

How To P*** Off Your Board!

Membership Services Conference
August 2024



Nick Smith
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Introductions and Content



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Who is On Your Board

- Student Trustees – inexperienced not stupid. Explain jargon and TLAs as well as context / reasons
- Officers – discuss “hats”
- Lay Trustees – students’ union context (?), jargon and TLAs
- All – strategic context and suitability for students



Bad Papers and Bad Presentations

So, what could you do to really irritate the Board when writing a paper or presenting an item?

10 minute discussion in small groups of 3 or 4



Good Practice Tips

Purpose

Clarity on what you are asking the Board

To approve (what?), to note (what and why?)

What do your Trustees need from you/ from the presentation/paper –what is their perspective?

Reminder – this is why this is important for you as a **trustee**

How does your content improve the quality of decision making?

No surprises –trustees already have the background

Content

Tell them what you're going to tell them, tell them and tell them what you told them

Structure and main points (signpost)

Clarity on key messages – rule of 3

Get someone else to review your visuals – appropriate?

Concise slides – don't put your speech on them

Make sure your graphics are visible and legible

Check for jargon and remove – check spelling

Did you answer the exam question?

Shows you considered multiple options

Includes cost/ benefit and consideration of risks

Use evidence (check that it is correct)

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Good Practice Tips

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Presentation Skills:

- Check the technology and the room you will be in/ online platform
- Check in with the Chair– check how much time you have allocated (Board meetings overrun)
- Know your audience and if you don't know ask (CEO/Board Secretary) – how much do they already know?
- Read the room – what is the mood?
- Leave time for questions
- Anticipate questions
- Practice (with co presenters)
- Practice to someone who is outside of the area
- Check your pronunciations
- No more than 15 minutes – attention spans 😊. 3 mins per slide
- Reference properly
- Tell them what you're going to tell them, tell them and tell them what you told them
- Where are there opportunities to engage the trustees? Questions you can ask them to engage in the materials?
- What will engage this audience? What are they interested in? data? Stories?

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Bad Culture and Behaviours

What could you do to ensure the board members don't develop a positive relationship & work as a Team?

10 minute discussion in small groups of 3 or 4



Good Practice Tips

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Induction

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Group induction and tailored inductions
- Mentoring and Buddying with staff
- 1 to 1's with chair and vice chair
- Behavioural frameworks

Ongoing Relationship Building

- Away days- development and strategy
- Include key staff in meetings
- Briefings on difficult issues
- Chair briefings
- Explain why
- Principle of no surprises
- Pay attention to team development

- Access to sector information
- Support in building networks
- Ensuring Board does not fragment/ use exclusive comms channels
- Regular effectiveness reviews
- Build reflection into every meeting
- Consider individual review processes/ 360's
- Process for CE performance review, objective setting and support
- Action lists and accountability frameworks

Dealing with Issues Arising

- Accountability to behavioural frameworks
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Knowing processes
- Use of dispute resolution processes

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Further Development Support



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Module 1- Context of SU Boards – How We Got Here-

Module 2 – Supporting the Board – Tools and Approaches –

Module 3- Common Challenges – When Things Go Wrong –

Module 4- High Performance and Hot Topics –

One to one Coaching – To be arranged on an individual basis

Action Learning Set

The cost of the programme is £550 per delegate.

The modules take place monthly on Thursday afternoons from 3 to 5.30



Thank you

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