

**Board Surveys**  
made easy.



INSTITUTE OF  
**COMMUNITY DIRECTORS**  
AUSTRALIA  
• Knowledge • Connections • Credentials

# Individual director and chair effectiveness: What it really takes

Presented by: Nicholas Barnett  
Executive Chair  
Board Surveys

Benchmarking Board Performance



# Why improve your director effectiveness?

---

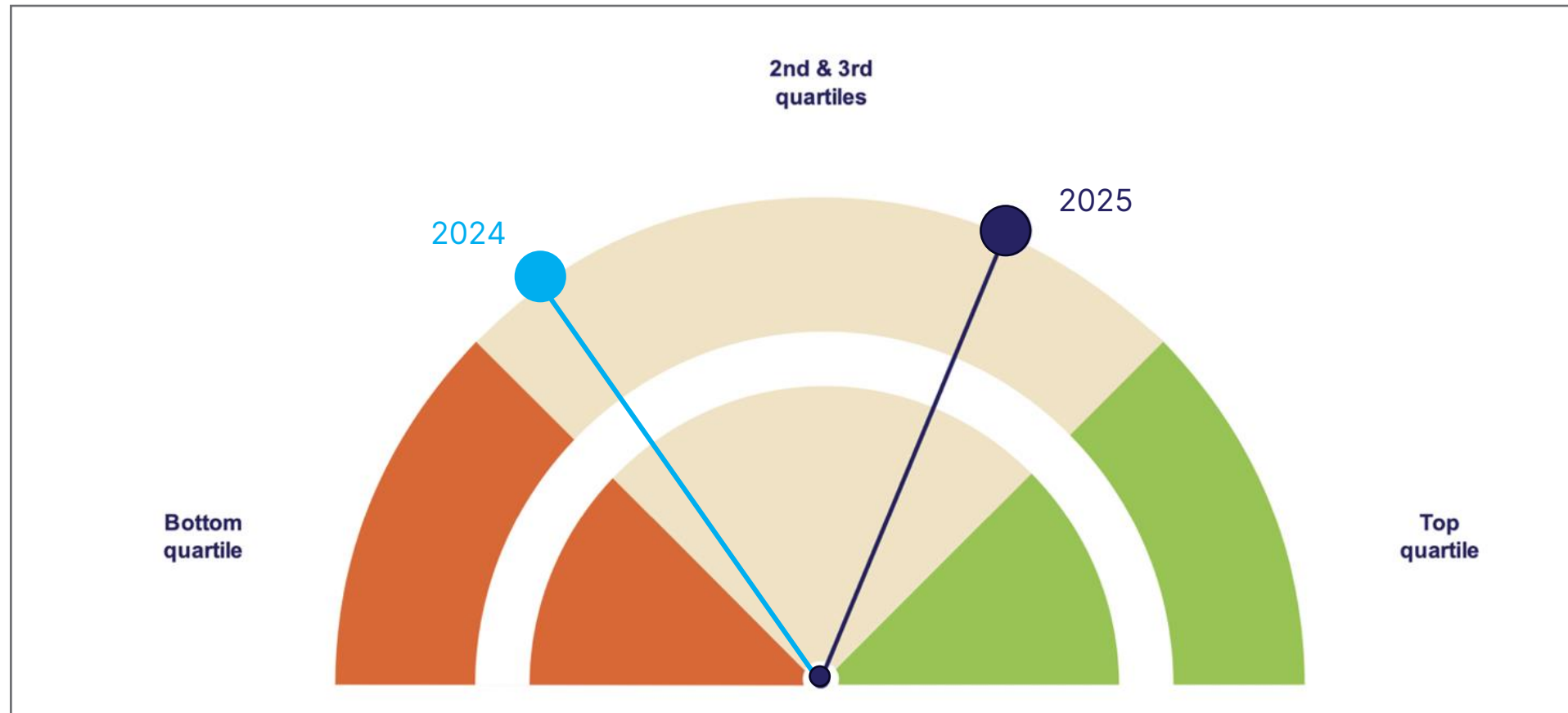
Better Directors: Better Boards

# Why improve board effectiveness?

---

Better Boards: Better Organisations

# Measure – determine gap – improve



# The 20 most important categories of a board's effectiveness



# Over 650 boards of all shapes and sizes are included in our comprehensive benchmark



# Our DRIVE framework of Director effectiveness

---

- D** = Direction (and strategy)
- R** = Relationships (and influence)
- I** = Insight (and contribution)
- V** = Values (and conduct)
- E** = Execution oversight

# DRIVE Framework

---

Based on effectiveness **inside the boardroom**

Includes judgement and ability to apply skills and experiences

Based on 24,000 comments from 1,250+ director reviews

Includes **What** directors do and **How** they behave

Not just about technical skills and governance know-how



# Your responses

Survey item	Ratings of me	Ratings of 3 others	Difference
Highly reliable (i.e., professional, measured and discrete) [Values]	6.0	5.5	0.5
Contributes meaningfully to strategic discussions [Direction]	6.0	5.3	0.7
Adds depth and rigour to discussions (i.e., not superficial) [Insight]	5.8	5.2	0.6
Is well-prepared and thoughtful in their contributions [Insight]	5.8	5.1	0.7
Builds constructive relationships with directors and management [Relationships]	5.8	5.1	0.7
Helps drive accountability, performance and strategy execution [Execution oversight]	5.7	5.1	0.6
Respects the boundary between oversight and management [Execution oversight]	5.6	5.4	0.2
Demonstrates sound commercial and strategic judgement [Direction]	5.5	5.3	0.3

# Greatest contributions to the board – from your comments

<b>D – Direction (and Strategy)</b>	Ability to shape and influence long-term success; includes strategic foresight and bringing clarity	36
<b>R – Relationships (and Influence)</b>	How directors interact with peers, management, and stakeholders; based on building trust, respecting boundaries, and emotional intelligence	33
<b>I – Insight (and Contribution)</b>	Preparedness, thoughtfulness, and value-added input; includes asking probing questions, synthesizing complex information, and bringing new perspectives	64
<b>V – Values (and Conduct)</b>	Modelling integrity, professionalism, humility, and composure; holding high ethical standards and building trust through reliability	32
<b>E – Execution Oversight</b>	Engaging with core fiduciary duties, monitoring risk, and providing performance oversight without blurring governance and management roles	62
<b>Total comments</b>		227

# Greatest areas for improvement – based on your comments

<b>Direction (and Strategy)</b>	Includes developing strategic foresight, focus on long-term goals supporting new strategies, industry engagement, and developing clear tasks within the director role.	11
<b>Relationships (and Influence)</b>	Improvement goals focus on building trust, enhancing collaboration through active listening, tolerating differing viewpoints, and improving communication with peers, the CEO, and stakeholders.	16
<b>Insight (and Contribution)</b>	The largest category - focused heavily on the need for preparedness, ongoing learning, and skill development in financial literacy, innovation and AI and contributing through probing questions.	24
<b>Values (and Conduct)</b>	This component addresses modelling professionalism, composure, and integrity, cutting down negativity and improving patience, developing self-belief, gravitas, and improving composure	15
<b>Execution oversight</b>	The primary theme was avoiding micromanagement and clearly understanding the difference between governance and management. Also, includes core financial rigour and strong oversight.	19
<b>Total comments</b>		<b>85</b>

# D = Direction and strategy – theme and personas

---

Theme: Does/fails to provide strategic foresight, challenge and long-term thinking.

Personas:

1. The micromanager VS. The architect
2. The puppet VS. The independent guide
3. The legacy guardian VS. The futurist
4. The short-termers VS. The steward
5. The handbrake VS. The catalyst

# R = Relationships and influence – theme and personas

---

Theme: Constructive/damaging interpersonal styles that build/erode board cohesion and trust.

Personas:

1. The ice king/queen VS. The connector
2. The backchanneler VS. The bridge builder
3. The echo seeker VS. The listener-leader
4. The monopoliser VS. The facilitator
5. The autocrat VS. The open debater

# I = Insight and contribution – your improvement suggestions

---

Theme: Deep/poor analytical engagement and deep/shallow board contributions.

Personas:

1. The surface skimmer VS. The synthesizer
2. The over-analyst VS. The insight curator
3. The parrot VS. The catalyst
4. The mute VS. The proactive contributor
5. The know-it-all VS. The curious expert

# V = Values and conduct – your improvement suggestions

---

Theme: Depth of character VS. ethical blind spots, ego-driven behaviour, or poor integrity alignment.

Personas:

1. The rule bender VS. The guardian
2. The reputation manager VS. The authentic leader
3. The moral crusader VS. The principled pragmatist
4. The reactor VS. The composed author
5. The tourist VS. The professional steward

# E = Execution oversight – theme and personas

---

Theme: Consistent/weak follow-through, strong/poor accountability, and clear/blurred governance boundaries.

Personas:

1. The operator VS. The boundary keeper
2. The rubber stamper VS. The challenger-steward
3. The firefighter VS. The sentinel
4. The fader VS. The finisher
5. The box ticker VS. The performance partner



# Other personas?

---

??

# Six (ANCHOR) attributes of an effective Chair

---

**A** = Agenda and alignment

**N** = Nurtures board culture

**C** = Composes and coaches the board

**H** = Horizon and strategic leadership

**O** = Oversight of performance and risk

**R** = Relationships and stakeholder influence

# What a board can do to improve director effectiveness

---

- Ongoing director feedback
- Performance, contribution and behaviours
- How as well as What contributed
- Regular formal director assessment
- Use a valid framework – e.g. DRIVE
- Constructive feedback loop
- Culture of rigour and openness
- Understand outsized impact

# 10 best ways to improve your board

---

1. Right composition and renewal
2. Look beyond profit to purpose and sustainability
3. Be strategic and add value
4. Set a high tone from the top
5. Clear board and executive role boundaries
6. Invest in good relationships and dynamics
7. Right committees – to support the work of the board
8. Effective board reporting and meeting management
9. Prioritise talent management and succession planning
10. Embed continuous improvement

# Some of ICDA's many training and development resources

---

- [Diploma of Governance](#)
- [Certified Community Director](#)
- [Online self-paced courses](#)
- [Advanced Leadership for Chairs](#)
- [NFP Leadership Certificate](#)
- [Financial Management for Community Boards](#)
- [Community Sector Chairs](#)
- [Community Sector Secretaries](#)
- [Community Sector Treasurers](#)
- [Social Enterprise Capacity Building](#)
- [Lunch and Learn Webinars & Workshops](#)

# Read our most popular insights and research

Visit [boardsurveys.com/insights](https://boardsurveys.com/insights)



## Elevating your board's performance in 2025

Board Survey's latest annual report draws on more than 600 board reviews and 1,250 director reviews to provide research, insights, tools and tips to help board chart a course for improvement in 2025.



## Golf Club Governance in Australia: 4 steps to better outcomes

This comprehensive study provides an in-depth analysis of the current state of governance across Australian golf clubs and offers practical recommendations for enhancing board performance and club sustainability.

Thank you  
Any questions?