internal resistance—but also made it clear that clarity, communication, and consistency are the most powerful tools in overcoming them.

Thomas concluded with an offer to support and mentor future leaders—highlighting his belief in giving back and ensuring that knowledge is shared across generations.

Thomas Klofac’s career journey is not just an example of executive success—it’s a reminder that leadership is about enabling others, innovating with purpose, and staying true to core values even as businesses evolve.

We extend our sincere thanks to Thomas for his time and candor. His insights are a valuable resource for any leader striving to build resilient, future-ready organizations in an increasingly complex world.