

LIVE
WEBINAR



5 Steps to Nailing Your Board Director Interview

Making a Great Impression That Leads to a Resounding “Yes” (from both sides of the table)



M. A. Pfister
Strategy Group

with Mark A. Pfister

International Board Director Competency Designation (IBDC.D) certification holders will receive 1 CPE credit by attending

— YOUR HOST & SPEAKER —



Mark A. Pfister

CEO &
Chief Board Consultant

M. A. Pfister
Strategy Group

+ worked with over
100 Nominating
Committees...

- Governance & Strategy expert, Non-Executive Director, & Chief Board Consultant having worked with hundreds of public, private, and nonprofit Boards with focus in Strategy, Governance, and Technology/Cybersecurity.
- He is known as “*The Board Architect*” for his work in defining the structural components of effective Boards.
- His book, ‘*Across The Board: The Modern Architecture Behind an Effective Board of Directors*,’ is a bestseller with circulation in over 70 countries.

WEBINAR REMINDERS

answering frequently asked questions

- **Purpose:** Share knowledge on the **successful elements of Board Candidate interviews** required to make a memorable impression.
- **Questions:** Write your questions in the Q&A section. If time allows, I will answer questions at the close of the presentation. Otherwise, I will follow-up with you via email afterwards.
- **Materials:** Yes, the entire webinar is being recorded and you will receive a link via email a day or two after the webinar ends. This link will also include the ability to view & download this presentation deck in its own separate file.
- **Additional Topic References:** You will notice additional reference links on many pages should you want to delve deeper into certain topics (you can click on the links when you receive the presentation shortly).

GOALS

learn the considerations

Learn Important Board interview topic points of coverage

and

Prepare your impressive responses & presence

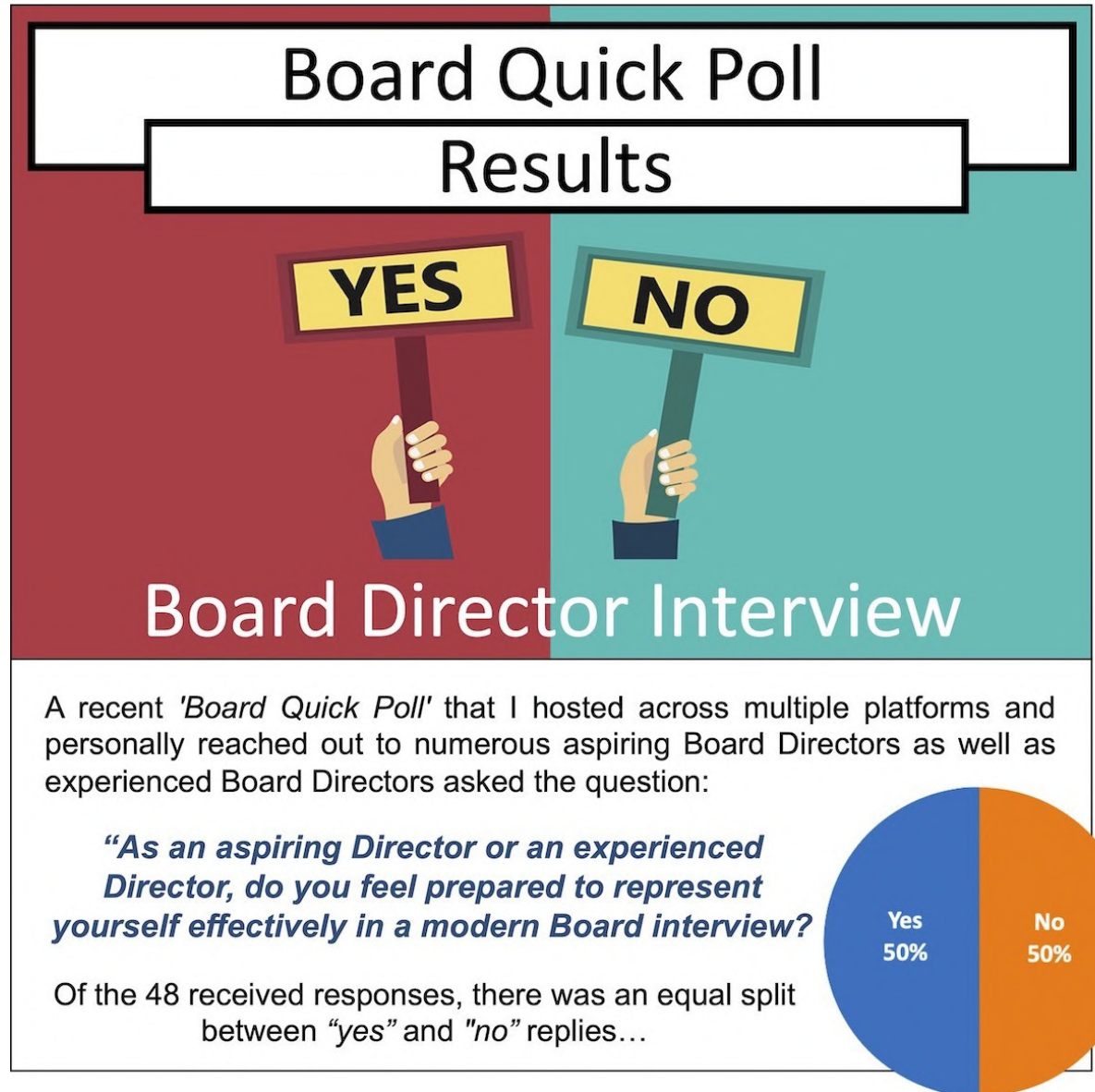
GOALS

what to walk away with from today's discussion...



SURVEYING THE FIELD

Results of a small poll
hosted in May 2020



— GETTING TO THE INTERVIEW —

the prerequisites

The largest hurdle for most Board Candidates is actually getting called for an interview!

Why?

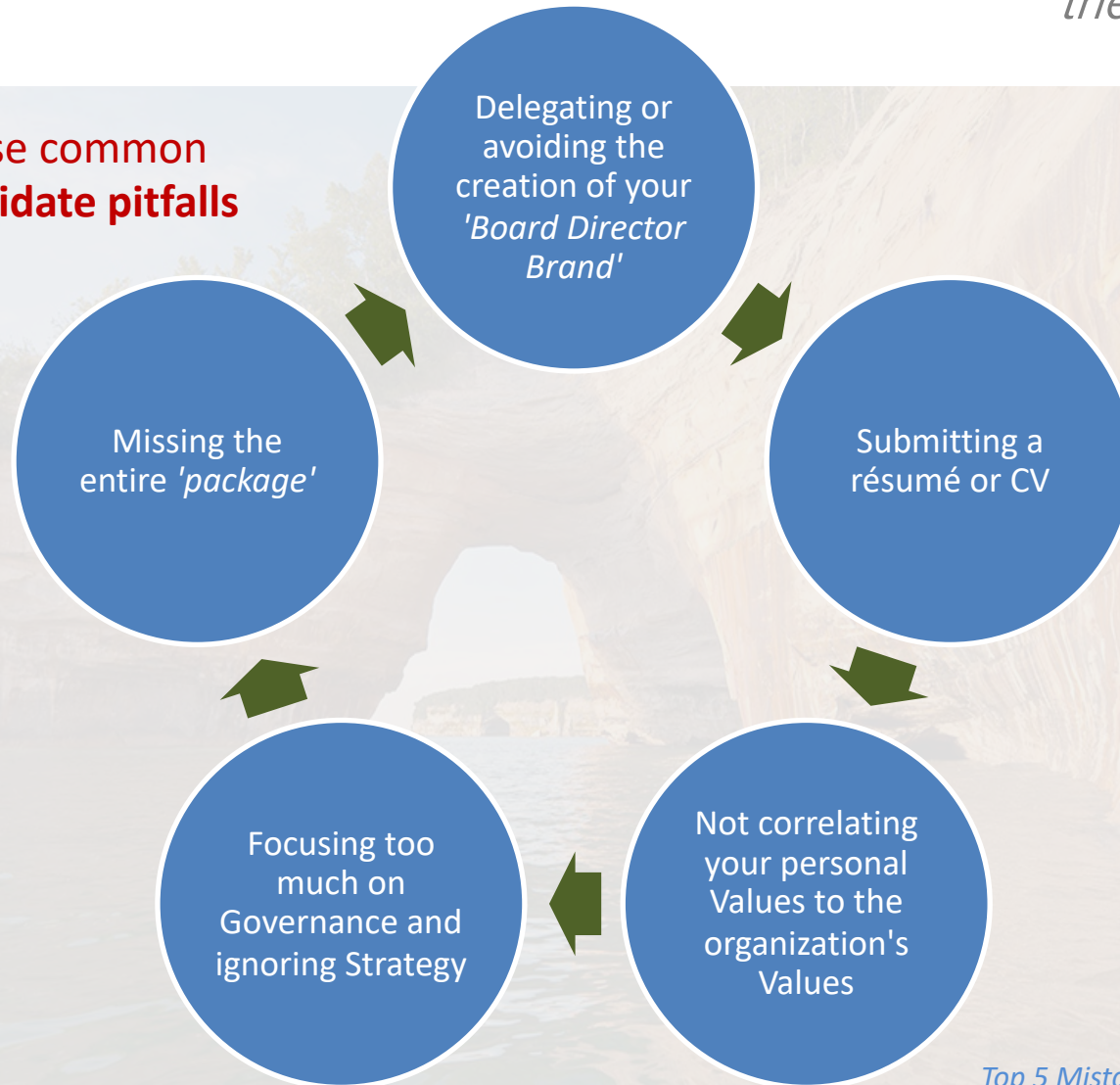
Because most aspiring as well as experienced Directors are not aware of proper and modern Board Candidate packaging principles...

Want to properly package yourself? See the premier way to do so here:
[Becoming an Exceptional Board Director Candidate Coaching & Certification Course](#)

— GETTING TO THE INTERVIEW —

the prerequisites

**Avoid these common
Board Candidate pitfalls**



Read my article:

[Top 5 Mistakes Board Candidates Make](#)

— GETTING TO THE INTERVIEW —

the prerequisites

For the remainder of our discussion today, we are going to assume that you have **packaged yourself properly** and got called for an interview...

Read my article: [5 Steps To Nailing Your Board Director Interview](#)

The Question of Values



Rule #1

The positioning of Board & organization values with Board Candidate values is the most important alignment

#1 – the question of values

Initially, laser-focus the interview discussion on your personal values superimposed over the organization's and Board's values.

Validates
Values
Alignment

Exhibits
Integrity
& Purpose

Confirms
depth of
character

Savvy search & placement companies, as well as mature Nominating Committees, understand that aligned values are the foundation for a strong culture - and the Board owns this important responsibility.

Values = Culture = Lower Organization Risk

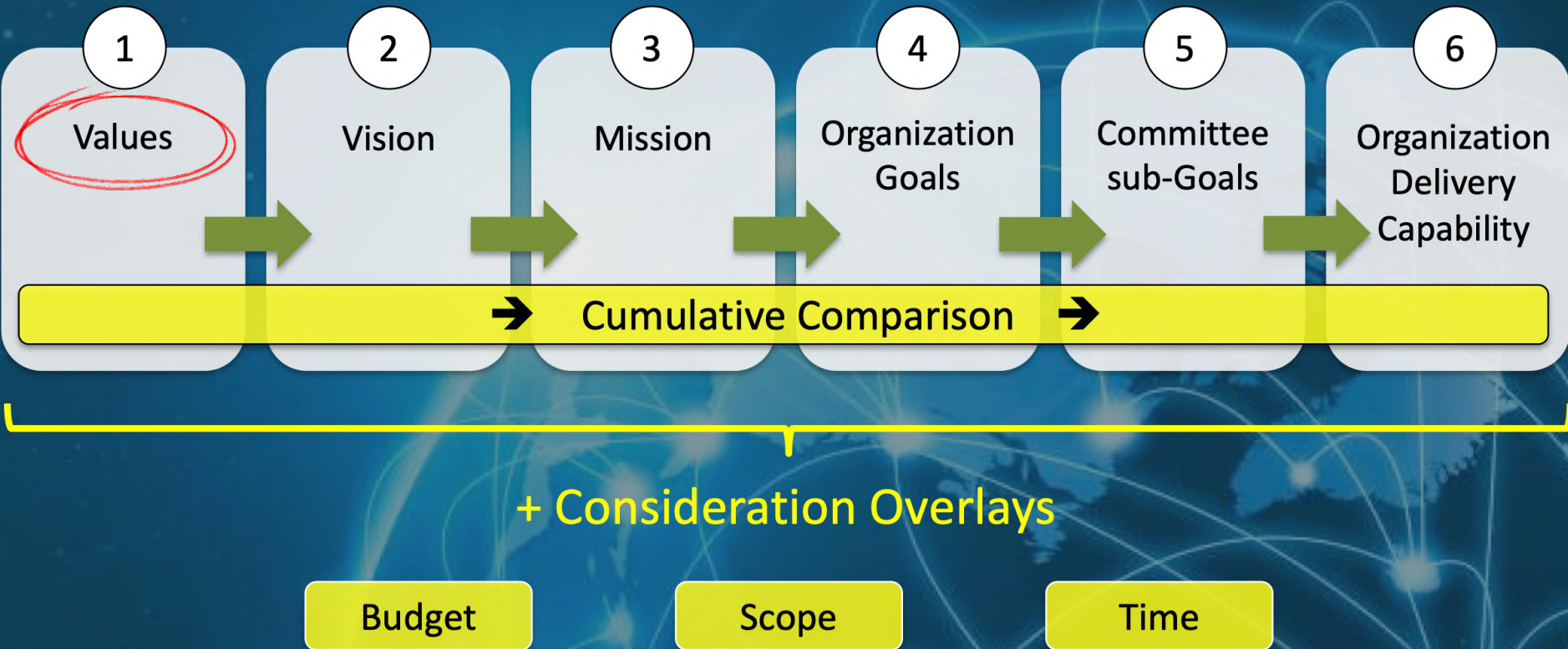
#1 – the question of values



Read my article: [‘The Story of Company Values’](#)

#1 – the question of values

Board Decisioning Flow



#1 – the question of values

As I mention in my book:



"...when interviewing Board Candidates, first and foremost look for passion and interest in the organization's values, vision, and mission.

I have personally become wary of Board candidates who, in their first 3 - 5 questions or comments, don't directly address the company's values or simply never address them at all throughout any discussions.

This is a bellwether pointing to a lack of fundamental governance knowledge and almost certainly a seed for future misalignment of interests."

Read all about modern Board architecture: <https://www.pfisterstrategy.com/books>

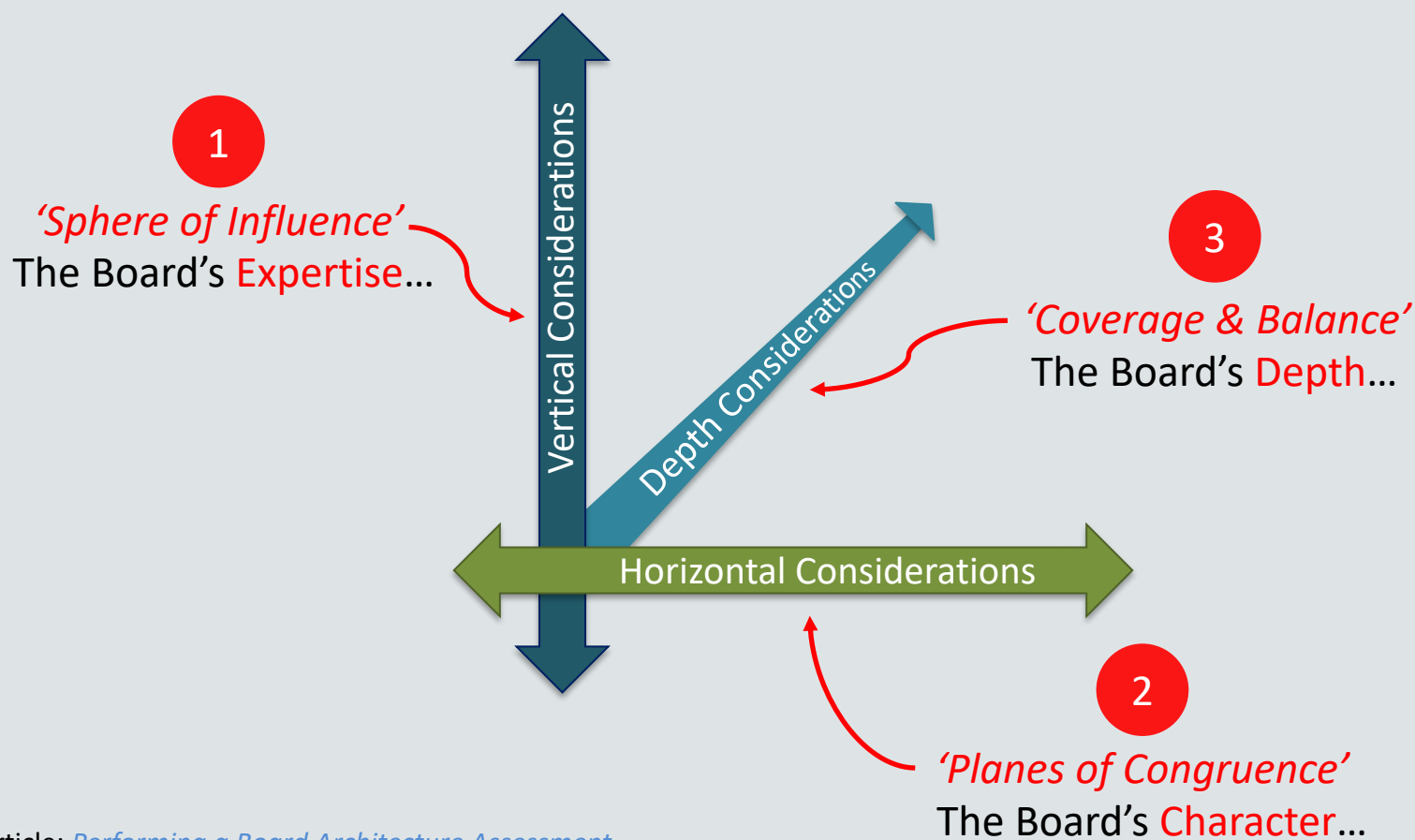
Enhance the Fit



Rule #2

Show exactly where & how you fit
and will elevate the Board

Proper Board architecture structural focus areas



Read my article: [Performing a Board Architecture Assessment](#)

#2 – enhance the fit

Most Boards have a fairly good idea of the skill set and experience level they desire in a Board Candidate...

1

Sphere of
Influence
(vertical /
expertise)

2

Planes of
Congruence
(horizontal
/ character)

3

Coverage &
Balance
(depth)

...but most Boards sorely lack in the understanding of how a new member can enhance the **character** and **depth** of the overall Board

Read all about modern Board architecture: <https://www.pfisterstrategy.com/books>

#2 – enhance the fit



This is where you, as a Board Candidate, can shine by:

- Performing a study of the existing Board's **expertise** (vertical) makeup, and also the Board's **horizontal** and **depth** makeup, highlighting exactly where you envision your enhanced fit, potentially filling some gaps unknown even to the Board. Spend the time to outline exactly how you will enhance the Board in both of these areas and bring it up during your interview.

#3 – strategy and governance indivisible

Strategy & Governance Indivisible



Rule #3

Make extremely clear your proficiency in the interrelational understanding between strategy and governance

#3 – strategy and governance indivisible

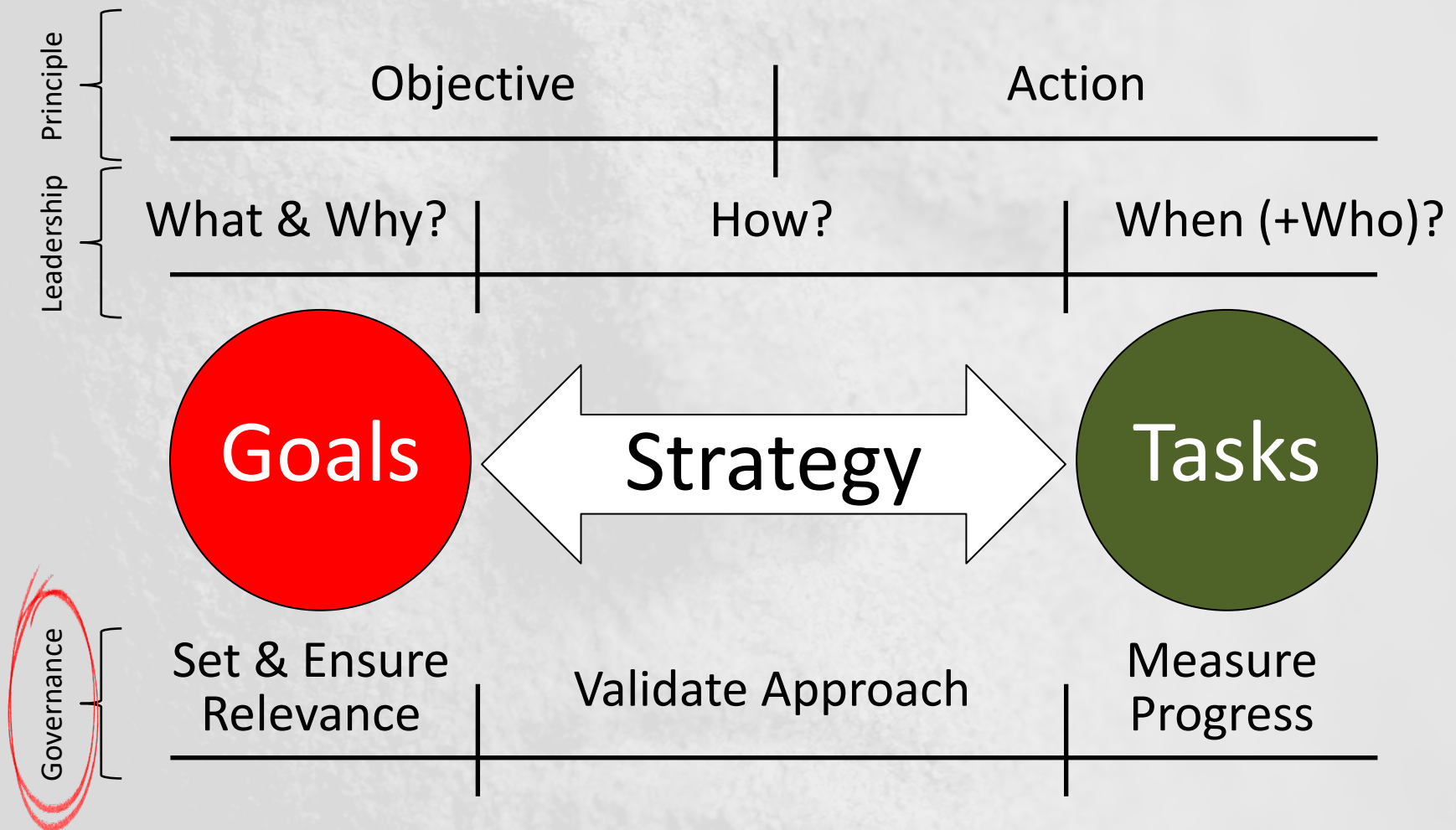
All too often, a Board Candidate's claim in an interview of being highly adept in governance is followed with clear lack of strategic understanding when probed more deeply...



Board Directors must be knowledgeable and skilled in both governance *and* strategy. After all, **you can't govern the components of a robust strategy if you don't know exactly what strategy is and how it is related to proper governance.**

See Chapter 5 in my [book](#) on the topic of 'The Role of Strategy'

#3 – strategy and governance indivisible



Read my article: [‘Why Do Boards Continue to Struggle With Strategy?’](#)

#3 – strategy and governance indivisible

Deeply prepare yourself for questions in this strategy/governance area, inclusive of researching anything published on the organization's strategy, prior to the interview.

The ability to make real-life references, correlations, and comparisons during a Board interview goes a long way.

Watch the recorded webinar: [Becoming The Strategic Executive](#)

#3 – strategy and governance indivisible

A good interviewer may:



- ...Take the approach of alternating questions between **strategic vs. tactical** instances as well as **strategic vs. governance** scenarios. This is used to understand if you, as a Board Candidate, have in-depth experience and abilities in the leadership space.
- ...See if you get the *hint* that questions are switching gears and that you are able to account for this in your responses. Always ensure that the level of your response accounts for the **'noses in, fingers out'** approach to ensure you convey the proper Board understanding and involvement.

Watch the recorded webinar: [Exceptional Board Governance](#)

#4 – the learning mentality

The Learning Mentality



Rule #4

*“Qualified is no longer a destination, but
more so a continuous journey”*

#4 – the learning mentality

Board Director candidates who prioritize learning show:

- ✓ Their involvement in Board Directorship is viewed as a discipline, not a hobby.
- ✓ An understanding that the Board vertical is quickly changing and evolving.
- ✓ Their commitment to the profession and their role.
- ✓ An increasing value to the companies served.

Read my article: ['The Board's Continuing Education Priority'](#)

#4 – the learning mentality

*‘The Career
Trifecta’*



Read my article:
*‘The Serious Board Candidate &
The Career Trifecta’*

#4 – the learning mentality

A good interviewer knows:



- ...An ideal Board Candidate is searching for ways to increase knowledge and have an opportunity to apply it. Boards, as well as incoming Board Members, who foster and sponsor a learning environment not only raise applicable knowledge that can be applied to the organization, but indirectly elevate camaraderie between Board Members.
- ...To look for Board Candidates who inherently allocate ample time for ongoing education and haven't forgotten that the current accelerating speed of change makes it a requirement for effective Board Directorship.

#5 – the other intelligences

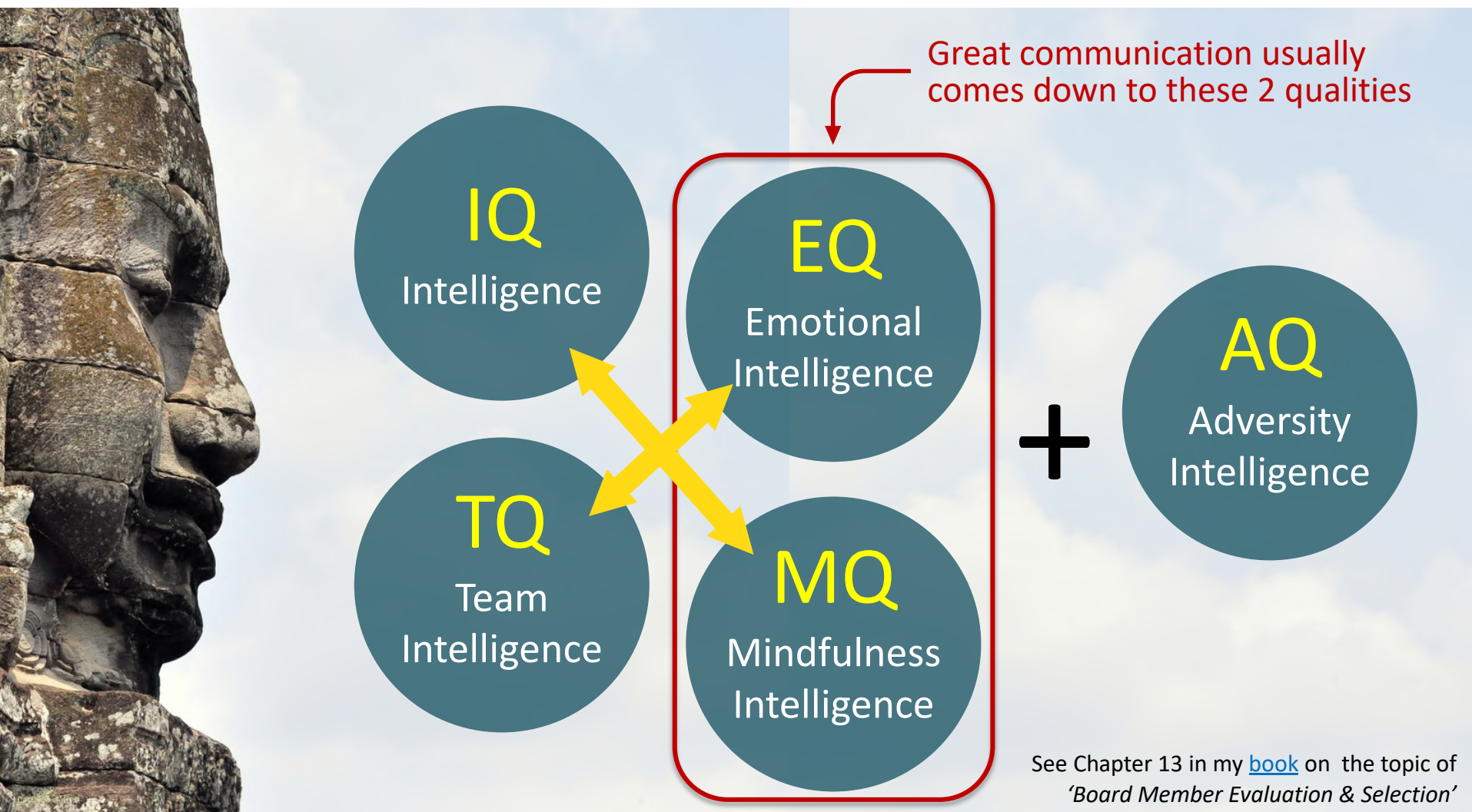
The Other Intelligences



Rule #5

Mindfulness Intelligence (MQ) and Emotional Intelligence (EQ) are equally important for boardroom success

#5 – the other intelligences



See Chapter 13 in my [book](#) on the topic of 'Board Member Evaluation & Selection'

#5 – the other intelligences

Communication is key for a successful Board

Much can be deciphered when observing the interaction and communication style of a Board by its individual members

Are Board Members truly mindful of one another?

Is there emotion clouding otherwise sound decision making?

Is there empathy between Board Members?

Are all Board Members open to voice their opinions?

Is there a deep sense of respect across the entire Board?

The most successful Boards are extremely open to discuss and hear all viewpoints without becoming paralyzed at decision time.

#5 – the other intelligences

One of the most indicative qualities to observe in a highly-functioning Board is that of

'respectful dissent'

A common example is a Board Member who is outvoted on a voiced preference, but is able to say, ***"I disagree, but I stand by the majority vote of this Board and support the decision 100%."***

Read my article: ['The Art of Respectful Dissent'](#)

#5 – the other intelligences



A good interviewer will probe to see if you know:

- ...A team, especially a Board, simply doesn't work well when even one individual lacks Mindfulness Intelligence (MQ) or Emotional Intelligence (EQ).
- ...MQ and EQ are foundational to the inner workings and relational dynamic of all Boards.

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M. A. Pfister
Strategy Group

BOARD ARCHITECTURE

all the core principles



For details on all aspects of modern Board architecture,
pick up a copy of my book.

Across The Board: The Modern Architecture Behind an Effective Board of Directors
<https://www.pfisterstrategy.com/books>

go forth and conquer

Have a
plan!

Package
yourself
properly

Remember
your values

Write to me at Mark@PfisterStrategy.com

Pick up my book at <https://www.pfisterstrategy.com/books>

Connect with me on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/markapfister/>





With a strong focus in Strategy, Governance, and Technology / Cybersecurity, Mark A. Pfister is CEO & Chief Board Consultant of M. A. Pfister Strategy Group, an executive advisory firm that serves as a strategic advisory council for executives and Boards in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. He is also Chairman & CEO of Integral Board Group, a specialized Board services and consulting company. Mr. Pfister is a *'Board Macro-Influencer'* and his success has been repeated across a wide range of business situations and environments. He prides himself on being a coach and mentor to senior executives and directors. In Board Director circles, Mr. Pfister has earned the nickname *'The Board Architect.'*

The overarching theme throughout his career has been his aptitude in leadership positions, passionate focus on people, unique governance models, and ability to create value for stakeholders through innovative business strategies and operational excellence. Michael Lorelli, Executive Chairman of Rita's Franchise Company, has said, *"Mark's unusual combination of excelling at a macro and micro grasp of business, genuine interest in Governance, and ability to coach and mentor a Management Team make him a terrific Independent Director."*

Mr. Pfister is a certified project management professional and frequently serves as an expert Project Executive, consulting on global programs/projects in their initiation and operational phases, as well as programs requiring remedial focus to bring them back on track. He has deep knowledge and experience in Board design & operations, strategic planning, business transformation, technology implementations, decisioning processes, certification & continuing education programs, executive coaching, and governance models.

Mr. Pfister was CEO of Pro4ia, Inc., an international consulting and professional services company specializing in a wide range of technology solutions utilizing formal Project Management as a proven and repeatable delivery method. With a Fortune 50 client list, Pro4ia was Citibank's Nominee for Crain's Magazine *'Entrepreneurship of the Year'* Award in 2005. He simultaneously served as CEO of Onit, Inc., a national sourcing company specializing in placements for all levels of technology skill sets. Mr. Pfister was also the National Program Office Leader for American Express leading some of the largest technology transformation initiatives in the company's history. He served as a Licensed Engineering Officer in the U.S. Merchant Marine, holds a B.S. from the State University of New York Maritime College in Facilities Engineering, and completed Harvard Business School's Executive Education Program for Board Directors.

Mr. Pfister is the creator of the *'Board as a Service'* (BaaS) engagement model, an industry he is credited with inventing. He is a Master Speaker and conducts international speaking tours, lectures, and seminars focused on effective leadership, strategy, Board architecture, becoming an exceptional Board Director candidate, professional project/program management, and entrepreneurship.

His popular book, [*'Across The Board: The Modern Architecture Behind an Effective Board of Directors.'*](#) an Amazon best-seller with circulation in over 70 countries, has influenced an entire new generation of Board Directors.

Mr. Pfister is a proficient Board Director and CEO with experience across multiple industry verticals. He is typically the Chair or a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, Governance Committee, Technology & Cybersecurity Committee, and has deep Nominating Committee experience. Mr. Pfister's experience as an internationally renowned Board Consultant, having guided and coached hundreds of Boards, Board Committees, and Board Members across public, private, and nonprofit verticals, additionally offers up unique and informed viewpoints to the companies he serves.

He holds an *Executive Masters Professional Board Certification* through the American College of Corporate Directors (ACCD), an [*International Board Director Competency Designation \(IBDC.D\)*](#) through M. A. Pfister Strategy Group, is a member of the National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD), is a certified *Project Management Professional (PMP)* through the Project Management Institute (PMI), earned a *Global ESG Certification (GCB.D)* through Competent Boards, and holds a *Certified Cyber Intelligence Professional Board Certification (CCIP)* through the McAfee Institute.