

Dear All

The Davos summit is on again, at a different time. It is on from 22 May to 26 May, 2022. Here are my learnings about Davos:

1. It started in 1971 as a collection of think tank experts discussing issues facing the world. Over 50 years it has become a place to be seen to be interviewed and to influence global flow of investment.
2. It has always been difficult to quantify the outcomes of any Davos summit, it is normally long on rhetoric and weak on practical implementation.
3. The theme of this year is “working together, restoring trust”. There are about 400 sessions this year.
4. The World Economic Forum who organize this have put out 8 broad themes for discussion. I am putting down my thoughts from some of the articles that were circulated about these 8 themes:
  - a. Global Cooperation: Gaining more significance after Covid and the Ukraine war. The papers argue for more private public partnerships in solving key issues. We live in a world of systemic complexity and a key capability of the future will be to connect the dots. We also live in a stakeholder capitalism world and need to manage expectations of stakeholders better.
  - b. Fairer economics: food and energy costs are rising. Inflation is at a 40 year high in the US. CPI for April was at 8.3 %. The food and Agriculture wing of the UN has monitored prices and food price index at 12.9 % is the highest. It is high for cereals at 17.9 % since cereals use wheat and coarse grains. Ukraine was one of the largest producers of wheat. Economists expect US inflation to ease off now, then UK inflation will ease and then Europe since fundamental demand has softened and people were buying more out of the fear of supply chain disruptions.
  - c. Technology and Innovation: 2.9 billion people globally do not have access to the web. Getting access to them will help improve many things in their lives. Digital will help them with knowledge tools and information to live better. It is a paradox since 95 % of the global population is covered by cellular networks.
  - d. Climate and Nature: the sustainability agenda is big and this year the discussion turns to plastic. In March this year 175 countries signed a declaration on plastic pollution. How does one develop a circular economy on plastic is a big discussion point.
  - e. Health and Healthcare: there is a belief that one of the benefits of covid has been that it has given us a toolkit to fight pandemics. There is recognition that we need many more private public partnerships in the health space.
  - f. Jobs and Skills: There is a big debate on the four day week. Henry Ford said many years ago “the 5 day week is not the ultimate and neither is the 8 hours per day sacrosanct”. He was precient, he said this well before we thought of work from home. Employees want flexibility, it is no longer an option but a given. Countries who adopted 4 day work week like Iceland Belgium etc report good balance of work and life.
  - g. Society and equality: “motherhood penalty” is seen as the biggest contributor to the gender gap wage difference according to sociologists. There is little gap in the 20s, the gap starts when women go on maternity leave typically between 30 and 33 and it widens after that. This is a topic for discussion. This has many side effects. 25 % of Women in America tend to get back to work within 10 days of delivering a baby. Women’s mental health issues went up 40 % between 2019 and 2021. Child care and support is the biggest concern for women.
  - h. Better Business: SMEs are the key for the future. Business has sustainable growth, societal impact and adaptive capacity as its three pillars. Adaptive capacity is defined as TINKING

LONG TERM BUT REACTING FAST. There is clear recognition that digital drives growth in any sector

So, these are the key topics for the year. I am sure you will read a lot about it in the media.

feedback welcome

Wr,  
Shiv