



Webinar Transcript – Cultivating Board Culture for Excellence and Impact

So welcome, everybody. Welcome to another of our governance made easy webinars titled today cultivating board culture for effectiveness and impact. Today, we are having a great discussion. We're about to have a great discussion with our special guest, Georgia Henry, Danica McLean, and Julie Garland McClellan.

Thank you for attending today. We always appreciate the effort you make to be here for our live webinar events.

During the session, if you have any questions for the panel, please use the q and a button on your toolbar, wherever that is on your screen. It just keeps helps us keep a track of things. And finally, if you stay through till the end, which we hope, of course, you will do and as is customary, we have a special treat for you. By answering a really short one minute survey at the end of the webinar, you'll go in the draw to win our beautiful gift hamper worth over four hundred dollars.

Last week's winner was, Marissa Chilcott, executive officer at Australian and New Zealand Society of Nephrology. Congratulations again, Marissa. I know you're on the call this afternoon, so welcome again, and thanks for leaving feedback on our survey.

For those of you who are are not too familiar with BoardPro, we are a board software provider, sometimes called a board portal, and we serve just over thirty thousand users around the world in about thirty nine different countries.



And we enable organizations to prepare for and run their board meetings more effectively with, you guessed it, clever software with less time and deliver more impact and value for the organization.

And as much as we are a software provider, a board software provider, part of our wider mission is to make the fundamentals of governance free and easy to implement.

And that's for all organizations, but especially those with resource constraints.

So these free webinars and the many hundreds of templates, guides, and white papers on the BoardPro resource page are a really good example of how we look to achieve our mission for nonprofits and small to medium businesses around the world.

Now just sit back, relax. A recording of the webinar, the transcript, and the white paper that Georgia has prepared for today will be with you on email later today. So just, relax, sit back, and ask as many questions as you care for.

So let me now hand over to our wonderful panel, to have them introduce themselves starting with you, Julie.

Oh, wonderful. Hi, everybody. I'm Julie Garland McClellan.

Most of you, if you know me, will know me as the person who's behind the director's dilemma newsletter.

But I am half my time a professional company director sitting on four boards at the moment and the other half of my time a consultant to boards and directors.



So that's me in a nutshell. And if you don't know the newsletter, type in the chat now, give you a link where you can get it.

Thanks, Julie. Danica, over to you.

Kia ora koutou, everyone. I'm Danica McLean from Board Administration Services.

We are a company providing bespoke, administrative support for boards, from minute taking through to strategic advice and how to uplift your governance.

I'm also a professional director. I'm certified from the Institute of Directors as a company director, and I'm a charter member with them. And I sit on my daughter's school board.

Fantastic. And finally, you, Georgia.

Thanks, Sean.

My, company is Henry Reit, and we specialize in organization culture and board culture and board effectiveness.

And, I also sit on boards, and spend a lot of time when we start to talk about organization culture always starting in the boardroom, starting with board culture because if there are issues within an organization culture, generally, there are issues with board culture as well, which has, I guess, really prompted the topic for today, and how we want to to have a good conversation about board culture and how you can enhance that for, effectiveness and impact.



Fantastic. I've been looking forward to today's webinar. So, over to you. Let's get cracking.

Let's get cracking. Okay. So, I'm not gonna focus too much on what culture is. I think everyone is well aware of of board culture and organization culture.

Elizabeth Broderick sums it up quite nicely in her quote that it's like the operating system in a computer. It's the enabling environment for everything an organization does.

So we know that culture has, as our ways of working our, our behaviors and interactions, it impacts the effectiveness of individuals, teams, and organization, and it has a direct impact on our results and risks, our value creation, and opportunities.

So we know that. We know why we should be having an effective culture, but it's quite difficult. So we find that why cultivating culture can be quite difficult.

I find it's mainly because it involves people.

Interactions between people can be challenging.

But, Julie, we were having a chat about this the other day, and you were mentioning the intensity in board in the boardrooms around how that impacts the relationships. Do you wanna share a little bit around around that?

Yeah. I think the way the conversation went was that sometimes staff members coming into a board meeting are slightly taken aback



by the robustness with which ideas, and hopefully it's ideas, not people themselves, are challenged.

And, that whole ability of a board to have difficult conversations and to ask each other respectfully, that's an interesting view. It's not one I share.

Where did you get it? What what did you consider informing it? How how has it formed?

Just understanding where people's viewpoints come from.

Yeah.

I I don't think there's enough time in the world for Donald Trump, but you'd be a brave person to try.

I think in boards, that level of challenge is so much higher in a good board than it is elsewhere in the organization where people are more inclined to defer to seniority or authority.

And I I do find that understanding how culture shifts throughout the organization. There's a sort of overarching, but then within it, there are little areas where something's more important than others.

Yeah. Absolutely. And Danica, what do you why do you see cultivating culture as being difficult?

It's not something that boards generally get right all the time.

Yeah, you're absolutely right. And I think the number one thing is that it requires trust and some people naively don't think that they need



to build that trust up, and they don't actually put in any effort to get to know their fellow directors, to get to understand the different personalities and the way that people think. And they don't reflect on their own way of interacting with those different personalities.

You know, they may not be, vulnerable enough. You know, they might put up a wall, and that then in turn limits their trust. And without that trust, I don't think people can have those open generative conversations.

Yeah. Absolutely. And I think dealing with with, emotions with other people with difficult conversations when there's time pressure, there's intensity of discussion.

You maybe don't know everyone in the around the in the boardroom as well as as as you should, given time constraints. It all makes cultivating culture a challenge and something that needs to be continually worked on. So what I'd like to do is invite people to put questions in the Q and A button to to ask questions about board culture, the challenges that you have experienced because we love answering those questions if there are some challenges.

We will attempt to answer those as we go along, and learn to share some examples.

There's a couple now in the q and a panel.

Awesome.

Do you want me to read them to you? Do you want to read them yourself?



Look. I'll I'll read them. I'll, I'll read them as we go through. I think there's a I can see we're getting a few good questions coming through.

I'll do the next couple of slides, and then I think we're gonna jump into case studies and examples and answering the questions.

So when I started working in culture and talking to boards about culture, very much used to get the response. We don't have time for that. We're so busy on the board. We're so busy dealing with, the the strategic issues with risks with governance.

We don't we don't have time to address culture, and culture is soft. It's fluffy. I even had it referred to by by, one board as being pink, which I took great offense at.

But it's actually not optional. It's an obligation. So if you look at your directed duties, your duty of care, as well as your obligations under work health and safety legislation, you actually have a proactive duty to be providing a work environment that is free of psychological hazards. And this extends to the boardroom. So organizations really have become quite good at defining culture for their organization and then forgetting about it when it hits the boardroom because there's a bit of a disconnect there.

Sean, if we go into the next slide.

Great. So what to cultivate an effective board culture, we need to align the board culture with the organisation culture. And every organisation has a culture whether it's created by default or by design. And if it's been designed and intentionally thought about, it follow a similar process to the model that I have here, which is



Henry Reid's model, where you have purposely you know, you've you've thought about and intentionally designed purpose, vision, and values.

You've embedded that in the frameworks for governance, strategy, and risk. Leaders are tasked with with upholding those standards, and that flows through to the experience of employees and customers and shareholders. It ultimately creates the right environment to be able to deliver the required impact, competitive advantage, results, and mitigation of risk.

But what happens you know, what we need to do in the boardroom is is, intentionally cultivate culture because, as Julie was mentioning before about the intensity, the issues, the the time pressures, it can be something that can get lost in in the, the focus of the boardroom.

So it does require intention. It does require clarity of expectations, particularly when things change.

It does require continual alignment between what's happening in the board and the, expectations for culture in the organization.

And as Danica mentioned before, trust the development of trust and building and and rebuilding trust in relationships is essential. And all of these things go to, making a psychologically safe environment.

So what are what are some of the things, I I think I'll probably get to some of the questions now because there's a few things coming in here around the types of issues that, can derail culture and break down the relationship. So the first one is, I've noticed management take offense to questions at times and get defensive.



Is that due to a lack of trust?

Again, I'm gonna throw that to you Julie first of all.

I think sometimes it's down to not having really good expectations is one thing. The other thing is sometimes it's bad board behavior.

If you've got a question from reading your board papers and you save it up until the meeting and launch it at management, they might have the answer on their desk but they can't give it to you, and they're not gonna risk giving you the wrong answer.

So, actually, having those those, intentional practices of if I have questions, I try to send them through by email first so that people have a chance to prepare an answer, the way I phrase my question, making sure they understand that it's a request for more information and a desire to understand rather than just, just me proving that I'm clever and I can pick holes in your argument.

Because anyone who does that isn't clever at all.

But how about you, Danica? What do you see?

I think, there's also an art in the way that you provide feedback, and some people can come across a bit aggressively in their question asking. And I think, again, that ties back to actually being conscious around your behavior and around the way that you approach these things as a director.

But I think too, management should be prepared, for their papers to be scrutinized. I think it's an ongoing, efficiency process, and you should always be looking to improve your board papers to kind of to



to be the best, the best information for the board, for the strategy, for the organization. It's it's a rolling feast. It's not always a one size fits all.

And you you know, you're gonna get that information and what what the board wants is from those directors providing feedback.

Exactly. And I think that comes down to a lot too about the the culture in the boardroom. Is it a psychologically safe place? Do do, you know, do people feel that they can safely ask questions or provide feedback?

And in a lot of environments where I've seen a breakdown in the relationship between management and and the board, that there is definitely a sense that the boardroom is not a safe place to be, be it would be that because of historical, things, incidents that have happened in the past, behaviors of directors, or that there's actually a lack of understanding of the scrutiny that is going to to come into, looking at the papers and and helping directors to make a decision.

We've got another question here. When organizations build silos around their operations, it's a challenge to bring culture changes. How do you go around the silos? So that that's probably a more operational question, and I'm really happy to have a conversation with how we do that within organizations.

But it is around setting clear expectations for culture across the organization, what that what that looks like, how that aligns to interactions, values based behaviors, what's what is acceptable, and and really working with managers to the board really needs to be directing how that culture is enabling the organization to deliver



the strategic outcomes. Any other comments on that, Julie and and Danica, before we move on?

Yeah. I think silos should be permeable.

If you look at any grain silo, they do connect in some places.

And so there should be acceptable levels of difference in culture. So you want your accounts department more excited about precision and numbers. You want your customer service department more excited about people and relationships.

But within an acceptable overarching culture.

So I think one of the best ways of of, breaking those silos is multidisciplinary teams and, making people work together. In Spanish, we say from rubbing you you grow affection.

And, it's a great saying in Spanish. It sounds much better.

But when people work together, they they do start to appreciate each other.

Danica?

I think there's plenty I can add to that, but, you guys have covered it well, and I think there are a few questions we should move on.

Excellent.

Okay.

One of the questions here from Paul, how to get board members more engaged?

That's always a challenging one. I think it really depends on the reason why they're disengaged.

So I'm working with a number of boards at the moment and there's disengagement in the boardroom for a number of reasons. One comes down to control and dominance.

So they're disengaged because of a very controlling, chairperson.

They're not given the opportunity to contribute.

They can't don't feel that they're able to share ideas.

So that is a reason.

And when we start to look at you know, other reasons for disengagement, looking at, again, alignment back to purpose. What are we here to achieve? Is it, is the board operating at a strategic enough level? What are the things that are actually driving the disengagement?

Danica, what do you think about, how to get board members more engaged?

Yeah. I think, having, having a code of conduct for the board is a good starting point and actually reviewing that annually as a board. And within that document, you can actually have expectations around how members of the different board can contribute, you know, really being clear that the board is a collective. There are no

individual decisions. It's the board that's making decisions, and that it should be a safe environment to have open, you know, difficult conversations when they need to be without any kind of malice.

Absolutely. Julie?

Yes. I I just totally agree. I think absence of malice and clarity of conflicts of interest, actually identifying them and getting them out of the shadows and onto the table takes away a a lot of the issues.

And sometimes there's just too much psychological safety. Everyone's too polite to mention that they're worried about something, and so they they switch off as opposed to too much psychological danger and everyone's too frightened to say something. So getting that balance, I think, the art rather than science.

Absolutely. Sean, we might flick to the next slide. And it definitely is a balance when we look at what is acceptable levels of psychological safety.

Psychological safety is very much on a spectrum, I think, of what's how people respond and and react. So agree that it is around setting and reinforcing expectations, addressing issues as well as they come up. And and I find that the level of psychological safety decreases when issues aren't aren't addressed in real time or when they're allowed to, you know, hold over from meeting to meeting.

Danica mentioned earlier too about rebuilding trust or building trust and having trusted relationships.



One of the models that I really like to use when we talk about trust is Frances Frances Frey's trust triangle where she talks about authenticity, credibility, and empathy being the the areas where trust can wobble. So if you think about if someone's interacting authentic authentically with you, you're more likely to trust them.

If they're providing you with credible information, they're doing what they say that what they'll do, they're meeting their commitments, you're more likely to trust them.

And if they're dealing with the situations, no matter how challenging, and in the boardroom there's a lot of challenging situations, you're dealing those with empathy, then you're more likely to develop a trusted relationship. So, again, it's focusing on the collective, not not self interest, but being aware of where trust might be falling down and what you can do to proactively, start to rebuild those trusted relationships.

I think too, it's also around having good processes for for feedback, for conflict resolution when when there is a lack of psycho psychological safety, in the boardroom.

And, Sean, we'll move on to the next one, which is we're talking about navigating challenges with diverse boards.

We'll you know, there's diversity is really important in boards, but it can create culture challenges as well. I'm actually gonna come on to another one of the questions here, from Rhianna. Individual agendas of board members can differ from the goals of the organization. That's one of the challenges.



So when we have those individual agendas, it certainly can create challenges. And I see that quite a lot in in member based organizations. We've got member elected directors or not for profits. We have people who are very passionate about outcomes that aren't necessarily exactly aligned to strategic direction.

Julie, what are your thoughts are on that when you've got this difference of of, alignment on expect on on, I guess, outcomes?

It's difficult. And if the outcomes diverge too much, you really have to ask yourself, does this person belong in this boardroom?

And I I think that's a very good question. And indeed, good directors ask themselves, do I still belong in this boardroom? Have I contributed everything I can contribute?

And it's now time for me to leave and see if somebody else can move things further forwards. And I I think we we talk so much about diversity, but diversity takes a lot of work. Mhmm. It's not not easy. And the more diverse you are, the more work it takes.

So so really thinking about how diverse can those perspectives about what's a desirable outcome be before they start to be counterproductive to having a board that is able to operate as a team.

And boards are teams.

They they definitely are teams. And I think I think you've mentioned there, Julia, a really having a really high level of self awareness about how well you're contributing. And I would say that that's that's an

area of development that many directors probably need to focus on. Danica, what are your thoughts?

I think I see it quite a lot in private organizations where there are shareholder directors on the board, and they just they don't quite understand that they need to take their shareholder hat off and just be a director and act in the best interests of the company, not necessarily the best interests of the shareholders, but there are other stakeholders.

So it's having that understanding around what the director duties actually are.

And, again, I've seen directors that have actually resigned from boards where they are very passionate about something, and they don't agree with what the organization's doing. And they voice their concerns, but, ultimately, they feel like they just can't add any value, and they step down. They actually resign. They feel like, you know, you get to the point where you get stuck.

And I've seen the opposite where they where they don't resign, and they go into battle. And so they are the ones who are sort of digging in and really creating, quite a difficult situation in the boardroom.

Mhmm.

We have a great question, in chat In the chat.

Yep.

From Kirsty. Yeah. She says, what do we need to consider as members based LGBTIQA, I think I've got everything, plus Plus.

Advocacy peak body board with community politics and potential conflicts of interest?

Who wants to tackle that one?

Okay. I'm I'm just trying to get to the let's see where the I can't see where the question is.

Okay. So an advocacy peak body, community politics, potential conflicts of interest, member based. It's a bit of you've got a bit of everything, thrown into that situation, Kirsty. So what you need to consider, you need to have really clarity around why you exist and what you're there to achieve to be able to drive, you know, keep people aligned, keep things focused, be able to have effective responses, when you're looking at advocacy, when you're looking at how do you manage community politics.

As as Julie mentioned before, having having real clarity on the conflicts of interest and calling those out early and and being aware of those those things.

Julie, what would would it be your thoughts about those? What needs to be considered?

I think there's that. And the other thing is these are just people. Yeah. We are all people.

So sometimes whilst there might be a community push from a certain part of the community for a certain outcome, the individual person on your board might not be part of that push and you see this so often with first nations people on boards and other first nations

people go well he doesn't speak for my mob and she's not my auntie and they're right.

They're just an auntie. They're just a person speaking for a mob and so the same thing I would imagine happens with these bodies. Don't just look at the person as, oh, this is our our lesbian. This is this is our trans.

This is our in in transition person. You you've got to think, no. This is this person, and they've got a certain amount of experience which is theirs. They've got skills and qualifications in addition to that experience.

Because sometimes we think, oh, you know, the the First Nations person's there to speak on First Nations issue. No. They're not. They're in jail on absolutely everything just like everyone else.

That's exactly right. They're there because they're, you know, they may be bringing some lived experiences, and specific skills and knowledge. But as a director, you're a director. You you're not there for for a singular issue. Danica, what are your thoughts on that?

I think you see this in a lot of member based organizations, and I think one of the things to consider is having really robust governance documents. So having your constitution, having your rules, having your code of conduct so that there are clear expectations of the way that, that those directors or members are, expected to behave.

But, also, you know, and a lot of these people are advocates or they've come from the community and they don't necessarily have governance experience.



You know, I think it's a very realistic idea to consider governance training for that board.

You know, so we'll go through that together and actually have an understanding of what it is, that you're expected to do in that role and how to manage these things, how to understand how a conflict spintra should be managed, etcetera.

Yeah. Absolutely. Sean, if you could flip to the next slide. I mean, a lot of those things that we've just talked about is is really about how do we create alignment and the clarity of expectations, having really good, governance, continuing education, induction processes, clarity around roles and responsibilities is all is all really important in that situation.

And I think the governance quite often lets boards down. I'm working with a couple of boards at the moment where their constitution actually was developed as a smaller member based organization. The organization has grown and the requirements have changed and the constitution has not. So actually, it's not fit for purpose and doesn't provide the board the support it needs to, to deal with some of these issues that are impacting board culture.

We'll flick on to the next one because there's quite a few questions coming through and the questions around this topic. One of my favorites, it's a breakdown of board CEO and executive relationships.

So I'm going to jump straight to the questions.

So, any advice around managing defensive behavior from the executive management team when board members are trying to



evaluate papers in front of them? Julie, I'm gonna throw that one straight to you.

Oh, I'm feeling guilty. I'm I'm getting all the first catches.

The I think the first thing is why are you trying to evaluate the paper rather than the decision you need to make that the paper is giving you information to help with?

If you've got issues with your papers, best to address it as a an in camera issue so that the board speaks with one voice not seven or nine voices because poor management have real trouble with that. So agree amongst yourselves. What do we want in our papers?

What what's the absolute maximum length? What's the level of detail? What's the technical content?

How do we want them structured? What should come first? Should there be a summary?

How are we using our resources section of the portal as well as our paper delivery section? How do we keep the essential reading essential and and not put things that aren't essential into the papers so everyone has to wade through them?

There's just so much to do there that you don't want to be doing in front of the executives. It's it's not something to be shared.

But I think as well, understand that most executives have never been trained in writing a board paper. So if you are getting picky with them and saying it's not good enough, it's like asking somebody why they



couldn't win an formula one race when they've never learned to drive.

Yeah. Absolutely. And I think there there's so much expectation around papers and and, so much you know, it causes so many issues. But exactly that, Julie, it's not been really looked at and and and expectations set and and education around that.

I'm conscious of time, Denica. I'm going to give you the next question. How do you deal with a dysfunctional board that treat executives like they're undergoing an inquisition and belittle them?

Also have faulty memories on what decisions have happened in the past? The chair has been briefed, but any behavior change has not been sustained.

Well, that's a tricky one.

Certainly, having faulty memories on what decisions have happened in the past, is an easy one because that should be in your board minutes, which tell the history of the company. And that is a clear record of what was decided and when. And so there shouldn't be any any, differing opinions over what those decisions were. You can't have a faulty memory when it's written down in the minutes because that is that is the act. The board has approved those minutes, and that is what happened according to the board.

What we call a dysfunctional board that treats executives like they're undergoing inquisition, again, it's a difficult one. Like, it comes down to probably training ongoing training for those directors in the board and approaching it for the board as a whole so that you're not singling out any individuals, giving them that kind of that governance



training, potentially, some, you know, psychological training around how to be self aware, how to be aware of your behavior and how that impacts others.

Having an understanding of how a board should be operating, what good governance looks like is a good starting point.

I think there's a challenge there too in the comment that the chair's been briefed, but the no behaviors are changing.

And and sometimes it can be that the chair is not taking any action and is is, not addressing the culture issues or the behavioral issues that might be within the board.

And and I, you know, really think that directors need to to have an awareness of the impact of the culture and the relationships that are happening and address it and raise those issues, when there is dysfunction within the board. Julie, what are your thoughts on that, on how to address it? When it may be the chair who is not addressing the issues.

It might be or it might be the chair who's attempting to address the issues and the director is refusing.

And it's very hard. You know, we we sign up to codes of conduct when we're joining the board.

Oh actually I do know a couple of directors who've refused to because they've said no I won't be bound by that, but still joined the board.



But as a chair if you've got a director that you cannot influence and on a board, you should all be able to influence everyone else and you should all be willing to have everyone else influence you.

That's that balance. But if you've got someone who's not playing that game, who's going it's my way or the highway, yeah, I hear what you say about the code of conduct, but I'm different. I don't have to comply.

You actually have to grow a backbone and threaten to remove them. And if that doesn't work, then you have to carry out your threat. Because if you make a threat and don't carry it out, you're never gonna influence them again.

Well, what you've done is just endorsed their behavior.

If you're not prepared to address it, you're not prepared to to manage it or carry through with consequences that, are appropriate, then you're actually endorsing that behavior and sending the message to everyone else that that's okay.

And what it creates is this environment where we see this lack of trust. The executives may be then hesitant to share information. There's a fear of reprisal.

Issues may not be escalated, so risks could be understated or missed completely, and it it compromises the execution of of strategy. So I think there's there's a whole lot there that, that that, you know, necessitates the the relationship a good relationship between the board, the CEO, and the executives, for information flow and and and risk management and and strategic execution.



Another question here is around how is the specific legislation in Australia around psychosocial risks impacted boards? In New Zealand, we don't have this. There's still a huge lack of understanding of boards around what psychosocial risk management is and their responsibilities.

So so my comment on on that is there's a there's an increasing awareness.

There's not been a lot of test case at test cases or tests of the the legislation.

At this stage, I think once it starts to be challenged legally, we will see a lot more boards pay attention.

But I think there's certainly a greater awareness and and understanding, and it's certainly starting a conversation.

So having it in the legislation, and a lot of, awareness raising around it is starting to have an impact, but a lot of boards don't understand what that proactive duty is, and how how their what level of risk and responsibility they have.

Denica or Julie, any comments on Yeah.

Just from a New Zealand perspective on that point, the Health and Safety at Work Act does state that as a PCBU, there is a responsibility to provide safe environments for, employees, and that includes mental health and well-being, safety, not just physical safety. So it kinda comes under that umbrella.

It's difficult. I mean, I'm in Australia. In theory, that law covers all of the boards I'm on. In practice on one of them, we had a very interesting conversation about what's the difference between a psychosocial injury report and a staff grievance report.

And none of us could answer, and neither could our lawyer. But I think the main thing is to really be thinking that people have emotional health and mental health as well as physical health. And if you're on a board, you're responsible for all three.

Absolutely. And I think there's, it it's, it's certainly you know, we we've everyone's aware of their responsibilities for physical safety, and, there are so many other impacts on, psychological safety. So it's very unlikely that you'll have a physical injury without also having a psychological impact or injury, but there are so many other hazards, psychosocial hazards, psychosocial hazards, that I think, that there's there's starting to become an awareness of, but it's really not there yet. A lot of work to be done in that space. Another question here is how do you manage poor behavior of directors at a board meeting? So this is within the board, not with executives. Disrespectful language using the f bomb, passive aggressive comments.

Wow. So for me, this is this is around the clarity of expectations. What standards are we prepared to accept? The chair, assuming that's not the chair, the chair should be taking control of that situation.

You have things like a code of conduct. You have values, organization values. They are there to be able to help set the boundaries and and, set expectations of of what is acceptable, and so need to to use those as well.

I'll keep moving through the questions. How to connect and understand each other's perspectives with the majority, of online board meetings? So this comes up a lot. We can't establish a great board culture if we're not face to face in the room.

Julie, I'm interested in your thoughts on that.

It's hard. I mean, they've done the neuroscience.

They've wired people's brains, and they proved that different things light up when we're with other people physically than when we look at other people on the screen. I notice I feel it myself that when I'm on the screen, I have to make an effort. I mean, you probably think I'm I'm deeply contributative, but I have to make an effort because my instinctive reaction to a screen is to sit back and watch.

And that's not what I'm there for. But I think you need to build in time. You need to have those sidebar conversations. You need to interact as people because otherwise, you're never never going to develop the teamwork you need. And, you know, when things go wrong and you need teamwork, it's too late to build the team. You've gotta have the team when everything's going well, so that you can pull through adversity.

Yeah. Absolutely.

I think you need to make the most of those opportunities that you have where you are together.

You know, you might have a once a year board meeting in person. You should add on a a dinner for directors. Or if that's too exhausting



because your board meeting's eight hours long, then potentially a lunch the next day or a dinner the night before, like, actually really put some effort in to create that time to be able to connect outside the boardroom together.

Yeah. Absolutely. I think we'll flick onto the last, slide, Sean. I know there's still quite a few questions. I'm happy to answer those offline, and, and come back to everyone.

Just sort of just sum up really, when you're looking at the culture in the boardroom and how do you cultivate a culture for effectiveness and impact, you need to assess where things are falling down, identify the issues, and then cultivate these relationships, rebuild trust, provide the opportunities for connection and interaction.

Or you need to redesign what are our expectations. Let's start again. This isn't working. So being intentional, having the clarity of expectations, making sure everyone's aligned, building trust, and certainly creating a psychologically safe environment.

Danica, anything to to add on, any other insights on creating a positive board culture?

Yeah. I think just reiterating what we've already said, you know, you need to work to build trust. You need that collegiality. You need to recognize that you're a team and that as a board, you are making, decisions together as well as a single entity. It's not individuals coming to each meeting with their own agendas. You're coming to to have generative conversations to come to a mutual decision as a board.



I think, again, just a part of that building trust is around the in person meetings. It's about trying to do that and then also, having those governing documents to to start with and how you wanna go forward as a board.

And, you know, looking at evaluations, if you're not sure how things are going, then actually getting a board evaluation, getting someone external to come in and give you that feedback and give you some insight.

Yeah. Absolutely. Julie, any final comments?

Yeah. There's a a lovely quest comment in the chat about don't use online meetings as an excuse for dysfunction.

Not an excuse. There is no no excuse. It's a leadership role. If you've stepped into that leadership role, it's your duty to function.

But having said that, online, you have to make more effort.

Absolutely. Yeah.

If it's the chair that's causing the problem, individual directors, you're all jointly and severally liable, you have to stand up and, make your points and be heard and use your influence.

So I think having a culture where people feel that if they do this, even if the rest of the board doesn't support them, they'll still be part of the team is so important. And I just love that phrase from, I think it was Ronald Reagan, that when a good friend makes a bad mistake, the good friend is still a good friend and the bad mistake is still a bad mistake.



And if boards could get people, it would be beautiful.

Yep. Fantastic. Look.

I will leave it there, but I will, answer those, questions that are that are in the chat, offline.

Thanks, Sean.

Thanks, Georgia.

So thanks, everybody. You'll receive an email from me later today, which will, of course, will include a recording of today's session, the transcript, and the white paper.

So just as you leave the webinar, don't forget to complete our quick survey. It's only a one minute survey. Go in the draw to win our beautiful hamper.

We'll announce the winner of that this afternoon as well. So thank you again for your attendance. I hope you enjoyed the session with, Georgia, Danica, and Julie.

So thanks again, team, for your great conversation today. We look forward to seeing you all, everybody, at our next webinar. Have a great day.