

Xavier Campell

CEO, Advisor and Speaker

Xavier Campbell was the Chief Executive Officer of the Essendon Football Club and became the youngest ever CEO in the history of the Essendon Football Club and the youngest in the AFL.

In what was a baptism of fire, Xavier's priority was to successfully navigate the Club through the extensive and complex challenges of the ASADA investigation and supplements matter. His leadership and guidance not only helped galvanise the Club, its large supporter base and commercial partners, but it built the strong foundations for the Bombers to rebound quickly.

Xavier drove the implementation of a new strategic direction, significant structural and cultural change, industry leading risk, governance and compliance processes and platforms, and a vision of being the most inclusive, respected and successful sporting organisation in Australia.

The transformation saw the Club enter a new and exciting chapter. By 2022 the Bombers had a membership of 84,500 (up from 53,500 when he first led the Club), qualified for finals four times, secured an AFLW licence, and completed a \$22.5m expansion to their training base at The Hangar in Tullamarine whilst eliminating a debt that peaked at \$12m in 2016.

During his time as CEO, Xavier was instrumental in driving the acquisition and retention of key commercial partners, including major partners KIA, AMART and Fujitsu General, leading and concluding the complex player compensation claims process from past and present players following the supplements matter, whilst also playing a pivotal role in relation to the retention of the suspended players during this time.

Xavier built a reputation for not only managing through crisis, but also for his progressive and innovative thinking in broadening the Essendon business model to include education, medical and the establishment of a first of its kind investment fund.

Essendon has also been able to build an exciting, young playing list that positions them well for the years ahead.

Xavier previously held the position of General Manager, Special Projects and Commercial Partnerships and Head of Commercial Partnerships, Merchandise and Licensing at the Club. Prior to that he spent time with sports marketing and management organisations, Dynamic Sports &



Entertainment Group, and prominent global agency, Octagon.

Xavier was one of only six individuals shortlisted for inaugural Global Leaders in Sport Under 40 ('leadership' category) in 2014, and was a member of Sturt Football Club's 2002 Premiership team in the South Australian National Football League.

He grew up in Echuca, Victoria, and is married with two children.

Campbell completed an Executive MBA from renowned global business school, INSEAD, in 2019.

Xavier Campbell Speaks About:

- Leading through change
- Crisis management
- Leading in high pressure/public environments
- Journey from humble beginnings (lack of direction) to AFL Club CEO

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