



Institut sur la gouvernance
d'organisations privées et publiques

Competency Profile for Board Governors

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Pour une gouvernance créatrice de valeurs®

Background

A college Board of Governors is composed of 19 governors:

- 7 independent governors appointed by the Minister
- 2 independent governors appointed by the Board of Governors and selected from the alumni (3-year mandate)
- 2 ex-officio senior executives (DG and AC)
- 2 teachers elected by their peers (3-year mandate)
- 2 parents of students elected by their peers at a general meeting (2-year mandate)
- 1 member of the non-teaching professional staff, elected by their peers (3-year mandate)
- 1 member of the support staff of the college, elected by their peers (3-year mandate)
- 2 students appointed by their peers (one-year mandate)

The Board of Governors plays a key role in setting the strategic direction of the college and overseeing its management. Its governors, regardless of the authority or electoral college that elected them, are collectively and jointly accountable for its good governance.

The Board's mandate and the context in which it is to be fulfilled requires that governors have relevant and diversified competencies that enable them to individually and collectively discharge their duties successfully.

The diverse and complementary competencies and experience of a Board's governors are not only indicative of balanced governance but also serve the interests of both external and internal constituents.

For example, gender balance on the Board of Governors can be achieved and maintained if all the constituents, that is, all those who are responsible for electing or appointing governors, are aware of and strive to contribute to gender equality.

This document describes the competency that a college Board should seek and maintain in order to better fulfill its mission.

Principles

The skills and experience profile of Board members (other than the Director General and the Academic Dean) refers to a set of skills that candidates should have in order to properly fulfill their mandate as governors of the institution or members of a committee.

These capabilities are classified as follows:

- A. Member profile
- B. Board profile

The member profile consists of competencies and expertise that all governors possess.

The board profile consists of some of the capabilities the college is looking for to form a team of governors with skills from different professions and sectors.

Scope

The Board member profile applies to all members except the Chair and Director General, who should have different competency profiles given the nature of their responsibilities.

Member profile

Note: In this document, the expression “Board members” refers to members other than the Director General, Academic Dean and ex-officio members who were appointed to their position due to their management skills.

General Competency	Evaluation Criteria	Importance
Vision	View the organization with a medium- to long-term perspective. Members must therefore 1) understand the organization’s internal and external realities 2) read and decode the organization’s internal and external environment 3) grasp the issues and the impact of the policies and orientations on the organization 4) have an overview of situations and their consequences 5) draw connections between elements of the internal environment and external environment.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic thinking	The ability to recognize the issues facing the organization based on a good grasp of the political, economic and social context in which it operates. Members must therefore 1) have strategic roles 2) be able to anticipate the issues and their impact on the achievement of the organization’s mission 3) recognize and understand situations that may represent a risk for the organization 4) be vigilant in evaluating files submitted to the Board.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Independence of mind	The ability for free self-expression without considering one’s personal and corporate interests. Members must therefore 1) assume their responsibilities with diligence and professionalism 2) freely express their thoughts and ideas 3) form an opinion without bias or prejudice 4) avoid promoting or defending their own or their group’s interests.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Capacity for analysis and synthesis	The ability to understand, decode and interpret information from different sources, process the information and draw logical conclusions. Members must therefore 1) seek out and seize opportunities to obtain relevant information 2) quickly grasp the content of documents brought to their attention 3) get to the crux of the matter 4) synthesize the elements of a situation 5) consider and suggest potential solutions 6) understand the organization’s environment and general operation.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledge of the college environment	Members must 1) have in-depth knowledge of the education sector’s stakeholders at the regional and national level and of the college’s close ties with the region’s other socioeconomic sectors 2) Understand how the college education sector is evolving as well as trends and emerging issues. 3) Stay abreast of recent college education developments that could affect the organization’s operational and strategic plans.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Curiosity and critical thinking	The ability to draw connections, question, experiment and collaborate. Board members must therefore 1) connect ideas and concepts from different areas of knowledge, seek out other points of view and 2) ask questions to clarify ideas and check their validity.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>

General Competency	Evaluation Criteria	Importance
Judgment	<p>The ability to give sound and reasoned advice. Members must therefore be able 1) to analyze, ask strategically relevant questions, 2) consider the viewpoints of the stakeholders and 3) fully grasp the issues while focusing on the underlying issues.</p> <p>This also means that members rely on facts rather than perceptions and fulfill their responsibilities impartially. They must therefore 1) demonstrate discernment and good judgment 2) be able to think critically 3) accurately assess the meaning and scope of things, and 4) act in an impartial, neutral and non-partisan manner.</p>	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Effective communicator	<p>The ability to clearly express oneself but also to facilitate dialogue through listening. Members must therefore 1) promote constructive discussion on the Board 2) be receptive to different points of view 3) encourage information sharing among members 4) clearly state their opinions and arguments 5) adapt their message to their audience 6) ensure that others clearly understand their message 7) respect the confidentiality of information brought to their attention.</p>	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Availability and engagement	<p>The ability to put in the time and effort to carry out and accept responsibility for one's mandate. Members must therefore 1) be available to attend Board and committee meetings 2) read the documentation provided for each Board or committee meeting 3) participate in Board and committee meetings 4) regularly attend meetings 5) complete required tasks on time 6) assume the consequences of their actions and decisions 7) use their knowledge, skills and experience for the benefit of the Board and its committees.</p>	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>

Board profile

Expertise	Evaluation Criteria	Importance
Accounting and finance	<p>Experience in and understanding of financial accounting, financial reporting and Canadian GAAP/international financial reporting standards and/or experience in internal risk controls, risk assessment, risk management and/or communication or an understanding of same.</p> <p>Be a member in good standing of the professional order of accountants. At least 10 years' experience working for a large company.</p>	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Human resources	<p>Extensive experience at a senior level in managing the human resources function of a large company and involving the development of HR strategies aimed at achieving corporate objectives, hiring, training and retention of appropriate resources and establishing succession planning and compensation principles and policies.</p>	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing and commercialization	<p>Extensive experience in a senior marketing role within a large company involving the development of marketing strategies aimed at achieving the company's objectives including positioning, market development and customer loyalty.</p>	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledge of public management	<p>An understanding of the characteristics of public management acquired as a senior staff member in a medium or large organization. Holds a graduate degree in public administration or management.</p>	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Operations management	<p>Extensive procurement management experience in a senior operations management role in a mid-size or large company.</p>	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
SME management	<p>Extensive experience as CEO or a senior executive in a public company, SME or medium or large non-profit organization.</p>	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>

Expertise	Evaluation Criteria	Importance
Risk management	Extensive experience in a senior management role that required an understanding of the inherent risks of large, complex organizations and the need to integrate risk management into planning, decision-making and reporting mechanisms.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Information technology	Extensive experience in a senior management role in a large or mid-sized IT firm, particularly in e-commerce and IT architecture development.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Governance	An understanding of good corporate governance, typically acquired in a senior management role or as a corporate director; experience supported by recognized training in this area. Previous experience as a board member of a public company, SME or a medium or large non-profit organization.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic planning	Extensive experience in a senior management role in a large company or SME implementing and managing a strategic planning process.	High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>

Other considerations

- Gender balance
- Age of governors
- Socio-economic representativeness

Specific profiles

When required, the Board, on recommendation of the Governance Committee, will propose candidates to the constituents that meet the desired Board profile, taking into account the composition of the Board and the needs of the institution.

The competency matrix (Appendix A) allows the Board to evaluate the competencies of its governors, gain a sense of the complementary skills on the Board and adjust its composition strategy.

This exercise should be carried out regularly and at least once a year by the Board Chair and with the help of the Governance Committee.

We are proposing a few generic competency criteria. The Board can add competencies that are specific to the institution.

APPENDIX A

Competency Matrix

Competency	Name	Average score	Importance of competency	Recruitment priority								
Vision												
Strategic thinking												
Independence of mind												
Capacity for analysis and synthesis												
Knowledge of the college environment												
Curiosity and critical thinking												
Judgment												
Effective communicator												
Availability and engagement												
Accounting and finance												
Human resources												
Marketing and commercialization												
Knowledge of public management												
Operations management												
SME management												
Risk management												
Information technology												
Governance												
Strategic planning												
Gender balance												
Age of members												
Socio-economic diversity												

Competency and Expertise Evaluation	
Poor	1
Average	2
Excellent	3

Importance of Competencies	
Low	1
Medium	2
High	3