

Partner Spotlight Series:
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What are some developing issues your business thinks board directors should be prepared for?

- In the Silicon Valley and San Francisco Bay Area, technology companies are being fundamentally disrupted by and reinventing how they do business with generative artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), including ChatGPT. How are companies going to be ready to respond to more sophisticated phishing attacks, the potential to leak trade secrets, and potential intellectual property infringement that are implicated by the increased reliance on AI/ML technologies, some of which are scraping company data?
- Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues are firmly in the political crosshairs, with both political parties making compliance and noncompliance with ESG-friendly policies a litmus test for adhesion. Companies need to decide how they want to proceed while remaining committed to their core values.



- Cybersecurity risks, despite having been around a while, cannot be overstated. Threat actors continue to refine and elevate their tactics, and cyberattacks persist.

What are your top three tips for directors to ensure they are well-prepared for tomorrow's challenges?

- Directors should regularly ask questions about the state of the company's culture. Between remote work, generational shifts, and the rise of unionization, directors should be keenly aware of cultural shifts as they can foresee the challenges a business might face tomorrow.
- Beyond understanding the financial statements, directors should consider the greater economy, including geopolitical concerns, supply chain, export controls, intellectual property protection, interest rates, inflation, and unemployment rates.
- Be an active member of the National Association of Corporate Directors. NACD remains the premier organization for directors. It provides tremendous resources to its members.

What are three ways your business can provide value for board directors?

- We provide training and education when needed to help board members understand new trends, regulatory changes, and other developments as they arise.
- We provide regular legal, regulatory, market, and business updates for general public consumption on matters of board interest.
- We host regular events where directors can meet each other as well as promising companies and investors who can propel them forward into new opportunities.

What's your favorite business podcast or book?

- There are plenty of great business podcasts and books. If you want to be inspired, read *The Pilgrimage*, by Paulo Coelho (originally published in 1987).

What's your favorite way to foster meaningful connections with others?

- I try to spend time to really get to know a person and their goals, and then help them realize those goals. Everyone needs someone in their corner cheering them along, and I do what I can to help people find success.

Who is your favorite character on Succession and why?

- They are all fairly unlikeable in their own way, but Gerri Kellman seemed to try her best to stay focused on the best interests of Waystar Royco. With the Roy family dynamics seeping into nearly every business transaction, that is no small feat.

What does your ideal day look like when you're not working?

- I genuinely love what I do, so I find I work at least a little bit every day. Helping my clients succeed in their endeavors is extremely rewarding. I am grateful for the love and support of my family and friends, so any time I spend with them always makes for a great day.

Other Learnings To Share

- Ask management to include the whole team in operational reviews before the board, and get to know senior executives, particularly those poised to transition into a C-suite role as part of the succession plan.
- Businesses should be transparent about why each director was selected for the board. A director should know the value and perspective that the business expects they will bring to the table.