



The Director Logbook

A governance tool

by the Good Governance Institute (GGI)

July 2021



The Good Governance Institute

The Good Governance Institute exists to help create a fairer, better world. Our part in this is to support those who run the organisations that will affect how humanity uses resources, cares for the sick, educates future generations, develops our professionals, creates wealth, nurtures sporting excellence, inspires through the arts, communicates the news, ensures all have decent homes, transports people and goods, administers justice and the law, designs and introduces new technologies, produces and sells the food we eat – in short, all aspects of being human.

We work to make sure that organisations are run by the most talented, skilled and ethical leaders possible and work to build fair systems that consider all, use evidence, are guided by ethics and thereby take the best decisions. Good governance of all organisations, from the smallest charity to the greatest public institution, benefits society as a whole. It enables organisations to play their part in building a sustainable, better future for all.

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The Director Logbook

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What is the director logbook?

The GGI director logbook provides all board members with a means of recording their experiences and contribution to the board.

This is particularly helpful when it comes to the annual review of performance as a board member or when applying for new positions, both in keeping a log of personal contributions, and the value of meetings, committees, events and reflections. We have based the log on sailing and flying logs and those used for personal development. At the heart of the log is the 1:10:100 rule used by the all-sector Benchmarking Institute.

The logbook encourages reflection on meetings attended: “for the effort/time/money I put in, what value did I get back (out of 10) and what value is there to the organisation (out of 100)?” The scoring is a simple way of recording ‘value and what I should do with the learning to prevent the potential value of it being lost.’

How to use it?

We have adapted this approach to provide a simple recording system for each ‘event’ in the career of a board director. Each activity such as a committee meeting should be noted by date, time required and role (e.g. chairing subcommittee) and then a simple score entered for my contribution (e.g. 5/10) with additional scores for value to me (6/10) value to my board (3/10) and my organisation (ICS/Trust/others) (6/10). There is room at the bottom of the page for recording further reflections on significant experience and actions.

The chair’s log

For the chair there is an additional set of sheets to record the contribution of individual board members. We believe the chair should review the contribution of all board members, executive and non-exec, in their roles. Again the logs should be useful for annual review and providing references.

We hope board members will value and use the board log in the same way that skippers, pilots and climbers use their logs as a lifetime record of their experiences, achievements and development.

Example:

If I attend a conference that costs £100 and 10 hours of my time in booking, travelling and attending, how would I assess the value in relation to the cost, both to myself and my organisation? Perhaps 8/10 for me because I learnt a lot but nothing new for the organisation so just 10/100.

In this case, it is ok to justify if the knowledge I gained was needed to perform my role as a NED but I might suggest others don’t attend if they already have that knowledge.

Another event might be 3/10 for me but could contain some useful insights into HR policy so 80/100 for the organisation, but it would only be worth attending if I follow up and share that knowledge with the HR director.

Tips for completing the log

1. **Allow time to reflect on your contributions to the board**
2. **Log all board activities: board meetings, sub-committee meetings, briefings, seminars, reading board papers, walkabouts, etc**
3. **Make a note of your reflections as you go (you can use the notes app on your phone and then transfer to the logbook)**
4. **Use this tool for appraisals and new appointments**
5. **Try it! You’ll get better and quicker over time**

Example

Board member activity log for: James brown

Date	Activity	Time in hours	My role/contribution	Value of my contribution x/10	Year:			Page:
					Value to me x/10	Value to my board x/10	Value to my organisation x/100	Comments
23/04/21	Audit committee	4	Chairing	6	8	8	80	Felt that agenda was out of control
12/05/21	Board papers	3	NED	4	6	6	60	Papers not clear on what is expected
02/06/21	Board	6	NED	4	6	6	60	Bard too long, too few decisions
08/06/21	Seminar of Health and Safety	3	Paying participant	1	1	1	50	Useful material on HR. Will pass to HR director
21/06/21	Reflective	1	Worrying about times report on vulnerable adults. Could that happen here?	5	8	8	80	Will raise with Director of nursing
27/06/21	Significant experience and actions e.g. to pick up as personal objective/review with the chair or others: My concerns on vulnerable adults were justified. Have initiated review through audit committee chair of our system and practices. Worried now what else we don't know. Will ask NEDs in other trusts how they deal with 'unknowns'							

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Board member activity log for:

Date	Activity	Time in hours	My role/contribution	Value of my contribution	Year:			Page:
					Value to me x/10	Value to my board x/10	Value to my organisation x/100	Comments

Significant experience and actions e.g. to pick up as personal objective/review with the chair or others:

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Chair's board member activity log for:

				Year:		Page:	
Date	Activity	Time in hours	Contribution	Value to me as chair	Value to me x/10	Value to my organisation x/100	Comments

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