



## Finding Solution-Driven Executives to Deliver the Energy Transition

**Murray Fox,**  
Director  
September 2023

**CRIPPS+**  
LEADERSHIP  
ADVISORS



## **The energy transition is inescapable. Enshrined in law in many jurisdictions, net zero is forcing a rethink of the entire energy landscape.**

Building a resilient, scaleable and net zero future will require a shake-out of the current energy landscape. Energy companies, and heavy energy users, are having to re-invent many aspects of their current operations, whether it's understanding new customers as a result of distributed energy systems, engaging with investors on evolving ESG metrics or striking alliances to build ecosystems that can deliver meaningful impact.

Many of these trends are still in their infancy, with the costs, technologies, regulatory framework, customer demand and distribution infrastructure still evolving.

### **Net Zero**

The issues are existential, the uncertainties are vast and the costs – both of action and inaction – incalculable. If previous problems had clear endpoints – to unlock the geology of a new basin or build-out distribution networks – they still dealt within the established norms of a fossil fuel-based economy and established commercial and regulatory frameworks.

By contrast, tomorrow's landscape is hard to define, never mind solve. How does an energy company truly account for Scope 3 emissions? How does a ship owner commission a new fleet with a 30-year-plus lifespan when new fuels are still being developed? What are the limits of a company's value chain? Is globalised trade truly compatible with net zero ambitions? What will EV market dynamics look like in five years, or 10 years?

It takes a new kind of executive to be effective in this world: leaders who are comfortable being uncomfortable, that relish the challenge of the uncharted future and can thrive amid ambiguity.

It is why leadership assessment needs to change. In the energy transition, without the conventional CV track record as a reliable guide, companies will need to understand how to assess and compare unique blend of skills, experience and attributes.

Competition for these executives is fierce. Going forward, it will be essential to spot outliers or those earlier in the career track who have the potential, with the right development and support, to become New Energy leaders. Rather than a flawless CV, seeking those with high IQ and EQ, specific behavioural traits and where deeper assessment using tools such as psychometric assessment calibrated to the types of challenges that lie ahead is a valuable tool.



## Energy Disruptors: The Brief

Energy companies are seeking out executives that can lead and navigate uncharted waters to a clean energy future. Companies need their leaders to:

- Create and lead a strategy that leverages company strengths and recognise where new capability and technology needs to be acquired or imported.
- Scenario plan for multiple outcomes in a volatile and ever-changing landscape.
- Acknowledge that in an ever-changing landscape, they need to be prepared to pivot and that assumptions made previously may be wrong. Therefore, be agile in trial and efficiency in evaluating opportunities, be prepared to reject and move on – it is a market full of new technology, projects and headlines.
- Identify and build relationships with Partners and/or customers across a broad set of new and non-energy related industries.
- Understand the company's current portfolio of new energy projects and ensure emerging risks are appraised and new opportunities are considered, adapted and captured.
- Collaborate across the company to build a market of projects and commodities in a way that balances risk, anticipates future market needs and supports the company's strategic vision.
- Develop trusted relationships with the investor community, analyse financial risks and returns and be a good custodian of investor capital in the face of an uncertain and complex future.
- Work with regulatory, government and customer groups across the value chain to influence legislation and inform best practice.
- Creatively build opportunities to become a trusted partner with internal and external stakeholders to understand the challenges that they face and to create solutions for them.
- Recognise the need for flexibility, collaboration and adaption to stay relevant in a fast-changing world and develop commercial agreements that will stand the test of time.



Corporates and investors alike recognise the opportunities being presented and the energy transition is no longer a side project. The impact of conflict on global energy markets, increasing regularity of extreme weather patterns, and the evolving regulation and incentive landscape, has created the momentum needed. The greatest risk is inaction.

**Murray Fox** | Director



## Key Traits and Competencies

As businesses evolve from an operational efficiency focus to strategy creation, partnerships and business build, there are recurring themes. Organisations of all types, including international energy industrial majors, start-up technology disruptors or investors, are seeking the same traits and competencies.

- A strategic mindset to create a clear value proposition that not only inspires buy-in from internal and external stakeholders but also delivers meaningful change.
- The ability to visualise and articulate, simply and clearly, the solutions and offerings that emerge from their work.
- Technical, operational and commercial experience in order to understand and fully assess the opportunities and have the credibility to discuss progress.
- A global mindset to understand the dynamics at play in the net zero agenda, differing government support and investment conditions, supply and demand fundamentals, technology and supply chain creation.
- Strong communication skills, and be able to clearly articulate goals, influence discussions and facilitate productive discussions.
- Curiosity and a willingness to admit what they don't know and embrace the talents and know-how of others.
- A future-focused mindset and fortitude in the face of novelty and uncertainty.
- A creative disruptor, who embraces innovation and uncertainty.
- Ability to engage with multiple stakeholders including influencing policy and subsidy award with state and national government. Developing and influencing partnerships across the supply and demand value chain that are coming together simultaneously.





**CRIPPS+**  
LEADERSHIP  
ADVISORS



## Contact

For more information, please contact:

Murray Fox | Director

E: [mfox@cripps.global](mailto:mfox@cripps.global)

M: +44 (0)207 440 8999

