

CEO board reporting check

Use this quick check when preparing reports for the board. It can help ensure reporting supports good governance discussion rather than operational updates.

1. Focus on what matters

Ask:

- Does the report highlight the most important developments since the last meeting?
- Does it relate to strategy, performance, or risk?

Avoid listing everything that occurred.

2. Provide insight, not just activity

Check whether the report explains:

- What happened
- Why it matters
- What the implications are for the organisation

Directors should not need to interpret the significance themselves.

3. Highlight what changed

Include:

- decisions made
- adjustments to plans or priorities
- new risks or opportunities identified

This helps the board understand movement and progress.

4. Link to strategy

Ensure the report connects developments to the organisation's strategic priorities.

For example:

- Which strategic goal does this relate to?
- Does it affect progress toward a key outcome?

5. Flag issues needing board attention

Be clear about where board input or oversight is required. This might include:

- strategic decisions
- emerging risks
- reputational issues
- significant changes in direction

6. Keep operational detail limited

Operational detail should only be included when it:

- highlights a risk or issue
- explains a strategic implication
- requires board awareness or oversight

Final CEO prompt

Before submitting a report, ask:

- Will this help the board understand what matters most right now?
- Does it highlight meaning and implications, not just activity?
- Will it support a useful governance discussion?

If the answer is yes, the report is likely to be useful to the board.