Carlo De Benedetti completed his studies at the Turin Politecnico where he graduated in 1958 with a degree in Electrical Engineering.

He began his entrepreneurial career in 1959 in the family business, Compagnia Italiana Tubi Metallici Flessibili, which later became Gilardini.

In 1976 he founded CIR (Compagnie Industriali Riunite), one of the most important private holding companies in Italy, with around 14 thousand employees. Listed on the Milan Stock Exchange, it operates in various sectors. He is currently Honorary Chairman of CIR and Cofide.

From 1978 to 1996 Carlo De Benedetti was at the helm of Olivetti and was Honorary Chairman from 1996 until June 1999.

From 2006 to 2017 he was Chairman of GEDI Gruppo Editoriale (formerly Gruppo Editoriale L'Espresso), of which he is currently Honorary Chairman.

He is currently member of the Reuters Institute Advisory Board (Oxford) and member of various international associations.

He is Chairman of the Rodolfo De Benedetti Foundation which he founded in 1998, in memory of his father, to promote research in the field of economic policy in relation to the labour market and welfare systems in Europe.

He is Chairman of the Foundation TogetherToGo ONLUS (TOG) which he founded in 2011 for the rehabilitation of children who have suffered neurological problems.

Carlo De Benedetti received the title of “Cavaliere del Lavoro” in 1983, was awarded the Légion d'Honneur in 1987, the Silver Medal for Merit by the Republic of Austria in 2006 and in 2015 he also received the title of Commandeur de la Légion d’Honneur.