

WGOB E-GUIDE

WRITING A BOARD COVER LETTER



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

HOW CAN YOU STAND OUT WHEN YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A BOARD OPPORTUNITY?

AFTER YOU **DEVELOP A STANDOUT BOARD RESUME**, THE MAGIC IS IN YOUR BOARD COVER LETTER, WHICH IS A PERSONAL STATEMENT OF THE VALUE YOU BRING TO THAT BOARD. BEFORE YOU BEGIN WRITING, REMEMBER TO READ THE BOARD POSITION SPECIFICATION (BOARD BRIEFING) TO ENSURE YOU'RE ADDRESSING THE KEY SKILLS/CRITERIA THE BOARD IS REQUESTING.

NEXT, USE THESE FIVE TIPS TO HELP YOUR BOARD COVER LETTER STAND OUT IN A VERY COMPETITIVE MARKETPLACE:

1. BE CONCISE

YOUR LETTER SHOULD BE ONE PAGE. THE FIRST PARAGRAPH IS AN INTRODUCTION, DESCRIBING WHY YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE BOARD OPPORTUNITY. THE SECOND PARAGRAPH EXPANDS ON THE VALUE YOU BRING TO THE BOARD, I.E., YOUR BOARD PROFILE (THE SKILLS/EXPERTISE/DIVERSE REPRESENTATION AND RELEVANT EXPERIENCES FROM WHICH THE COMPANY WOULD BENEFIT). THE THIRD PARAGRAPH EXPLORES HOW YOU WILL SHOW UP IN THE BOARDROOM. FINALLY, END WITH A CLOSING STATEMENT THAT SUMMARIZES HOW AND WHY YOU WILL MAKE AN IMPACT ON THE BOARD (WE SUGGEST REFERRING TO **HELLE BANK JORGENSEN' STEWARDS OF THE FUTURE** FOR INSPIRATION).

2. BE COMPELLING

TO STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD, **MAKE YOUR BOARD PROFILE COMPELLING BY INCLUDING UNIQUE DETAILS**. ADD A QUOTE FROM A CURRENT OR PAST BOARD COLLEAGUE THAT HIGHLIGHTS YOUR SUPERPOWERS. MENTION AWARDS THAT HIGHLIGHT YOUR RELEVANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS. INCLUDE A PIECE OF YOUR THOUGHT LEADERSHIP THAT ALIGNS WITH THE COMPANY'S PURPOSE.

3. BE CREATIVE

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A GRAPHIC DESIGNER BUT CONSIDER USING A TEMPLATE TO MAKE YOUR COVER LETTER EASY TO READ. USE A TABLE TO HIGHLIGHT THE SKILLS YOU HAVE THAT MATCH THE BOARD POSITION'S SPECIFICATIONS. FOR IDEAS AND INSPIRATION, **REVIEW THESE SAMPLE COVER LETTERS ON OUR WEBSITE**.

4. BE AUTHENTIC

AS OSCAR WILDE ONCE SAID, "BE YOURSELF; EVERYONE ELSE IS TAKEN." SHARE AN AUTHENTIC STORY ABOUT YOURSELF THAT ILLUSTRATES HOW YOU HAVE MADE AN IMPACT THAT IS RELEVANT TO THE BOARD POSITION'S SPECIFICATIONS.

5. BE CONFIDENT

USE AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENTS THAT YOU CAN QUANTIFY, NOT QUALIFY. DESCRIBE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF WHICH YOU ARE MOST PROUD AND SHOWCASE YOUR BOARD LEADERSHIP. FOR EXAMPLE, "I HAVE LED SPECIAL COMMITTEES ON M&A TRANSACTIONS VALUED AT OVER \$\$" OR "I HAVE LED A CEO SEARCH COMMITTEE."

WITH SO MUCH INTENSE COMPETITION FOR BOARD POSITIONS, A BOARD COVER LETTER CAN HELP YOU STAND OUT. REMEMBER, BE BOLD AND COMPELLING SO THEY HAVE NO REASON NOT TO OFFER YOU AN INTERVIEW.