

Crafting Governance Frameworks:

MEETING TRUE NEEDS, NOT JUST REQUESTS



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A well-considered, embedded governance framework enhances an organisation's transparency, builds donor, stakeholder and/or shareholder trust, and provides a solid foundation for sustainable growth and the successful achievement of its mission.

Stepping into the world of charity governance, we embarked on a transformative journey with a well-known charity.

At the outset, we were brought in to support on the governance framework however upon inspection and evaluation we identified their plans for improving their framework were not realistic to achieve the outcome that they wanted. With their support we re-wrote the entire project to deliver an entirely new framework.

The Background

Governance frameworks provide a structured set of guidelines, policies, and procedures that guide how the entire organisation operates and is managed, as such they have the power to positively affect the culture, outputs and efficiency of everyone in the organisation.

Frameworks exist in every organisation whether they are formally and thoughtfully put in place or

if they evolve through the behaviours and culture that builds in the organisation over time.

No organisation will need or have the exact same framework as another because they will have unique goals, challenges, and cultural nuances that require a tailored approach. Attempting to apply a templated framework without considering an organisation's specific needs can lead to inefficiencies and misalignment with an organisation's true objectives. With our client it was essential we truly understood their current organisation and its current culture and ethos first and then uncovered the aspirations of leadership and where the status quo needed to evolve. What we built met their specific needs and the requirements of the charity now and in the future.

What's it all about?

Governance frameworks can be large, unwieldy and get over complicated but by focussing on the right areas, in the right level of detail, significant cultural change can be achieved.

Some of the key areas we reviewed as part of this project included:

1. Board of Directors: Roles, responsibilities, structure, committees and performance evaluation.
2. Executive Management: Oversight of daily operations and implementation of board policies.
3. Policies and Procedures: Guidelines that dictate behaviour within the organisation.
4. Risk Management: Identification, assessment, and mitigation of business risks.
5. Compliance: Ensuring adherence to applicable company laws, regulations, charity governance code and internal policies.
6. Stakeholders: Mechanisms for communicating with shareholders, employees, and other stakeholders.
7. Succession Planning: Ensuring continuity of leadership.
8. Compensation and Benefits: Policies to remunerate and incentivise employees and executives.
9. Legal and Secretariat team: Target operating model, roles and deliverables, hiring and

embedding new staff and expectations of the team and its stakeholders.

Different organisations may emphasise certain areas more than others based on their industry, size, geographic location, and other factors. However, the overarching goal of a governance framework is to provide a structure that supports the organisation's mission, protects stakeholders, and promotes transparency and accountability.

The governance framework we designed and delivered was fully embedded when it was audited by one of a Big 5 accountancy firm a year on and the results were heartening. Green ratings in all areas; a clear testament to the robustness of the governance structure we had put in place and the way it has been adopted and integrated seamlessly with the existing culture. The accountancy firm's feedback affirmed we'd achieved our original vision for the framework one year on. Even their suggestions for improvement were highlighted as 'nice to have' and had already been presented to the Board of Trustees over a year prior as part of our parting presentation on what the phase 2 future governance framework evolution should include.

In real terms this project will have had a lasting, if not indirect effect on the lives and more importantly the care that this charity provides to thousands of people in need every year.





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