

Why You Haven't Landed A Seat On A Board



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Being invited to serve on a board is a coveted position. It requires thought and planning to become a valued member of any board. It's not enough to assume that

you're qualified and ready. It's critical that you take smart steps to develop your resources and skills into assets that will showcase your credentials and position you for success. □ Last week's workshop at the NACD "Beyond Borders Convergence – 2016 Global Board Leader's Summit" focused on this very subject – Landing Your Next Board Seat. Here are the top six actionable ways that were highlighted by experts in this field during the workshop, to enhance your ability to land your next board seat.

1. Craft Your Reputation

Your reputation is a key differentiator and it is very important to ensure that your CV is accurate. For example, when I was vetting a candidate for a board, on her resume she listed herself as President of a large telecom company. After further examination, I realized that her title had no meaning as she was only President of a small business unit of 20 people. She became an automatic knock-out for not being truthful about her actual responsibilities. This mistake could have been avoided if she were up-front about her responsibilities on her resume and listed that she was president of only a small unit, not the entire firm.

Patricia Lenkov, Founder and President of Agility Executive Search LLC warned that during the vetting process, she looks at everything – including the chronological resume to understand any gaps and what was done each year. She conducts a detailed due diligence, talking to people you have worked with, teams

you have been on and what people think about you. If you want to get a seat on a board you must act ethically and respectfully every step of the way.

2. Personal Brand Management

As an executive, an integral part of landing your next board seat is all about positioning and managing your personal brand □ . Lee Stiegemeier, cofounder and Chief Verbal Artist, Circle Sideways, shared that in today's hyper-connected world, it precedes you everywhere you go as seen through three distinct views:

- **The traditional lens**, which consists of marketing assets often built inside the executive career. To prepare for multiple opportunities, be sure your document library includes a one-page biography with head shot, a one-to-two-page executive resume and a long, codified CV of your career accomplishments that assists in the interview and due diligence process for boards.

Recommended by Forbes

- **The digital lens**, which consists of your digital reputation and online presence. From your core social media profiles to your blog or other digitally published viewpoints, this lens must be manipulated and cleansed to accurately and effectively represent your actions, expertise, accomplishments and passion as they relate to potential board service.

- **The 360-degree lens**, which incorporates direct feedback from trusted advisors and colleagues who know you well and understand what you're hoping to achieve. This lens brings the positioning process full circle, providing you with the ammunition you need to make small tweaks that could have a tremendous impact on your search for a board seat.

3. Build A Plan

Janet Cowell, treasurer, North Carolina and director, ChannelAdvisor Corp., recommended to build a serious business plan that expressed your end objectives of getting onto a board. Achieving this goal is like any other business enterprise goal. It's not random. You need to determine which board you can add value to, which culture would you fit into and then figure out who can potentially serve to make an introduction. We all only have so many units of brain power, time and energy. So prioritize your plan around industries and the work you have a passion for.