

WGOB E-GUIDE

HOW TO NETWORK YOUR WAY ONTO A BOARD



WGOB E-Guides provide tips for your board journey, empowering you with the confidence and courage to lead and serve on corporate boards.

DID YOU KNOW THE POWER OF CONNECTION CAN BE A ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE PATHS TO ACCOMPLISHING YOUR GOALS IN BUSINESS AND BEYOND? SPECIFICALLY, THE PATH TO SUCCESS IS AUTHENTIC CONNECTION WITH PEOPLE IN YOUR NETWORK. HOWEVER, THE VERY IDEA OF NETWORKING AND CONNECTION CAN BE INTIMIDATING.

YOU CAN GENERATE CONTACTS IN TWO MAJOR WAYS: ONLINE AND AT EVENTS. WHETHER YOU MEET ONLINE OR IN-PERSON, IT'S EASIER TO SECURE A MEETING WITH SOMEONE IF YOU HAVE A WARM INTRODUCTION FROM A MUTUAL CONNECTION. THE MORE NETWORKING YOU DO, THE EASIER IT WILL BE TO GET CONNECTED TO MORE HIGH-VALUE CONTACTS.

1. ONLINE

SINCE THE SHIFT TO REMOTE WORK, IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER TO INVEST IN YOUR ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORK. USE LINKEDIN AND TWITTER TO IDENTIFY PEOPLE YOU THINK CAN HELP YOU DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS AND ASK THEM FOR A VIDEO CHAT TO DISCUSS THEIR CAREERS AND GET ADVICE. WHEN ASKING FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS, MAKE SURE YOU ARE SPECIFIC ABOUT WHY YOU WANT TO MEET. ALSO, BE SURE TO ENGAGE WITH THEIR SOCIAL POSTS AND ARTICLES THROUGH COMMENTS AND LIKES. OTHER WAYS TO GENERATE CONTACTS ONLINE INCLUDE ATTENDING RELEVANT WEBINARS, PARTICIPATING IN VIRTUAL NETWORKING EVENTS AND BEING ACTIVE IN YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE.

2. AT EVENTS (IN-PERSON OR VIRTUAL)

AT IN-PERSON OR VIRTUAL EVENTS, ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO STAND OUT IS TO ASK RELEVANT AND WELL-RESEARCHED QUESTIONS. PEOPLE LOVE TO ENGAGE ABOUT THEIR EXPERTISE, PLUS YOU STAND TO LEARN SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T KNOW BEFORE. YOU CAN ALSO REACH OUT VIA EMAIL OR LINKEDIN TO THE SPEAKERS BEFORE OR AFTER AN EVENT.

ONCE YOU'VE BUILT YOUR NETWORK, YOU CAN MAKE DIRECT ASKS SUCH AS, "I'M LOOKING FOR A CORPORATE BOARD TO WHICH I COULD ADD VALUE." BE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE TYPE OF CORPORATE BOARD YOU ARE LOOKING FOR. EVENTUALLY, ALL YOUR NETWORKING WILL PAY OFF AND YOU WILL BEGIN BUILDING A STRONG REFERRAL BASE FOR BOARD OPPORTUNITIES.

NETWORK MAPPING YOUR WAY ONTO A BOARD

AFTER IDENTIFYING A BOARD OPPORTUNITY, YOU CAN INCREASE YOUR PROBABILITY OF GETTING BOARD INTERVIEWS BY EMPLOYING A TECHNIQUE CALLED NETWORK MAPPING. THE KEY IS TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE EXISTING MEMBERS OF THE BOARD YOU WOULD LIKE TO SERVE ON AND IDENTIFY IF THERE IS ANYONE IN YOUR NETWORK WHO CAN MAKE AN INTRODUCTION. THE MORE CONNECTIONS YOU HAVE, THE EASIER IT WILL BE FOR THE BOARD TO DETERMINE IF YOU ARE THE RIGHT FIT.

YOU CAN READ MORE ABOUT NETWORK MAPPING IN DEBORAH ROSATI'S BLOG POST [NETWORK MAPPING YOUR WAY ONTO A BOARD](#). FOR ADDITIONAL ADVICE ON NETWORKING, WE ALSO RECOMMEND [THIS ARTICLE FROM WOMEN'S AGENDA, FIVE TIPS FOR NETWORKING YOUR WAY TO A BOARD CAREER](#).