

# SOLUTIONS MANAGER

Denis Creighton is CEO of Fexco's managed business solutions and outsourcing division. He has been a member of the IoD since May 2007

#### What is your current role and what does it involve?

I am the CEO of Fexco's managed business solutions and outsourcing division and responsible for the group IT division also. My role is to develop the strategy, review and adjust as necessary and execute the business plan. We work in a number of verticals and keeping up to speed with industry developments is a key part of what is required in the management of the business unit.

#### Do you have any non-executive roles?

Yes, as part of some personal investments I have a couple of roles. These tend to be in the software and product areas as I enjoy entrepreneurship and assisting in fast mobilisation. It's also an opportunity to contribute from previous experiences and mentor teams towards success.

#### Tell us about your career background and some of the milestones along the way

Initially, I had planned to be an accountant but switched to IT in the late 1980s, which turned out to be a great stepping stone for me. I held a number of management roles in Eircom in the IT space before moving to Eircell just as the mobile industry exploded. This was a key moment for me as the pace and dynamism was incredible and I made some great friends there also. Launching 11811 for Eircom was another key milestone and I learned quite a lot about the value of marketing and consumer behaviour.

My move to Conduit and the experiences I gained there from growth, refinancing and acquisition provided me with some great insights into business and diversity. I was fortunate to work in a number of countries and that certainly exposed me to many different challenges and opportunities.

#### What are the main skills or attributes that have helped you to get to your current position?

I enjoy working with and developing people and that has certainly helped me succeed in my career. I am known for a 'let's just do it' approach once a decision has been made. I take a 'disruptor' approach and challenge the norms regularly. Delivering on time is something that I constantly drive to achieve and I've always adopted the 80:20 rule. I am a strong believer in business process improvement (BPI) as part of standard management behaviour. I believe that physical fitness is critical to mental fitness and the ability to deal with stress and I attribute my high energy levels to this.

#### Can you define your leadership style?

I adopt a very open management style which is very inclusive of all contributors. I believe in clear communication with a structured approach that enables people to perform to their best abilities. I have

a positive outlook to all that I do and I enjoy creating opportunities for people to develop. I make myself as accessible as possible to offer support and guidance but I like deadlines and delivering on time.

#### What is your philosophy in business?

For me, I like to work with facts and relevant details and if it doesn't look and feel right, it probably isn't.

#### What has been your biggest lesson in business?

Success in business depends on having the right people and you need the resources and skill sets in place to grow any business. The ability to understand business requirements, convert to action plans and execute with a clear focus is critical to achieving successful results. Investing your time in your people and rewarding the correct behaviours will inevitably lead to success in most cases. It is really important to create the right environment for people to flourish.

#### What have been your biggest successes and/or failures in business?

I have been involved in the successful launch of a number of businesses in different countries – Ireland, the UK, Switzerland, Austria and Spain. The exposure to different cultures, regulatory challenges and language challenges has been a great learning experience. On the failure side, my biggest failure was around underestimating a competitor and the depth of their pockets!

#### Who or what are your main influences?

I have been really lucky to work with a great business coach in the late 1990s and also with a strong mentor. This has proven invaluable to me and I strongly believe that most successful business leaders have had exposure to great advice and guidance along their way. My parents' work ethic and values have always stayed with me and continue to influence my decisions.

#### How important is ongoing education?

It depends on what your definition of education is but I believe that continuous learning is critical. Attending networking events and business seminars is all part of ongoing education and contributes to more informed decision making. Life is about learning and should never stop...

#### Do you have plans for the future - inside or outside Fexco - that you'd like to share?

I plan to continue at the same pace and with the same energy levels for a few more years yet! I will continue mentoring as I enjoy helping people develop their careers and increase their contribution to business. And of course I have my bucket list!



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