

SERGIO SALVADOR

REF Global | Nanyang Business School | Building Peer Advisory Boards for SEA and UAE
Top Leaders and | Google, Egon Zehnder, EY

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EXPERIENCE

Managing Partner, SEA & UAE

REF

Present Location

REF is a global organisation dedicated to fostering growth and leadership development among top-tier business executives.

At the heart of the REF experience are its peer advisory groups, where members connect with a select group of fellow leaders from non-competing spaces. These forum groups provide a unique space built on trust and confidentiality, allowing members to tap into the collective intelligence and diverse perspectives of their peers. With a 30-year history, originating in the USA and present in more than 20 countries and 200 cities globally, with 3000+ members, REF offers a proven and powerful platform for executives to gain valuable insights, address challenges, and achieve their full potential.

As the Managing in Singapore, I am responsible for leading the expansion of our operations, designing and curating peer advisory groups, and facilitating Forum Sessions based on the proven REF methodology and Forum structure.

Adjunct Lecturer

Nanyang Business School

Present Singapore

Nanyang Business School (NBS) is the largest business school in Singapore, with over 7,000 undergraduates and postgraduates. Since 2004, the Nanyang MBA has been ranked the best in Singapore and among the best in the world, according to The Economist.

Facilitating the growth of future global leaders by bridging the gap between rigorous academic theory and real-world executive practice based on several decades of corporate experience. Leading modules focused on core business competencies like Negotiation and Leadership Communications, leveraging my industry experience to provide students with "lived" insights into leadership and market dynamics. My approach emphasises the development of collective wisdom and critical thinking, ensuring the next generation of professionals are equipped to navigate the complexities of an AI-driven, globalised business landscape.

Partner, People Consulting

EY

09/2024 - 01/2026 Singapore, Singapore

In the face of the disruptive forces changing the working world, organisations need to become much more adaptable to rapid change — and they need their people to be flexible and agile to match, at a time when it's getting harder to source, manage, motivate, and retain talent while controlling costs. EY People Consulting can help you effectively harness your people agenda as part of an integrated business strategy. This can translate into competitive advantage by helping you get the right people, with the right capabilities, in the right place, for the right cost, doing the right things, supported by the right technology.

- Led HR transformations: Successfully devised and implemented transformation agendas in HR practices for various organisations across the private and public sectors.
- Leveraged talent management: Developed customised talent management strategies to improve workforce performance and development.
- Applied organisational design principles: Optimised organizational structures to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.
- Integrated AI into HR: Incorporated artificial intelligence-based solutions to streamline HR processes and improve decision-making.
- Drove positive business outcomes: Achieved measurable improvements in business results through HR initiatives.
- Unlocked employee potential: Partnered with leaders and organisations to maximise the skills and capabilities of their workforce, from the top to the bottom of the seniority ladder.

SUMMARY

People are ultimately responsible for an organisation's success. With a professional background that includes digital giants like Google, Yahoo!, and Nokia, unicorns like CARSOME, and top talent consulting firms like Egon Zehnder and now EY, my passion is to harness and develop human capital to its full potential. My journey has taken me across continents, where I've pioneered people-centric initiatives, fostered global alliances, and championed organisational and individual development. Over the years, I've established myself by developing comprehensive solutions that place leaders and individuals at the heart of company transformation. My executive coaching experience has enabled me to guide countless executives, ensuring they leverage their unique talents, overcome obstacles, and achieve meaningful change within their teams and organisations. Beyond metrics and milestones, the friendships and relationships I've fostered have been the most valuable to me during my career. From employee engagement to succession planning and change management, I believe in a people-centered strategy that prioritises empathy, collaboration, and strategic innovation. At EY, my focus is on developing and implementing innovative HR transformations that drive business outcomes. I specialise in aligning talent management, organisational design, HR admin, AI integration, and change management initiatives to empower businesses to adapt and thrive in today's dynamic landscape.

LANGUAGES

English, Spanish

Native



Japanese, French

Beginner



CERTIFICATIONS

International Certificate Of Competency (ICC Certificate)

International Yacht Training

Powered Pleasure Craft Driving License

Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)

16PF

PSI Services LLC

Hogan Developmental Survey

Hogan Assessment Systems

Hogan Personality Inventory

Hogan Assessment Systems

Associate Certified Coach (ACC)

International Coaching Federation

Coaching for Business Results

Google

Mindfulness for Wellbeing and Peak Performance

Monash University

EXPERIENCE

Strategic Advisor

CARSOME

📅 01/2024 - 04/2025 📍 Singapore, Singapore

In this role, I drove organisational transformation through a comprehensive leadership approach that significantly enhanced company performance across multiple dimensions. I increased executive committee effectiveness by implementing structured decision-making frameworks and clear accountability metrics, while simultaneously leading development programmes that built critical leadership capabilities throughout the organization. My executive assessment initiatives identified crucial talent gaps through data-driven evaluation of leadership competencies against strategic requirements, which informed the organizational restructuring I executed to optimize team composition and reporting relationships. This restructuring eliminated redundancies, improved spans of control, and ensured organizational design supported efficient workflows and decision-making processes. Additionally, I revolutionised our talent acquisition strategy by implementing a proactive approach focused on attracting high-caliber candidates with skills aligned to future business needs, including developing compelling employer value propositions and leveraging data analytics for more effective recruitment. These interconnected initiatives formed a cohesive strategy that strengthened leadership capability, optimised organizational structure, and positioned the right talent to drive sustained business performance.

Group Chief People Officer

CARSOME

📅 05/2022 - 01/2024 📍 Singapore, Singapore

In this capacity, I orchestrated a complete overhaul of people strategies and aligned them with long-term overarching goals, harmonised people processes, and instituted OKRs for 4,500 employees. I established specialised People Development and Organisational Design teams, managed a re-titling initiative, crafted a cohesive compensation strategy, improved integration of new hires, nurtured executive leadership, and played a pivotal role in the Compensation Committee of the Board.

- Expanded People & Culture team to 106 across 6 countries, and implemented new annual and mid-year review processes, with an 85% response rate, and 75% satisfaction rate among employees.
- Initiated the CARS survey, leading to targeted department improvements.
- Hired key leadership roles including a CFO, Chief Product Officer, and a new GM for Thailand to strengthen the leadership bench.
- Reduced People-related costs, supporting management of the bottom line to meet financial goals.
- Devised and launched the company's inaugural Onboarding and Executive Programmes.
- Guided the top core leaders through an Executive Development Programme.

Consultant and APAC Digital Practice Lead

Egon Zehnder

📅 03/2020 - 04/2022 📍 Singapore, Singapore

In this role, I worked closely with my clients aligning business goals with talent objectives.

- Leadership Advisor to multinational, founder-led and family-owned companies.
- Certified Coach, passionate on unlocking individual and team potential.
- Expert in CEO and Board Appointments.
- Certified on Strengths Profile, 16PF, Hogan, etc.

Consultant

Egon Zehnder

📅 11/2017 - 02/2020 📍 Singapore, Singapore

In this role, I worked closely with my clients aligning business goals with talent objectives.

- Leadership Advisor to multinational, founder-led and family-owned companies.
- Certified Coach, passionate on unlocking individual and team potential.
- Expert in CEO and Board Appointments.
- Certified on Strengths Profile, 16PF, Hogan, etc.

CERTIFICATIONS

Qualified Teacher Status

University of Zaragoza

Search Inside Yourself

Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute (SIYLI)

Accredited Strengths Profile Practitioner

Strengths Profile

International Certificate Of Competency (ICC Certificate)

International Yacht Training

Small Powerboat & RIB Master Training

International Yacht Training

Qualified Teacher Status

University of Zaragoza

PROJECTS

Leadership Coach at Nanyang Business School

📅 05/2022 - Present 📍 Location

As a Leadership Coach at Nanyang Business School, I partner with high-calibre professionals across the EMBA, PMBA, Nanyang Fellows, and MBA programmes to bridge the gap between academic theory and executive impact. Drawing on extensive corporate experience managing large-scale global teams, I facilitate deep dives into strategy and self-awareness, helping these leaders pressure-test their decision-making and cultivate collective wisdom. My focus is on empowering participants to navigate complex organisational challenges and refine the emotional intelligence necessary to lead high-performing teams in an increasingly volatile global landscape.

Member and Investor at XA Network

📅 10/2018 - Present 📍 Location

Launched as part of the Google alumni network in 2018, XA's first offering is the XA Network, an investment network comprising senior leaders from global and regional technology companies, as well as founders of notable companies from across Southeast Asia. Our purpose is to foster inclusive innovation by empowering the tech community in Southeast Asia. Founders value our members' distinguished backgrounds as entrepreneurs and senior business builders. Furthermore, our portfolio companies are able to tap into the collective power of deep-rooted networks and expertise across business strategy, product development, fundraising, and much more. XA has invested in a wide variety of promising companies including Lummo (fka BukuKas), Spenmo, Tigerhall, Sampangan, Neuron Mobility, Infradigital, and many more.

EXPERIENCE

Director Of New Business Partnerships and Innovation

Google

📅 12/2015 - 10/2017 📍 Tokyo, Japan

In this capacity, I spearheaded innovative trend identification, emphasising Digital Out of Home and VR/AR sectors; delved into untapped business arenas to discover potential collaborative avenues; oversaw conceptualisation and realisation of innovative business ideas; and supervised internal career coaching under the Guru+ initiative, fostering the professional growth of fellow employees.

- Built a multitude of Googlers through tailored coaching, catalysing their career advancement within the company.
- Earned accolades as a distinguished hiring authority and manager, solidifying a legacy of leadership excellence.

Global Head of Gaming and Mobile Partnerships

Google

📅 07/2013 - 11/2015 📍 Singapore, Singapore; Tokyo, Japan

Directed cross-platform gaming partnership initiatives, emphasising business consultancy, monetisation, and expansion. Forged relationships with game developers, publishers, and other strategic partners to pioneer innovative business models. Constructed and mentored global teams dedicated to fortifying the gaming industry's progression and monetisation. Incepted and led a novel global vertical emphasising mobile and gaming, enhancing product and strategy alignment for the sector. Engaged in high-stakes collaboration with industry giants, such as Nintendo, ensuring cohesive business growth and innovative product integration.

- Mobilised new business avenues, realising revenue streams exceeding US\$20m+ (from zero) through strategic collaboration with industry frontrunners.
- Headed Google4Games initiative, culminating in Google's debut presence at key global events and an amplified gaming narrative via the C-level G4G framework.
- Catalysed monetisation potential of online video streaming in competitive gaming, spearheading a groundbreaking programmatic video business in China, generating between \$20m-\$50m in 2017.

Head of Global Partnerships (Southeast Asia)

Google

📅 07/2011 - 06/2013 📍 Singapore, Singapore

Constructed and mentored the inaugural partnerships team in Southeast Asia, emphasising the augmentation of business relations. Piloted multi-disciplinary teams dedicated to publisher monetisation, distribution, mobile integration, and forging high-calibre partnerships with pivotal regional entities. Envisioned and executed sophisticated sales strategies tailored for Southeast Asian demographic, fostering establishment, and nurturing of strategic publisher relations. Commanded executive leadership ensemble in cultivating synergistic relationships, furthering the One Google and Google 4 Publishers agendas. Effectuated cross-functional, inter-regional initiatives geared towards fortifying APAC's involvement in global projects and optimising partner business solutions.

- Augmented strategic publisher revenue from a nascent stage to an impressive USD14m annually within an 18-month timeframe, incorporating partnerships with industry titans like Viki, MediaCorp, and Sanook.
- Championed integration of search bars into 50,000 feature phones alongside an Indonesian collaborator, propelling search outreach in the region by a substantial 6% between 2011-2012.
- Cultivated and launched SEA advertising partnerships frontier, inflating business worth from ground zero to tens of millions within a 2-year span, subsequently ensuring a smooth leadership transition post a 2.5-year tenure.

Head of Mobile Business Development

Yahoo!

📅 01/2011 - 06/2011 📍 Singapore, Singapore

Head of Services Marketing

Nokia

📅 01/2010 - 01/2011 📍 Singapore, Singapore

Country Manager SEA (Digital Business) and several other roles previously

Electronic Arts

📅 02/2000 - 12/2009

📍 Madrid, Spain; London, United Kingdom; Hong Kong, China; Singapore, Singapore

Founder & Publishing Director

Grupo Intercom

📅 06/1998 - 02/2000

PROJECTS

Founder and Executive Coach at Catalyst Labs

📅 06/2017 - Present 📍 Location

As the founder of my own company focused on leadership development and growth, I drive client-centric support. Provide executive coaching, tailoring strategies to different senior leaders for optimal outcomes. Support leaders in recognising and leveraging their innate strengths. Design personalised roadmaps to aid leaders in conquering self-sabotaging mindsets, and increase self-awareness.

- Elevated leadership trajectories of numerous senior executives, driving clarity in goal-setting and action alignment.
- Secured sustained business growth by ensuring leaders consistently met or exceeded their personal growth targets.
- Developed leaders and leadership teams in the digital and technology spaces by using my extensive industry experience.

Freelance Journalist

📅 06/1997 - Present 📍 Location

Independent writer and content creator specialising in the video game industry for almost three decades. Content can primarily be found on www.geeknative.com, Medium, or rerally on Vocal.media.

Lecturer at Temasek Polytechnic

📅 04/2013 - 09/2014 📍 Location

Creating and empowering the next generation of digital leaders in Southeast Asia. In between breaks, figuring out how to revolutionise the world of higher education.

- Lecturing on Digital Ecosystems
- Lecturing on Digital Marketing
- Lecturing on Technology and Digital Advertising
- Lecturing on Mobile and Messaging
- Lecturing on Online Video
- Lecturing on Display Marketing
- Lecturing on Remarketing
- Lecturing on Programmatic

EXPERIENCE

Co-Founder and CEO

[Solojuegos.com](#)

 07/1996 - 06/1998  Barcelona, Spain

EDUCATION

LEAD Executive Leadership Programme

[Stanford University Graduate School of Business](#)

 Date period

Graduate Certificate in Organisational Psychology

[Golden Gate University](#)

 Date period

Masters in Arts (M.A.), English Studies

[Universidad de Zaragoza](#)

 Date period

Masters in Arts (M.A.) (through University of Zaragoza Erasmus Programme), English Studies

[Trinity College Dublin](#)

 Date period