

# The Bridge

CGBA's latest news, views and announcements



Cyprus Germany  
Business Association

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Mark your calendars  
and join us at the  
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## Happy 2026!

Καλή Χρονιά!

As we welcome the start of a new year, we would like to extend our warmest wishes to you all, our members, partners, and friends of the CGBA. May 2026 bring health, success, happiness and revitalised opportunities for growth and collaboration.

The new year also marks an exciting new chapter for our association as we proudly introduce our new logo. You may have come across it on our social media platforms already. It is a fresh look that reflects our evolving vision, renewed energy, and continued commitment to strengthening Cyprus - Germany business relations.

New year, new logo, same strong mission!

And in our aim to provide high quality events, we are excited to present an upcoming evening that offers fresh perspectives for today's fast paced world, as change is redefining the business landscape. Join us on 27 January at KPMG Limassol for 'Leading Through Disruption & Change' and explore how to lead with confidence in uncertain times.

Book your ticket [here](#) and we will see you there!

# Leadership Begins Before the First Slide

*By Ringo Gossler, Leadership & Team Trainer at Meaningful Synergies Ltd.*

A leader enters the room a few minutes after the meeting has started. The agenda is already full. A laptop is placed on the table, cables are connected, slides appear on the screen. While the system is still loading, small talk fills the space. Bodies lean back. Arms cross. Eyes move from the presenter to the clock and back again.

I have experienced this scene many times. Sometimes as a leadership trainer, sometimes as a conference participant, and at times, simply as a quiet observer in the room. The faces change, the topics change, but the pattern remains familiar. The meeting begins before anyone has really arrived. The presentation starts. Slide after slide follows. The content is solid and well prepared. Yet something subtle happens in parallel. Energy drops slightly. People nod. No one interrupts. When the presenter asks if there are questions, the room stays quiet. Not because everything is clear, but because it feels easier to move on than to slow the group down. Time is tight. The agenda is long.

This is often the moment when leaders later say, "Everyone understood."

What experience has taught me is that nodding does not always mean alignment. It often signals politeness, uncertainty, or the quiet assumption that clarity will come later.

A sentence often attributed to George Bernard Shaw captures this well: "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." Information may have been shared and slides may have been shown, yet understanding remains fragile. Not because people are unwilling or incapable, but because meaning was never consciously created.

Whether on a conference stage or in a leadership meeting, presentations are moments where someone stands in front of others to transfer a message. Slides may support that moment, but they never replace presence. The way a leader opens such moments often reveals more about their leadership than the content that follows. Long before decisions are taken, leadership has already become visible.



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Over time, I have learned how much can be read in body language during these openings. Posture, pace, eye contact, and the way silence is handled are never neutral. I rarely address them in the moment. They become a gift later, when leaders begin to reflect on why meetings feel efficient on paper but exhausting in reality.

There are different ways leaders can enter these moments more intentionally. Not as techniques to be combined, but as entry points chosen deliberately. Some begin with a real story that anchors the topic in lived experience. Others open with a framing thought or quote that invites reflection. A third option is structure: past, present, future. Where have we come from, where are we now, and what do we want to create next.

Interestingly, the meeting described earlier already contained all three elements, just not intentionally. The past showed up in established habits and a packed agenda. The present appeared in nodding heads and unasked questions. The future surfaced later, when decisions had to be revisited because they never fully landed.

What all effective openings share is their impact on the first minutes. Attention is highest at the beginning of a meeting or presentation, and again at the end. How leaders choose to enter the room shapes everything that follows. Silence, speed, story or structure are all signals.

This applies as much to internal meetings as to external presentations. Meeting culture influences decision quality, ownership and trust. When organisations begin to treat presentations and meetings as leadership moments rather than routines, conversations change. People speak up earlier. Decisions become clearer. Responsibility becomes shared.

# Cultural Corner

## Tunnel Edition

### A Hidden Tunnel Network Beneath Larnaca

Beneath Larnaca, a maze of ancient tunnels exists, dating back to the historic Bekir Pasha Aqueduct's (Kamaries Aqueduct) 7km underground section built in the 1740s to supply water. They are largely unexplored and closed to the public.



Photo credit: Wikipedia



Photo credit: Restored segment of the spy tunnel in the Allied Museum's permanent exhibition, 2019 (AlliiertenMuseum/Eberle u. Eisfeld)

### A Spy Tunnel in Berlin

During the Cold War, Western intelligence secretly built an underground tunnel from West to East Berlin to tap Soviet military communication lines. Known as Operation Gold, the tunnel ran for nearly a year before being "discovered," revealing just how far espionage went beneath the divided city.


## THANK YOU!


We extend our heartfelt gratitude for the generous support of our current annual and event sponsors. Their contribution plays a vital role in helping us offer varied networking opportunities, as well as an array of interesting events that benefit our members.

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## Upcoming Events



Our innovative '**CGBA Spotlight & Networking**' series enables you to showcase your company, putting you and your industry on stage.

There is no fee from the CGBA for hosting such an event. However, we highly recommend that after your presentation, you offer light refreshments for guests to enjoy during the networking part. We kindly ask that you cover the cost of this catering, as we aim to avoid charging our members.

This approach allows your company to gain valuable exposure to your target audience in a friendly and mutually beneficial setting, as we work together to share these objectives and opportunities:

- **Knowledge sharing and exchange:** each event covers a different theme and topic and each speaker will have the opportunity to share their knowledge on a specific sector, or present the dynamic of their company and services offered
- **Connecting and networking:** facilitating connections among members, industry experts and stakeholders
- **Community Building:** fostering a community that collaborates and supports each other
- **Visibility:** enhancing the CGBA's visibility and awareness.
- **Membership Growth:** attracting non-members and showcasing the benefits of becoming part of our association

To host your CGBA Spotlight & Networking event, please contact us **here**

Mark your calendars! More information on our forthcoming events can be found **here**

**27**

JANUARY 2026

### Leading Through Disruption & Change – Keynote Speech with KPMG

🕒 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

📍 KPMG Limassol

**18**

MARCH 2026

### 'Get Connected' Networking Event: Areso Bar Restaurant, Nicosia

🕒 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm

📍 Areso Bar Restaurant, Nicosia

*For all our 'Get Connected' Networking events we offer the use of nametags to enhance interaction among our guests. Registered participants can collect their personal tag from the registration desk. As part of our sustainability initiatives, kindly return your name tag to the designated box before leaving the venue, ensuring it is available again when you join us the next time! Thank you.*

This newsletter is brought to you by the editorial team **Uta Steffen** and **Carine Khoury Niemann**, design by CGBA's Media Partner **HOB**