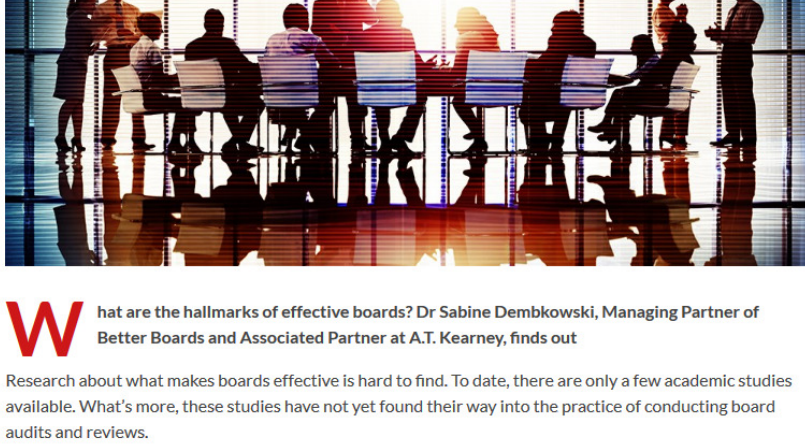


[+](#) [SHARE](#) [Blogs](#)

The art and science of creating effective boards

Post on: Apr 28, 2017 | [Dr Sabine Dembkowski](#) | [Comment](#)



What are the hallmarks of effective boards? Dr Sabine Dembkowski, Managing Partner of Better Boards and Associated Partner at A.T. Kearney, finds out

Research about what makes boards effective is hard to find. To date, there are only a few academic studies available. What's more, these studies have not yet found their way into the practice of conducting board audits and reviews.

From this research, it's becoming clear there are seven hallmarks of great boards. Board members can benefit by understanding the hallmarks and incorporating them in their practices in the boardroom.

1: The right composition of know-how and behaviours

Diversity of people breeds diversity of thought – this is essential for long-term board success. However, we found that the current focus on gender cuts the conversation short. The issue is far more than gender!

It's crucial to understand how different areas of expertise, preferred group roles, and personality styles fit together and complement each other.

Hallmark 2: Utilising the strengths of members for effective boards

It is vital that individual members of a board understand their personal strengths and areas of expertise. Boards will also perform better if each member has a keen understanding of how their strengths are perceived by their colleagues as well as the collective strengths of the group. Effective boards help individual members and the collective to understand their unique strengths and how they can be leveraged to implement and execute strategy and ensure lasting value.

Hallmark 3: Clarity about roles and responsibilities

Ill-defined roles and grey areas of responsibility are the norms rather than the exception on today's boards. The hallmark of an effective board is to have absolute clarity and transparency of roles and responsibilities.

Hallmark 4: Share a vision

Effective boards have a clear and common vision that provides orientation and guidance. Most boards would state at the outset that they are of a shared vision. More often than not I find the devil is in the detail and behind the facade there's less alignment around the vision than the chairman and some board members would like to believe.

Hallmark 5: Ability to resolve conflict between board and management

Effective executive boards and their members understand how to **resolve conflicts** between the board and the next management level. Clarity about who on the board has good conflict management skills, and agreement of the issues that he/she should take ownership of, can help to resolve issues.

Hallmark 6: Solid structure and organisation

The organisation of the executive board's work depends fundamentally on the Company Secretary and the interplay between chairman and CEO. Effective boards understand how to organise and structure their work.

Hallmark 7: Regular reviews and reflections

Regular time-out where board members can connect, leaving daily work behind them and reflecting on how they have worked together, are critical for success.

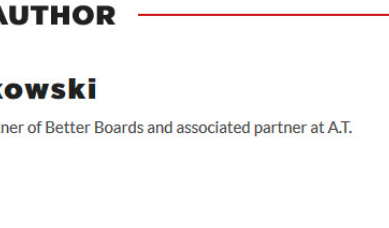
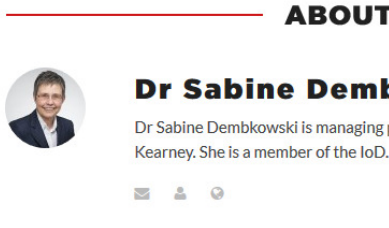
The seven hallmarks of effective boards are a good starting point combining the art with the science of effective boards. If they are properly applied, a chairman can gain great insights into how they can better orchestrate the board, while CEOs, executives and NEDs can gain insights into how to increase their level of impact, become more effective, and advance their board career.

Read more here

Dr Sabine Dembkowski is a member of the IoD

Tags: [art](#) [Board](#) [Boardroom](#) [Members](#) [science](#) [Vision](#)

[+](#) [SHARE](#) [Blogs](#)



ABOUT AUTHOR

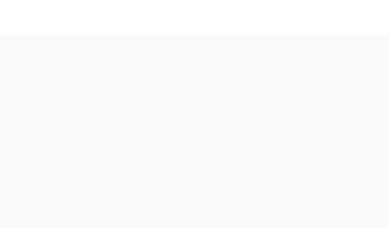
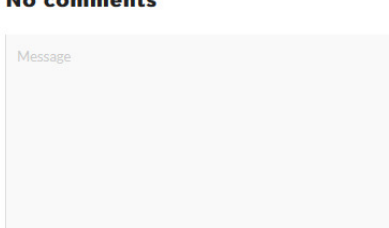


Dr Sabine Dembkowski

Dr Sabine Dembkowski is managing partner of Better Boards and associated partner at A.T. Kearney. She is a member of the IoD.



RELATED ARTICLES



No comments

Message

Name... Email... Website...

[SEND](#)

☐ I'm not a robot

☐ Notify me of follow-up comments by email.

☐ Notify me of new posts by email.

Need to know how auto-enrolment will affect your business?

Go to [director.co.uk/financialplanning](#)

[Learn more](#)

In association with **SCOTTISH WIDOWS**

TRENDING

- Meet the entrepreneurs who quit their day jobs to launch School Lettings Solutions**

Apr 18, 2017
- Learn from Kim Kardashian? Yes we Kanye**

Apr 18, 2017
- Vodafone enterprise director Phil Mottam: Three keys to closing the UK productivity gap**

Apr 18, 2017
- The ultimate Disney holiday: Walt Disney World combined with a Disney cruise to the Bahamas**

Apr 13, 2017
- Chartered director Jason Wouhra's strategy to turn East End Foods into a £1bn powerhouse**

Apr 11, 2017
- How to write the perfect CV**

Apr 6, 2017
- Kennedy City Bicycles – the British urban bike manufacturer**

Apr 3, 2017
- Brexit negotiations: what are the options for UK business?**

Mar 28, 2017
- The future of workplace environments**

Mar 24, 2017
- Doing business in Ghana**

Mar 15, 2017
- Genesis Publishing's sibling directors talk growth**

Mar 13, 2017
- Product design consultancy Design Reality making waves far beyond its north Wales home**

Mar 9, 2017
- Lausanne travel guide: cosmopolitan buzz and small-city cosiness in Switzerland**

Mar 3, 2017
- Strategic business planning 2017: 10 actions for directors**

Mar 1, 2017
- Former Red Arrows executive director on how YOU can build a high-performance team**

Feb 10, 2017
- Ronan Harris, Google MD, on why SMEs are close to his heart**

Feb 6, 2017
- Ogilvy & Mather Group's executive partners**

Jan 17, 2017
- OutfoOffice.com entrepreneur Darren Burn seeks rapid expansion of LGBT-friendly travel brand**

Nov 21, 2016
- Cathay Pacific: LGW to HKG flight review**

Nov 10, 2016
- Peninsula Hong Kong review + what to see and do in Hong Kong**

Nov 10, 2016
- A healthy outlook at Randox**

Nov 4, 2016
- Meet Britain's cycling entrepreneurs**

Jun 12, 2015

FINANCIAL PLANNING

The latest stories from our financial planning hub

In association with **SCOTTISH WIDOWS**

- Business transformation beyond the digital**

Apr 27, 2017
- Pension companies still charging switch fees**

Apr 26, 2017
- Maternity leave: talking to your employees about pensions**

Apr 25, 2017

Need to know how auto-enrolment will affect your business?

Go to [director.co.uk/financialplanning](#)

[Learn more](#)

In association with **SCOTTISH WIDOWS**

LATEST STORIES

- Bastide Provençal: exploring Brigitte Bardot's old home**

Apr 29, 2017
- How to motivate talent in times of fast business growth**

Apr 28, 2017
- Innovate or sustain? Why savvy digital age businesses do both**

Apr 28, 2017
- The art and science of creating effective boards**

Apr 28, 2017
- "Starchitect" Sir David Adiyee on the cover of May's Director magazine**

Apr 28, 2017

INSPIRING BUSINESS

WITH THE IOD

- New! World First teams up with the IoD**

Apr 12, 2017
- New! The Enterprising Women's Initiative**

Mar 1, 2017
- How the IoD can help older entrepreneurs**

Feb 21, 2017
- How to become a non-executive director**

Feb 8, 2017
- In-company training tailored to your business**

Jan 18, 2017
- IoD 99: Growing the next generation of entrepreneurs**

Jan 11, 2017

COVER STORY

- Chartered director Jason Wouhra's strategy to turn East End Foods into a £1bn powerhouse**

Apr 11, 2017
- Sarah Brown on politics, public speaking and her new campaign for gender equality**

Mar 6, 2017
- Ronan Harris, Google MD, on why SMEs are close to his heart**

Feb 6, 2017
- Meet the IoD's new director general Stephen Martin**

Dec 29, 2016
- Dame Stephanie Shirley: 'First-generation immigrants are wealth creators'**

Oct 21, 2016
- Mike Adams – the chief executive changing the conversation on disability**

Oct 11, 2016
- Metro Bank founder Vernon Hill on strategy, fans, disruption and Brexit**

Sep 15, 2016
- Sir Ben Ainslie on business and his bid to win Britain's first America's Cup**

Jul 15, 2016
- Nicholas Coleridge, president, Condé Nast International**

Jun 15, 2016
- The Black Farmer founder Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones**

May 13, 2016
- Sacha Romanovitch – the Grant Thornton CEO on making the UK economy vibrant**

Apr 4, 2016
- Dermalogica founder Jane Wurwand on successful entrepreneurship**

Mar 7, 2016
- Professor Brian Cox shares winning formula for UK business growth**

Feb 5, 2016
- Global Radio chairman Lord Allen on Brexit, boardrooms and the BBC**

Jan 5, 2016
- The business of Bond**

Oct 26, 2015
- Margaret Casely-Hayford: The ActionAid UK chair talks talent, diversity and building a great company culture**

Oct 1, 2015
- Anya Hindmarch: The handbag entrepreneur on international business, brand Britain and Margaret Thatcher**

Sep 2, 2015
- Darren Childs, chief executive of UKTV**

Jun 15, 2015
- Gerry McGovern, chief creative officer of Land Rover**

May 11, 2015
- Lady Barbara Judge is named the IoD's first female chair**

Apr 8, 2015

ADVERTORIAL

- Mastering the art of travel**

Feb 1, 2017

