

Why board services are vital to improving company performance

We all know that success isn't easy. The only thing that's harder, perhaps, is maintaining your position at the top once you're there. And that's as true for companies as it is for individuals. The fate of any company rests on human performance: individuals' understanding of the business context, bright ideas and competitive strategies, the sense of what opportunities to pursue when, and the leadership and culture to bring the best out in everyone from the board on down.

As AIMS International consultants, our role is to help client companies FIND&GROW their leaders. Board Services are for many of my colleagues and for me personally a particularly interesting focus area. Operating in over 50 countries as we do, we run into differing corporate governance codes and national regulations, as well as levels of development. We naturally take these differences into account and adjust our approach, but, at the same time, many challenges that businesses face are the same the world over. Governance and the interaction between owners, the CEO, non-executive and executive board members are always crucial for the success of companies, whether these functions are well developed or not.

Board Services to consider

Something that often strikes us and is sad to see, is how many companies and their leaders continue down the same road even when they know it won't bring them success. There is a tendency to view contracting outside help as a sign of weakness, even though we all know how hard it is to maintain optimal performance without support. It sounds counter-intuitive, but it is frequently companies that are already operating at the top of their game that seek input on Leadership Assessments and Coaching.

Most corporate boards could find room for improvement, but, of course, the kind of assistance that would benefit them the most will depend on their particular situations. A service that many companies ought to look at quite seriously is Board Evaluation.

Facts are the best basis for deciding on a course of action and everyone from regulators, shareholders, and board members themselves view assessments of current board capacity as a critical element of good corporate governance and sustainable business development. It's important both for improving corporate governance – looking at structure, processes, individual competencies, communication, and so forth – and improving effectiveness – helping to set the right priorities and identifying and filling skills gaps.

That's another essential board service: ensuring that the right people are in key positions. When the time comes, it can make a big difference conducting a formal Executive Search to find a new chairperson, non-executive board member, or CEO with the skills and mindset that future challenges demand.

At AIMS International, we also see Succession Planning as an important service, particularly for family-owned businesses. A lot of them are in a process of professionalisation and changing leaders from one generation to another or from family to non-family management – and they often struggle to define what new leadership should look like. Our service is always bespoke. We work closely with them and other stakeholders to ensure we work in accordance with each organisation's development goals.

I wish that more leaders would recognise how effective enlisting specialists can be in unlocking greater potential in themselves, their employees, and their businesses. If you would like to know what we can do for you and the company you represent, you are most welcome to contact us for a call or meeting. Please browse our Board Services Global Practice page and contact a consultant near you!

The Board Services Practice at AIMS International specialises in collaborating with boards of directors to enable them to succeed in their assignments. In addition to Executive Search assignments, we assist with surveys, evaluations and coaching assignments in order for the boards of directors to address their areas for improvement.



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