

# GARETH WILLIAMS

## Major Career Roles

**Group HR Director**, Diageo plc
**HR Director**, United Distillers & Vintners Inc
**Senior Vice President**, International Distillers & Vintners North America
**Chair**, Young Samuel Chambers (YSC) Ltd

## Other Career Highlights

**Independent Director**, WNS Holdings Ltd
**Independent Non-Executive Director**, Saga plc
**Director – Development**, Grand Metropolitan plc
**Vice President HR**, Heublein Inc

Gareth Williams is an experienced global HR and board leader whose career spans over four decades across consumer goods, business services and healthcare. He spent 30 years with Grand Metropolitan and Diageo, becoming Group Human Resources Director for Diageo in 1999 and serving on the Executive Committee through a period of significant organic growth and landmark acquisitions. During this time the business expanded to over 30,000 employees in more than 80 countries, and Gareth held oversight responsibility for Corporate Relations alongside the global people agenda. He stepped down from his HR role in 2013, supporting the incoming CEO through his first year in post.

Having worked closely with multiple Chairs and CEOs through mergers, integrations and major organisational change, he is particularly attuned to the dynamics of executive teams, board–management relationships and the demands on leaders in complex, regulated and high-profile environments. He has deep experience of remuneration, nomination and governance matters and is often sought out as a trusted sounding board on succession, talent and culture.

His earlier career began in HR and industrial relations at Ford of Britain, before joining Grand Metropolitan's brewing division in 1984 and moving through a series of operational and group HR roles. He spent four years in the United States with the North American Spirits and Wine division (IDV), including as head of HR, before returning to the UK as Group Organisation and Management Development Director. He went on to become HR Director for IDV's global business and then for the combined Wines and Spirits business following the merger of Guinness and Grand Metropolitan to form Diageo.

Since leaving Diageo, Gareth has pursued a plural career. He was a Non-Executive Director and later Chair of leadership consultancy YSC, and served on the Board of NYSE-listed WNS Holdings as a Non-Executive Director, Chair of the Remuneration Committee and member of the Nomination Committee. He was also a Non-Executive Director at Saga plc, serving on all main Board Committees and chairing the Remuneration Committee. Beyond his corporate roles, Gareth is a Trustee of Cicely Saunders International, a world leader in palliative care research and education, and a Bupa Association member.

Gareth brings deep cross-sector expertise in:

• Global consumer goods & branded businesses – senior HR leadership across Grand Metropolitan and Diageo.
• People, culture & organisational development at scale – designing and implementing global people strategies through growth and transformation.
• Business services & outsourcing – board experience with WNS Holdings and leadership advisory firms.
• Health, social care & non-profit governance – trustee and association roles in palliative care and healthcare.

He holds a degree in Economics from the University of Warwick and brings a calm, pragmatic and commercially grounded perspective on leadership, culture and transformation at scale.