

If potus is america's
ceo, then this needs
to change
immediately

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If America was a business, you'd have to consider it a highly successful startup. Although we're still young, we're unique in our accomplishments—both in terms of our ideas and our economy.

As the co-founder of a successful startup, I'm also in a rare category. Only a small number of new companies succeed. A tiny percentage of those exceed \$1 billion in system-wide sales. And of those, few have one of the founders still at the helm as CEO.

My experience on this last point has given me an idea on how to change our presidential elections—which, let's face it, have grown too long, too melodramatic and too dominated by “ sizzle” vs. “ steak.”

First, let's look at why most startup CEOs don't last. It's pretty simple:

Running a \$100 million-dollar company with hundreds of employees is totally different than starting a new company. Founders tend to be visionaries, and most visionaries find it hard to adapt from launching an idea to profitably running a company. People like me initially tap their friends, family and existing networks to bring their new product or service to life. But as our businesses grow, we have to move back from the front lines and hire outside specialists. In doing so, we recognize the greater needs for structure, strategic planning and budgeting. And with rising employee head counts, we also witness the rising expectations, egos and emotions that go along with it.

Bottom line: Company founders like me have to accept a gradual loss of control. But you know what's even more significant? The loss of *knowledge* .

It's true. As my business has grown, I've become less informed on almost every aspect of it. And as I've brought in legal, financial, marketing

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and technologyspecialists, I've had to accept the fact that these people know more about their areas of expertise than I ever will.

Not only am I OK with that; I'm thrilled about it. So here's the question:

If we want our country to run like a business, then why do we accept long presidential election seasons focused solely on one candidate , rather than looking at the teams they would hire to actually run the country?

Think about it. Right now, we assume that one person can be an expert on the entire \$4 trillion budget of our company, the United States of America. We expect them to provide detailed answers on questions relating to immigration, trade, international relations, education, energy, defense, healthcare and the economy. And then we get frustrated when their rhetoric comes across as shallow and lacking in detail.

Sure, the president we elect will eventually appoint a cabinet, as well as bring in scores of policy advisors and perhaps appoint a Supreme Court Justice or two. But isn't it odd that the only team member we know ahead of time is arguably the least significant—the vice president?

Here's what I propose. As part of choosing our president, America does two things differently, First, we follow the advice of Sheryl Crow (and others) and shorten the election season—I would suggest to six months. Second, we demand that the candidates choose their team of experts upfront, make that list public and place those people on the debate stage as well.

Imagine that. Instead of putting individuals under a microscope for nearly two years—which inevitably leads to a negative focus on headline-grabbing scandals—we scrutinize an entire team in a condensed timeframe. In addition to the presidential and VP debates, we also have group debates: cabinet vs. cabinet, expert vs. expert. We see knowledgeable people answer real questions with actual detail. We could even have entire debates devoted to just one important issue - and hear in depth discussion on how to solve our countries most pressing problems.

If we want America to run like a business, and we want the president to be our CEO, then let's see how our candidates' executive skills truly match up. Let's find out how good they are at assembling high-quality teams, creating the right vision and empowering people to execute their strategies. With this process, we would gain real insights into the leadership capabilities, style and effectiveness of the individual candidates and how they might impact the country—based on substance, not rhetoric.

In business, the best *team* wins. Shouldn't the same apply to politics?

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