

Amazon—president, CEO, and chairman

1. Does Amazon have a well-balanced board?

You have first to decide what you believe constitutes a well-balanced board. The board has less women than men. The information in the case does not say much about their backgrounds. Some have business experience, some professional or financial knowledge, and women are represented but not strongly. Web research might establish more.

2. Jeff Bezos has the title of president, chief executive officer, and chair of the board. Some of the members of his board also carry multiple titles such as chair, president, and CEO. Is such centralization of authority and power in one person a good idea?

This question is intended to be a follow-up to the previous one. The tendency for concentration of leadership is particularly strong in US corporations, although pressures are there to split the roles as recommended in many corporate governance codes.

3. Should the roles of CEO and chair of the board be separated?

Not only is Jeffrey Bezos CEO and chairman, he is 'President, Chief Executive Officer, and Chairman of the Board'. This might be expected given the success, power, and now wealth of the man. Given the market performance of Amazon shares, the market currently seems content with this domination. However, that does not mean it will necessarily last.

4. Should Jeff Bezos' succession be planned? If so, how?

This question is an inevitable corollary to the previous one. Whether and, if so, how that might happen, given the membership of the board and no apparent pressure from institutional investors.