



# JOINING A BOARD: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

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# Board or Committee Application Cover Letter

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This template is a guide for the creation of your cover letter. You're welcome to use the key elements in any order that best suits your authentic self.

NAME  
EMAIL ADDRESS  
MOBILE NUMBER  
LINKEDIN LINK

DATE

Dear NAME,

An opening line about the role you are applying for and any relevant information required such as application identification number - POSITION / ORGANISATION

A summary of WHY you are applying for the role.

*For example - as a parent of a daughter who participates as a member of your club I see both the physical and mental benefits she receives, this inspires me to want to give back to other parents and encourage participation.*

If the position has a list of specific skills or list of the requirements; speak to each requirement and how you align.

- You are presenting your value not your past experience
- You don't have to align to every requirement, speak to the ones that you do.

*If you align to only one or a few apply anyway - you do not know which of the requirements is a priority and which is a 'good to have' you may match one of their key requirements without knowing it.*

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*For example: I offer extensive experience in the listed requirement of stakeholder management due to my work with X where as part of the X committee we contributed to a turnaround in stakeholder engagement.*

- Use 'I' when you need to speak to what you specifically bring and 'we' when you are part of a team. Too many 'I' and people will wonder if you can work in a team and too many 'we' and they wonder if you can deliver what you offer.

If the position doesn't list a specific value or skill that you offer that's ok, you can still speak to what you offer totally.

*For example: as a member of the club I can offer this committee not only understanding as a parent but also my ability to define strategic objectives into actionable goals.*

- What value do you offer both personally and professionally - Think of it like this - there are a lot of people in the workforce that have a job like yours, what makes you right for this role outside of your role - what value do you bring to the committee or board.





Closing statement - you may have space to include an additional 'why' or you may choose to end with a 'I look forward to hearing from you.'

Kind regards

NAME



# DO NOT

-  Include your working title that you will have listed in your CV
-  Include links to your social media accounts if they are not business accounts - you may be asked for links at another stage in the interview process.
-  Be overall critical of the current system or person instead focus on what you offer
-  Be the person that becomes all about you and your ideas - check your ego at the door



# Board Cover Letter Template

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This template is a guide for the creation of your cover letter. You're welcome to use the key elements in any order that best suits your authentic self.

***This CV is not the same as your work CV.  
You need a different one for Committee or Board roles.***

**\*\*\*PROCEED TO NEXT PAGE FOR THE TEMPLATE\*\*\***





NAME

PHONE

EMAIL

**3 KEY VALUES EG: Strategic Insight | Organisation | Coach | Creative Thinking**

Summary of who you are **NOT WHAT YOU HAVE DONE**

You can include a sentence about you personally, something that will provide a sense of who you are and a way for the reader to connect with you - for example: *In my spare time I enjoy being outdoors including camping with my family.*

LINKEDIN Link

**Current Governance Board, Committee & Director Positions**

Position - Company - Month, Year

**Core Strengths**

Bullet Point your core strengths - again these are NOT roles they are the value you provide.

- Core Strength 1
- Core Strength 2
- Core Strength 3

**Executive Experience**

CURRENT

*Current Director roles presented on previous page*

POSITION	COMPANY	DATE



PAST

POSITION	COMPANY	DATE

Roles beyond 2010 available upon request & Referees available upon request

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**Professional Memberships**

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You can adjust this membership section to align with the role you are applying for ie: if it's a sport and you are a member of a club, if it is a NFP and you have a membership that you would like to declare. If you have no relevant membership then exclude this area.

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**Education**

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Keep this area very small UNLESS specifically relevant to the role. Some companies have a number of certification programs for employees if you have a number of these certifications then rather than listing them all (unless they are highly specific to the role you are applying for) you can group them as eg: 6 Certifications from COMPANY X relating to my role as Y.

In collaboration with Rare Birds Mentor Lab



# Board Consideration Checklist

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Due Diligence or doing your research is an important part of accepting a role on a board.

Once you accept a role whether it be as a Director or Non-Executive Director you are legally bound.

# THE ORGANISATION

## CONSTITUTION

What specifics do you need to know

## STANDING & REPUTATION

Have there been any serious issues in the past - how were they dealt with

## HISTORY







- Read at least 2 annual reports, newsletters, media releases and website information and social media
- Who are the stakeholders or members, Are they happy or are their issues you are finding

- Based on the annual reports and any other financial information you have is the company financially stable
  - Where does the core funding come from and is that stable?
  - Is the company is a growth phase

- Who is in the management team
  - What are their skills, qualifications and reputation



# REPORTING & PERFORMANCE

-  Do the annual reports show external auditor results if not can you access these reports
-  Are your organisation obligations to relevant legal requirements up to date ie: PAYG, SGC, ATO, ACNC, ASIC
-  Current cash position - is this trending in the right direction and does it align with operating policies
-  Is there a cash flow forecast and how is this monitored and managed
-  Is there or has there been any financial distress
-  Is the current budget on track against actuals

# THE BOARD

- Is the board made up of different types of roles ie: Elected or Appointed Directors, Director and or Non Executive Directors
  - *How independent is the board*
  
- Who are the Directors
  - *What are their skills and experience*
  - *How were they selected ie: skills matrix*
  - *How long have they served*
  - *Have you met them*
  - *Do their skills match the strategy*
  
- What board committees exist and who serves on which committees
  
- What are the board's governance and risk policies
  
- What time commitment is required (always add another 2-3 hours so that you have a clear understanding of your time commitment)
  
- What does the board offer to assist directors in performing their duties
  - Professional and or development training
  - Induction Process
  - Remuneration and or reimbursement of expenses
  
- What is the working relationship like with management
  - How do the Chair and CEO work together



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- > Will your skills, knowledge and experience assist
- > Do you support the direction
- > Are the aims achievable
- > Does the organisation know the journey it is on

## LEGAL CONSIDERATION

- ✔ Do you have a letter of offer or documentation that includes;
  - the Term of your appointment
  - Board charter or other relevant behaviour and expectations
  - Time and attendance requirements
- ✔ What are the indemnity and insurance provisions (Read the policy and understand what it means to you - get advice if unclear - as a Director or Non-Executive Director you have legal obligations)
  - What if any legal exposures might you personally face
- ✔ What is the legal structure of the organisation
  - Is there any historical charges you need to be aware of
  - Does the organisation comply with all legal requirements
  - Are there any legal matters currently active
- ✔ Is there a shareholding qualification or other legal requirement in the constitution to fulfil before accepting or being accepted in the role

# YOU

- Why do you want this position
- What do you want to get out of this position
- What do you offer this organisation / how will you support their direction
- Do you want your name associated with this organisation
- Are you comfortable being associated with the other directors
- Does the Chair's view of your skills and value match yours
- Do you have any conflicts of interest





Conducting due diligence will ensure you have sufficient information on the possible risk in terms of personal financial liability and any potential reputational damage. This is important not only because you want to deliver results but also for legal reasons.

*Under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), directors are liable for decisions and actions taken during their term of office. Technically, a director new to the board will not be responsible for decisions made prior to joining. However, problems that may arise in the future from past decisions. If the current board, including you, does not respond with proper care and diligence, there may be legal repercussions.*

It is imperative to fully understand the organisation you are considering joining including their financial position, risk exposures and control processes prior to deciding to accept an offer. At any stage during your due diligence you may decide to withdraw your decision to proceed - this has to be done prior to your acceptance of the position.



## ABOUT THE MENTOR



# Heather Disher

A dual business owner, co-author, speaker, Board Chair, Director, Non-Executive Director. Mentor and committee member Heather has a wealth of knowledge that delivers strategic solutions tailored to unique challenges.

With a passion for supporting other business owners, **Disher Advisory Synergy** is a space where Heather can leverage and share her skills and experience in a formal way. She offers advisory, governance, and operational services. In **Alchemy Outsourcing**, Heather's team matches virtual assistants (VA's) to businesses, enhancing operational focus and efficiency.

Heather's openness to share while remaining curious about other perspectives ensures an interesting, energised and warm conversation.



[Heather Disher](#)



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