



The Board Search Breakfast

David Schwarz

*Australia's leading board
recruitment expert*





WELCOME

Welcome to the Board Search Breakfast.

The good news is that 50% of organisations with boards recruit new board members each year. So, whilst the board appointment journey is undoubtedly competitive, thousands and thousands of people successfully gain new appointments each year. You can too.

However, most people go about finding and gaining a board appointment all wrong. They put their efforts in the wrong place and when that doesn't work, they do the same again, get frustrated or quit. If this sounds like you or you can't find opportunities, or aren't getting appointed then it is likely you are doing one of three things wrong.

Successful Non Executive Directors (NEDs) on the other hand do things differently. They are able to answer three simple questions. Helping you to answer these three questions is what we will do today. Doing so will mean a board appointment within 12 months should be your absolute expectation.

I want this breakfast to revolutionise the way you go about finding and gaining a board appointment. As such, I am going to share with you not only what the 'rules' of how to gain a board appointment are but also how you can circumvent them.

Regardless of your level of experience and scale of your aspirations (a paid, voluntary, commercial, government or a NfP board role) and whether it is your first, a subsequent, or a more significant board appointment that you desire, you will leave knowing what it is you need to do to separate yourself from your competitors and dare them not to appoint you.

Kind regards,



David Schwarz
CEO | Board Direction

THE THREE PILLARS OF A BOARD APPOINTMENT

THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU CAN DO.

People will 'peg' you in the first instance by focusing on immediately graspable facts and, ignorant of context, are unable to hold differing views simultaneously. This means that if you don't tell people you are looking for a board appointment, they will peg you some other way and not be able to help. So, beyond being clear about what boards you want and can be appointed to, and the reason you should be appointed, the most important thing is to start telling people you are looking for a board role. This is the most valuable thing you can do.

THIS IS WHAT SUCCESSFUL NON EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS KNOW.

Successful NEDs are clear about what role they want and can be appointed to. Yes, they can articulate the scope and scale of their aspirations including how much they require to be remunerated and the industry they want to focus on, but they can also name the organisation specifically. Without you also being able to do this your approach will quickly become reactive, unstructured, frustrating and unsuccessful. So, defining your target - your Aspirations - is the first of three 'core pillars' of a board appointment.

The other second thing successful NEDs are able to do is Articulate clearly what it is they offer their target's board or boards similar to it – the second 'pillar' of a board appointment. To do this you must understand what it is Chairs want to see in successful candidates and be able to succinctly state these formally, informally and both verbally and on paper. This will of course be a very different pitch to the one you give as an executive and may take some getting used to.

Finally, they understand how to use this knowledge to be appointed one of only four ways:

1. Through personal connections (65% of successful appointments);
2. By directly approaching an organisation with an offer to help (15%);
3. Via a Recruiter (10%);
4. Responding to an advertised opportunity (10%).

They know that each of these routes requires different strategies and tactics - the final pillar: Application. Beyond this, they should know that some appointments will be more desirable than others and as such, some will be difficult to secure. As such you must structure your time accordingly and ensuring your aspirations match with the level of activity you are willing to undertake in order to be appointed.

DON'T WAIT FOR THE PERFECT TIME TO BEGIN YOUR BOARD CAREER – GET STARTED TODAY.

These three 'core pillars' (Aspiration, Articulation & Application) form the basis of everything we do at Board Direction because we know that if our members getting these right then they will separate themselves from their competitors and their journey to a board appointment will be quicker, more enjoyable, and more successful.

YOUR NON-EXECUTIVE CV

A Board CV is vastly different from your executive CV and writing one is the best place to begin when considering your first, or subsequent board role. While there is no set template for the style or format it must answer the central question any Chair/selection committee will want to know 'Why should we appoint you?' For this reason your Board CV must: demonstrate your success as at board level, be succinct, be readable and separate yourself from your competitors.

1. **Length:** In the vast majority of cases the length of your document doesn't matter. Some Executive Search Firms may demand your Board CV is no longer than 2 pages
2. **Photo:** Including a photo is perfectly acceptable however by doing so can lead to discrimination based on your age, sex, disability or race - I recommend against it.
3. **Board Profile:** Your profile should never be aspirational. It should pitch you at board level and outline any board level experience you have had - not necessarily just your board appointments. Writing in the first person is fine but your profile should not exceed one paragraph.
4. **Board & Executive Successes:** This section evidences your governance or strategic successes and things you are particularly proud of achieving in your executive or board career. Again, please be as specific as possible and include statistics or numerical evidence wherever possible.
5. **Non Executive & Committee Experience:** In an executive resume this section comes after details of your executive career. Here it comes first. This section should outline in chronological order your current and past non executive or committee experience. Where you have been on board sub-committees or executive committees these can also be included.
6. **Executive Board Experience:** Here you can include the names of any committees or board roles you have held as part of your executive career.
7. **Executive Career:** Whilst this section will begin with the same information as would be found in your executive resume it should be much shorter and only include headline successes – ideally strategic ones that can be evidenced. Also include information about the scale of your company and your responsibility within as this quantifies your experience.
8. **Qualifications & Professional Development:** This will likely replicate the content of your executive resume.
9. **Extra-Professional Activities & Interests:** A list of any professional activities or personal interests that cannot be incorporated in the sections above for example: languages, awards, charity work, memberships or personal successes.
10. **Referees:** Many Chairs/selection committees head straight to this section. They are interested to know if they know your referees. Your list should include the highest level genuine referees you can muster. Do not include their contact details.

Writing your Board CV can be almost as valuable as the end product as the process will help you to articulate your successes and as such the sort of organisations that will value them.

YOUR BOARD APPLICATION COVER LETTER

In the past, cover letters were often deemed to be good enough if they simply introduced you and your interest in the role advertised and then referred to your attached CV. As a result, they were often too brief, functional at best, added no additional value and for this reason were rarely read.

In a competitive environment when there are far more candidates than opportunities cover letters form a crucial part of the non executive application process regardless of whether you are responding to an advertisement, using a recruiter or approaching a company directly.

A good cover letter can only be written after conducting significant research and should include 5 paragraphs:

1. **Passion for the Role:** Not a statement about your understanding of the company, where you saw the job advertised or what the role is that you are applying for. Instead it must demonstrate your passion for the role - based on the research you have done. It is where your earlier research will pay real dividends. 'Based on your research what are the needs at board level and how can you help'?
2. **Your Profile:** Insert the profile you should have already written as part of your CV. It summarises your experience, your success, your networks, your achievements and your education. It is your answer to the question 'Why should the board appoint me?'
3. **Address Gaps or Concerns:** It is not uncommon for boards to disregard an applicant because of a misinformed interpretation or assumption based on a poorly crafted CV. In essence, this paragraph should briefly allay any fears the chair or nominations committee might have with regard to your application so that they do not discount you. 'Conflicts – real or perceived? Seem too busy to contribute? Unemployed? Career Break?'
4. **What is Memorable About You?:** Tell them about your extra-professional activities. The things outside of your professional career. It might not get you appointed but it might be the difference between getting an interview or not.
5. **Passion for the Company:** This is one of the most important sections but different from your opening paragraph. Again, based on your research this summary demonstrates your understanding of what the company does, your connectedness, intelligence and strategic approach. Most importantly, it demonstrates your passion for the objectives or goals of the organisation. It is a strong way to finish any cover letter. 'Why are you applying for this organisation as opposed to another similar one?'

One page, focused on what you know about the organisation, their challenges and how you can help - be specific and 'dare them not to appoint you'.

BOARD DIRECTION

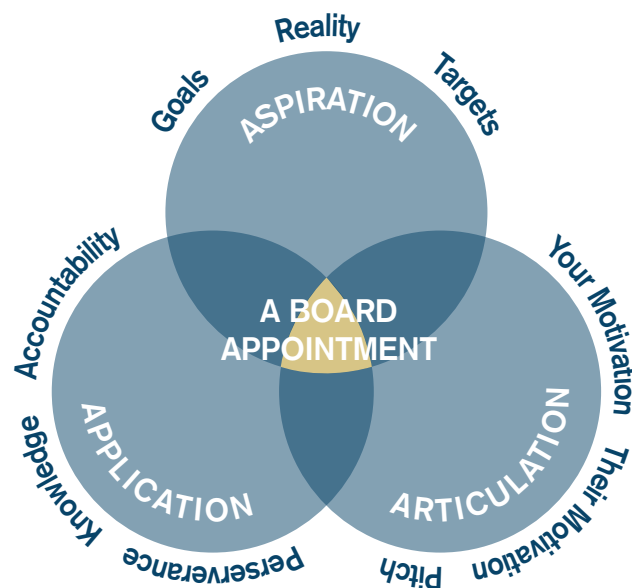
Board Direction is not a governance or recruitment company. Having assessed over 10,000 board applications and CVs, conducted thousands of board interviews and taken briefs from hundreds of Chairs we know how and why people get appointed. We offer our members:

1. Access to the largest and most comprehensive list of board vacancies sourced exclusively for our members and
2. A suite of training, coaching and accountability services that get people appointed.

Utilising over 15 years' experience of putting people on boards we have developed

The Board Appointment Model that step our members through every element of the board appointment journey - including every strategy and tactic they need to get appointed as quickly as possible.

THE BOARD APPOINTMENT MODEL



This model and our associated training programs offer, together with the templates documents and training, our members an unparalleled and achievable structure that helps them achieve their board aspirations - regardless of the scope or scale of their aspirations or whether they are an existing or aspiring NED.

THE BOARD APPOINTMENT PLAN

We are not a governance or recruitment company. Operating for almost a decade Board Direction has cemented its reputation as the Australia's leading NED career development and board vacancy advertising firm. In this time, we have helped thousands of people gain a board appointment. This is how we measure our success.

5 STEP BOARD APPOINTMENT PLAN



Planning: 1:1 Career Planning Session setting out your aspirations and the path ahead

Documents: Bespoke CV, Cover Letter, and LinkedIn writing

Roles: Access to our personally sourced database of 5,000+ Board Vacancies

Training & Support: Online Board Appointment Program, in-person Workshops, and downloadable reference resources

Accountability: Monthly or quarterly catch-ups to keep you on track

The Board Appointment Plan underpins all we do.

OUR SERVICES

We offer our members the following services:

- **Board Vacancies:** Over 5,000 National Non-Executive & Advisory Board opportunities across the Commercial, Government and Not-for-Profit sectors sourced annually.



- **Board CVs & LinkedIn:** We have written over 3,000 Board CV's and Board LinkedIn Profiles. Addressing the five things a Chair wants to see in a successful candidate.
- **The Board Appointment Program:** A bespoke training course designed to get you appointed within 12 months, walking you through each step of the journey to an appointment.
- **Board Career Planning:** Defining a list of target organisations and your value at board level; the two fundamental steps required to get appointed.
- **Targeted Research:** Researching the names and contact details of the people you must speak with to target your organisations.
- **Board Appointment Workshops:** Practical in person training sessions held nationally.
- **Application Reviews:** A critical review of your board applications prior to you submitting them.
- **Application Writing:** A full board application writing service – getting you past the gatekeepers and into an interview
- **Mock Interviews:** A transformative process that we guarantee will increase your confidence and success in an interview.

OUR SUCCESS

- **BOARD CVS:**

With pleasure I am informing you that as a result, I believe, of using your advice and the Board CV style and content you worked on with me, I have now received an appointment as a Non Executive director ... I asked what attracted their attention to me, to which they responded "the style, format and clearly articulated content of the CV".

Rodney Turner, NED Program Member

Thank you, since you re-worked my LinkedIn profile and NED CV I have had a lot more hits and no end of approaches for roles.

Michael Cooke, Executive Member

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- **TRAINING:**

'Wow! I have received valuable information that will allow me to achieve more success in my pursuit of my next board position. 10/10.'

Robert Heard, Executive Member

'I loved the frankness, straightforward and honesty of the approach that David took. Great to have someone who cuts through the "bullshit". I really felt that you were talking to me with my interests at heart, rather than on on-sell to your next course.'

Jane Ketelbey, Executive Member

The Masterclass was outstanding for me as a reference for my approach to appointment.

Keith Brown, Executive Member

I have found each of the sessions very informative and have taken away a number of key points that I have begun putting into action. GarryWhatley, Webinar Series

- **GET PEOPLE APPOINTED:** We have helped thousands of our members gain Board Appointments

'Thanks to my Board Appointments membership my non-executive career is well underway. I secured two non-executive board positions in this year!'

Sandra Gamble, Executive Member

Thank you for assisting me to make this first step into directorship outside of my own company and good luck to you in continuing your worthy business.'

Rodney Clarke. NED Program Member

'Thanks to your advice and support I now sit on two boards!'

Hamza Vayani, Executive Member



BOARD DIRECTION

PUTTING PEOPLE ON BOARDS



David Schwarz is CEO & Founder of Board Direction – Australia's leading board advertising and non-executive career support firm. He has over a decade of experience of putting people on boards as

an international headhunter and a non-executive recruiter and has interviewed over one thousand non-executives and placed hundreds into some of the most significant public, private and NFP roles in the world.



www.boarddirection.com.au

