



What makes a great director? Do they exist?



ACADEMY

# Jean Pousson



- Born and educated in Mauritius
- Worked for Barclays in South Africa
- Senior IoD and GTA Consultant
- Has NED experience
- Worked in over 32 countries
- Typically interfaces approx.600 directors in any given year and about 8 to 10 Boards

# Today



- What makes a good director
- Communication in the Boardroom
- Board Dynamics
- Why directors “fail”
- The hard decisions
- The NED
- Learning from COVID aftershocks

# Directors



- We advertise for directors and human beings turn up!
- Most directors are professionally and emotionally unprepared for their first appointment.
- Boards, like families, are dysfunctional. Its a question of how dysfunctional.

# IoD Director Competency Framework



# Exercising skills...



Six skills from the framework:

- Think strategically
- Analyse and use information
- Make decisions
- Communicate
- Lead
- Influence. How could you tell when you are being influenced?



# Communication



- With respect....
- Research has shown....
- When I was at...
- I think...
- I would rather have questions that cannot be answered than answers that cannot be questioned.



- Regulations are additive
- Laws invite avoidance, hence Governance
- The ethical is always more robust than the legal. Over time it is the legal that should converge to the ethical, never the other way around. R.Feynman
- ESG. An outpouring of confected virtue
- Why are ESG considerations now so much talked about?

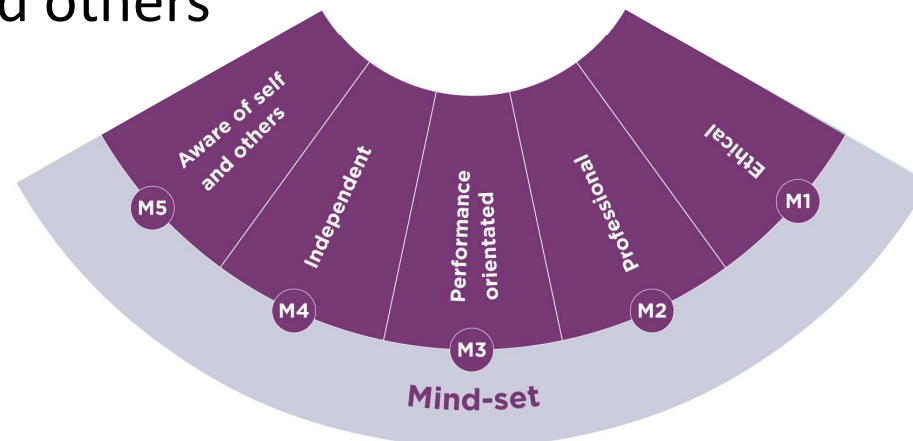


# ... and adopting the right mind-set



The best preparation starts with your mind-set:

- Being ethical
- Being professional
- Being performance orientated
- Being independent
- Being aware of yourself and others



# When ethics and business collide



- Boards can be uncomfortable places
- Should the BBC have fired Jeremy Clarkson?
- Why did the European Super League proposal tank?
- Alison Horner. Tesco and Carillion. What would you do?

# Board Dynamics



- Ultimate responsibility
- Culture
- Don't meet that often
- The virtual issue
- Power play(Organisational Charts lie!)
- Different voices. eg shareholders
- Dominance

# Why directors “fail”?



- No(poor) training, induction and development
- Remain operational. Derailment.
- Don't get the dynamics
- Stay in their lanes
- Bravado vs humility

# The perfect NED



- Gravitas, presence ,commercial nous etc...
- Experience is great as long as the future resembles the past.
- Challenges intelligently
- An independent mind like a jury member
- Curiosity. This should be a standard KPI
- Doesn't relive his/her executive career



- Velocity of risks. New risks. Business Model under attack.
- Continuity plans are there for a purpose
- Worst case can happen
- Innovate
- Learning Board
- There is no blueprint



# Thank you

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