

# Dr. Ignacio S. Gatell

*Executive Leadership | Industrial Transformation | Operational Excellence*

+971 55 454 9060 | nachosg@gmail.com | drgatell.com | digitalgreenlean.com

linkedin.com/in/DoctorGatell

## **Executive Profile**

Industrial and technology executive with over 27 years of experience across the UAE, Europe and international operations. Former Vice President at EDGE Group, Director at Emirates Global Aluminium and Chief People Officer and Chief Operating Officer at Gamium–DIDIT. Leads strategy execution, organisational transformation and capability development through people, culture and disciplined operational improvement.

Experience includes annual multimillion-dollar operational, transformation and innovation savings, commercial development of an industrial centre of excellence, leadership across five plants in Europe with a combined budget of approximately USD 2 billion, and crisis response for approximately 7,000 employees. Holds an International PhD in Business and Economics, awarded Cum Laude (with Honors), with research on Leadership and Culture for the integration of Lean Manufacturing, Industry 4.0 and Circular Economy.

## **Selected Executive Achievements**

- Financial performance | EGA: Led enterprise-wide improvement initiatives delivering USD 12–20 million in annual savings through process optimisation and waste elimination.
- Commercial transformation | EDGE: Led the repositioning of LIF into BRIDGE Excellence and Process Industrialization, leading 25 professionals and increasing external revenue by 400% from 2024 to 2025 through training and projects.
- Innovation and engagement | EGA: Integrated employee innovation and Lean projects: approximately 40,000 ideas in 2019 and USD 18+ million in annual audited savings across the combined system. Savings scopes overlap and are not additive.
- Crisis response and leadership | EGA: Maintained operations without a COVID-19-related staffing shutdown during the 2020–2023 response, covering approximately 7,000 employees.
- Business scaling | Gamium–DIDIT: Led organisational and operational development as the business grew from 6 founding partners to more than 25 people, supporting ISO 27001 certification and the move from remote work to Barcelona.

## **Core Expertise**

Strategy execution and Hoshin Kanri • Business transformation • Operational Excellence • Lean Manufacturing and Toyota Production System • Organisational design • Change leadership • Innovation management • Leadership and talent development • Commercial development • Crisis management • Industry 4.0 and digital transformation • Circular Economy

## **Professional Experience**

### **Digital Green Lean**

**Founder** | 2024–present

- Connects executive advisory, industrial transformation and doctoral research; supports assessments, roadmaps, implementation, technology adoption, innovation and leadership development.
- Developed Digital Green Lean: a framework and maturity model for Lean Manufacturing, Industry 4.0 and Circular Economy, addressing culture, leadership and persistent operational tensions.

### **Excellence UAE**

**CEO and Founder** | 2013–2020

- Delivered strategy, Operational Excellence and business transformation advisory. Client experience includes Schneider Electric, Toyota Tsusho, Dubai Police, Abu Dhabi Police and RTA; coached executives and developed process improvement and project management approaches.

### **EDGE Group**

**Vice President BRIDGE Excellence and Process Industrialization** | Nov 2024–May 2026

- Led 25 professionals in the transformation of the Learning and Innovation Factory into BRIDGE Center of Excellence, defining its strategy, organisational structure, identity, facilities and commercial purpose.

- Deployed Hoshin Kanri to translate strategic priorities into operational objectives and execution routines; led six pillars covering business excellence, industrialisation, capability development, technology and AI, quality, and external engagement.
- Increased external revenue by 400% from 2024 to 2025 through external development and projects; developed industrial partnerships and contracts. Operational Excellence savings were generated separately.
- Delivered more than 3,000 man-days of training annually and increased the number of people trained in new capabilities by 35%; developed engineering bootcamps, AI leadership programmes and physical and digital twin applications.
- Employee satisfaction achieved above 92% and ISO 21001 certification; deployed the EDGE Excellence Model and improvement projects across clusters.

## Emirates Global Aluminium

### Senior Consultant to Executive Leadership | Mar 2020–Nov 2024 | Part-time engagement

- Led the COVID-19 emergency response and operational continuity programme from 2020 to 2023 for approximately 7,000 employees, coordinating the Medical Centre, testing, HR, facilities, security and emergency procurement.
- Implemented island mode, isolation, workforce rotations and return-to-work protocols. Maintained operations without a COVID-19-related staffing shutdown; employee and family support reached a combined population of 20,000.
- Advised EVP and SVP leadership on implementation projects spanning sustainability, environment, civil defence and medical operations; supported leadership development and organisational design.

## Gamium–DIDIT

### Chief People Officer, then Chief Operating Officer | Sep 2021–Dec 2023

- Initially full remote, then supported transition to office-based operations in Barcelona.
- Led organisational and operational development across Gamium's monetised metaverse and DIDIT's digital identity platform for Know Your Customer (KYC) and Know Your Business (KYB).
- Built a cross-functional leadership team across People, Legal, Sales, Finance and IT as the business grew from 6 founding partners to more than 25 people; established recruitment, compensation and performance management processes.
- Developed legal and compliance frameworks for operations across the UAE, Spain and international markets; supported achievement of ISO 27001 certification.

## Emirates Global Aluminium

### Director Business Transformation, Quality and Health | Jun 2016–Jan 2020

- Led more than 100 professionals across quality, health, innovation and transformation, delivering USD 12–20 million in annual savings through efficiency improvements and waste elimination.
- Developed the integrated EMAL–DUBAL innovation system through Kaizen Teian, Kaizen Events and Tamayaz process innovation. In 2019, approximately 40,000 employee ideas contributed to a combined innovation and Lean system delivering USD 18+ million in annual audited savings.
- Oversaw management systems covering ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001 and IATF 16949; directed the Medical Centre, emergency response capabilities and health insurance management.

## Emirates Aluminium

### Senior Manager Business Systems and Lean Transformation | May 2009–Jun 2016

- Led more than 25 professionals delivering Operational Excellence; established EMAL's employee innovation system in 2009 and led its subsequent integration with DUBAL's system. Deployed Hoshin Kanri, Lean training and executive coaching.
- Coached senior executives and standardised Lean practices across sites. Results included a 5% increase in foundry efficiency, 12% reduction in maintenance budget, 4% reduction in casting rejections, 2% reduction in potline energy consumption and 45% improvement in planning compliance.

## Alcoa

### Progressive Engineering and Leadership Roles | Sep 1999–May 2009

- Europe OpEx, Planning and Manufacturing Manager | 2007–2009: Led Operational Excellence deployment and standardisation across European operations; team of more than 50 professionals.
- Primary Europe Casting Operations and Technology Manager | 2006–2007: Led five casthouses with a combined budget of approximately USD 2 billion (USD 2,000 million), 25 direct reports and more than 600 people in total through direct and indirect reporting lines.

- Operations Management, Pittsburgh / Lean Manufacturing Consultant | 2005: Selected for a corporate consulting assignment supporting global transformation initiatives.
- Europe and Spain Lean Manufacturing and Quality Assurance Manager | 2003–2005: Pioneered Lean implementation across Spanish and European facilities.
- Casthouse Process Engineer and Production Coordinator, Spain | 1999–2002: Developed technical and operational expertise in aluminium processing and production management.

## **Iberia, Líneas Aéreas de España**

**Assistant to the Head of Laboratory, Engine Division | Internship | Mar–Sep 1999**

Supported the Head of Laboratory in the engine division.

## **Education**

- International PhD in Business and Economics | University of Oviedo | 2020–2026

Awarded Cum Laude. Research on culture and leadership for integrated Lean Manufacturing, Industry 4.0 and Circular Economy.

- Executive MBA | Vértice Business School | 2006–2007
- MSc in Industrial Chemistry | Universidad Complutense de Madrid | 1992–1999

## **Research and Publications**

Gatell, I. S. and Avella, L. Impact of Industry 4.0 and Circular Economy on Lean culture and leadership: Assessing Digital Green Lean as a new concept. European Research on Management and Business Economics, 2024. DOI: 10.1016/j.iedeen.2023.100232.

Gatell, I. S. and Avella, L. A maturity model for assessing Digital Green Lean leadership and culture implementation in manufacturing companies. Total Quality Management and Business Excellence, 2024. DOI: 10.1080/14783363.2024.2347373.

Gatell, I. S. and Avella, L. Different Paths, Shared Destination: How Institutional Context Shapes Circular Economy Capability Development in Lean Manufacturing. Manuscript under review.

## **Recognition and Languages**

Recognised by The Technology Express among the 50 Digital Transformation Leaders of the UAE 2025. Further professional information: drgatell.com.

Spanish: native | English: fluent

## **Methods and Management Systems**

Lean Six Sigma • Toyota Production System (TPS) • Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) • Reliability-Centred Maintenance (RCM) • Value Stream Mapping (VSM) • Hoshin Kanri • ISO 9001 • ISO 14001 • ISO 45001 • IATF 16949