



# ‘The Energy Advantage’: Key Takeaways from Conversations with Latin American Leaders

Exploring energy awareness with top leaders across  
Brazil, Chile and Mexico

■ *By Ricardo Sunderland*

Latin America is a vibrant mosaic of cultures, traditions, and beliefs—emitting a richness that shines through its people. With support from my Egon Zehnder colleagues, I had the privilege of travelling across Brazil, Chile, and Mexico to engage

with over 110 senior leaders, including 25 CEOs and 85 Chief People Officers from leading companies, in addition to over a hundred of business students, alumni, and faculty of one of Brazil’s top business schools. In this second leg of my book tour for

[“The Energy Advantage: How to Go from Managing Your Time to Mastering Your Energy”](#) (the first having taken place in [Europe](#)), it was immensely enriching to share insights and learn from these remarkable leaders.

## Tapping into Your Unlimited Energy Resource

**“Did our fuel supply from our childhood, supposedly inexhaustible, run out? Or have we simply lost easy access to the energy it generates? I’m convinced it’s the latter.”**

– *The Energy Advantage*

My conversations with senior leaders laid bare a positive trend: Most CEOs are attuned to what energy means and are curious about how to master their energy. As I define in the book, “Human energy is the creative power within all of us. It is the driving force that creates and animates all the powerful experiences in our lives.”

From that mutual understanding, we delved into conversations about physical, emotional, and spiritual energy that manifest within each of us. We explored both energy blockers (such as anger and fear) and givers (like joy and forgiveness) and discussed how achieving a conscious understanding of often unconscious things elevates our self-awareness, self-love and enables freedom of choice.

Why does this matter? Because, while time is a limited resource, our energy is unlimited. Take the pandemic as an example. Some CEOs shared that by staying grounded in their purpose, or “North Star,” they navigated through this incredibly challenging time. By intentionally acting with purpose as an anchoring force, these leaders were able to energize their teams and thrive, not simply survive.

Another key theme is vulnerability. Traditionally, strength has been associated with resilience and decisiveness; however, Latin American leaders increasingly view vulnerability as a positive leadership trait. Embracing

it requires bridging thinking, doing, feeling, and being—a concept that resonated deeply during one-on-one discussions. CEOs have discovered that by becoming willingly vulnerable and sharing their leadership challenges, they foster trust and create greater psychological safety within their organizations. Their examples as vulnerable leaders help generate the openness and curiosity that organizations now depend upon for success and ongoing innovation.

## Family Perspectives: Breaking Down Compartmentalization

**“Most of us with dreams and ambitions understand that we need to be creative to succeed—in business, as in every other aspect of our lives. Here’s a key takeaway: your creative power reflects your energy level.”**

– *The Energy Advantage*

Another impactful discussion involved the integration of family life into leadership coaching. Leaders shared the difficulties of compartmentalizing work and home life, noting that work stress often seeps into personal interactions. By inviting family members into coaching sessions, leaders gain insights into how their work-life imbalance affects loved ones, often hearing from family members that while they may be physically present, they are mentally elsewhere. This feedback underscores the value of being more aware—not just for organizational impact but for strengthening relationships with family, in turn making leaders better across all these spheres of their life. Interestingly, we see that this topic is a major point of interest elsewhere as it deeply resonated with European leaders too.

## Strengthening the CEO-CHRO Relationship: Available tools

**“In the intimacy of our conversations, as the demands upon my clients start to overwhelm them, they begin to tell me about the boulder on their shoulders, the void in their stomachs, and the annoying voices in their heads.”**

– *The Energy Advantage*

Across Latin America, I encountered CHROs with varying levels of curiosity and skepticism about the topic of energy work. Many—especially those with backgrounds in psychology—expressed skepticism, often questioning how energy coaching differs from therapy and whether it leads to lasting change. While energy work isn’t intended to replace therapy, it provides a holistic framework for growth, addressing needs beyond the intellectual. After all, a successful career and remarkable intelligence don’t necessarily translate to feeling happy or fulfilled. Many of the world’s most senior leaders grapple with anxiety, dissatisfaction, and fear.

Encouraging leaders to embrace a fresh approach to their growth requires patience and a thoughtful “hook”—a way to ignite genuine curiosity. It can come in different ways, but the result is always positive: leaders become more attuned to their creative power, reducing fears and unconscious beliefs, ultimately performing at their peak. Techniques like family constellations, for example, have shown nearly 100% success in creating behavioral shifts within 12–18 months. Even initially skeptical leaders left many conversations with a

newfound appreciation for the potential of this work, as illustrated in the book through real stories. For People leaders and CEOs alike who are interested in delving deeper on what tools are available, at Egon Zehnder we offer distinct pathways for development, from [individual leadership coaching](#) and onboarding to our comprehensive suite of [breakthrough leadership programs](#).

In our discussions, we also explored the importance of trust-building between CHROs and CEOs—a foundational element for introducing transformational practices at the executive level. CHROs might be surprised by how open CEOs are becoming today, how they are sharing their personal challenges. Times have changed, and leaders are more willing

to open up. Still, trust, particularly in personal matters, must be earned. Initial conversations may face resistance, yet with persistence CEOs often become more receptive, giving CHROs an opportunity to support them on a deeper level.

### **The Path Forward: Creating Lasting Change**

**“The energy of the mind is the essence of life.”**

- Aristotle

As our Latin American tour came to a close, it was clear that energy awareness is a priority for most CEOs. These leaders are managing complex

responsibilities, striving to balance professional success with personal fulfillment, and seeking ways to inspire their teams. Embracing energy work offers them a pathway to lead with greater self-awareness and purpose. Our many conversations ignited deep, meaningful exchanges and connections that will resonate in the long term and across the world at large.

**Note:** *all proceeds from the book sale will be donated to charity. If you have already purchased the book, please consider leaving a review on your e-commerce platform of choice.*

## About Egon Zehnder

Egon Zehnder is the world's preeminent leadership advisory firm, inspiring leaders to navigate complex questions with human answers. We help organizations get to the heart of their leadership challenges and offer honest feedback and insights to help leaders realize their true being and purpose.

We are built on a foundation that supports partnership in the truest sense of the word and aligns our interests with the interests of our clients. Our 600 consultants across 66 offices and 36 countries are former industry and functional leaders who collaborate seamlessly across geographies, industries and functions to deliver the full power of the Firm to every client, every time.

We partner closely with public and private corporations, family-owned enterprises, and non-profit and government agencies to provide executive search, leadership solutions, CEO search and succession, board advisory, and diversity, equity & inclusion.

Our services include discovering leaders, developing leadership, advancing governance, shaping successions, and unlocking transformations. We partner with Mobius Executive Leadership to offer highly experiential, personalized and transformational programs for senior leaders.

We believe that together we can transform people, organizations and the world through leadership.

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