

# Economics and Business Review

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## Aims and Scope

Economics and Business Review is the successor to the Poznań University of Economics Review which was published by the Poznań University of Economics and Business Press in 2001–2014. The Economics and Business Review is a quarterly journal focusing on theoretical and applied research work in the fields of economics, management and finance. The Review welcomes the submission of articles for publication dealing with micro, mezzo and macro issues. All texts are double-blind assessed by independent reviewers prior to acceptance.

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Richard LeBlanc (Ed.). 2016. *The handbook of board governance, a comprehensive guide for public private and not-for-profit board members*. Canada: John Wiley & Sons Inc. ISBN 978-11-1889-550-4

The book brings together the top concerns of boards around the world and while it is possible to debate some aspects presented by different authors, Richard has brought into one book some of the most controversial topics with a broad range of expertise. The 859-page book is divided into eight sections with an easy to follow appendix which is critical when faced with such a large volume of information.

Section I discusses the boards responsibilities and trends albeit before the world came face to face with populism, Brexit, and the concept of a CEO as the president of the USA. Many of the trends have great merit, but only if the warnings are heard. Throughout the book alarm bells are sounding, the hope is that the reader is listening. In the first section leadership is a key issue and the book provides some pragmatic suggestions on the leadership role of directors and the chair. Succession planning and some of the current tools but as in all areas of governance the director must always be looking to adapt as times change.

In the next section the reader travels through the thorny culture and behavioral issue of "What makes a Good Board?" That of course raises the question of what makes a good director and good chair. Using a combination of lessons learned from how not to run a board to what to do to improve individual board member participation. The four chapters in this section discuss topics from the individual to the board as a team.

Section III brings the reader to the heated topic of risk governance and some

of the methods and alternatives that are worthy of consideration. As the first three sections display this is more than just an accumulation of scholarly views the handbook is forming a story that flows from section to section.

Section IV brings the reader back to shareholder accountability and current issue of director's engagement, the book is not a set of solutions, instead it provides a combination of ideas for reflection. The issue of gender diversity is put forward with the Norway story of government intervention.

This theme of reflection continues into section V on performance, measurement and executive pay where Richard brings together a collection of scholars and executives to present not just a state of the nation, but rather a series of discussion papers that challenge some of the status quo concepts and looks at alternatives for improved performance.

By the time the reader gets to section VI they have realized that none of the sections are totally autonomous and that interrelationships exist between all the topics. Richard has cleverly combined authors and topics allowing certain themes to build from section to section. The topic of governance and information technology needs to be on the minds of all directors. The selected authors drive home the inadequacy of current boards in dealing with the technology issue. The authors drive home the critical level of attention needed by boards in this area.

It is fitting that the technology issue just precedes section VII on sustainabil-

ity of boards and the changing roles. This section has some short case situations that highlight the importance of understanding good governance in both behaviour and practise. Again, the reader is not given a set of solutions but rather options to consider going forward and the need for each board to determine their own Key Performance Indicators. Section VIII reviews the different forms of boards be they private, start-up, non-profit or in different parts of the world and some common themes and issues they face.

In conclusion, the book is not so much a handbook on how to do corporate governance as it is a thought document that should generate both discussion and action for boards in their quest to bring

greater effectiveness and efficiency to the board. The handbook brings together in one place a comprehensive selection of ideas and possibilities for current boards and boards of the future. Board members after reading the book should have more questions for their own boards on a range of topics from diversity to board education and composition. The effective director will see the handbook as the start of a journey and not the end. For each topic covered much more needs to be explored. The book covers many issues but there is lots of room for volume II as corporations tackle the issues of governance 2017 and beyond.

*Gary L. Evans*

University of Prince Edward Island Canada



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