



Beyond Governance

Creating clarity, improving business

DECISION
MAGAZINE



The Responsible Business

The Role of Governance

A meeting with Claire Mattinson

*Group Regulatory Governance & Compliance Director
Ceuta Group*

Extract from a DECISION magazine report commissioned by Beyond Governance

Introduction

What we are experiencing could be described as the business equivalent of the perfect storm.

The convergence of a new generation with a distinctive mindset, the sudden realisation and acceptance that the environment clock really is now counting down, coupled with the dramatic increase in the pace of technological advances, and the impact of Covid-19 which has been to fast-forward change.

As a consequence, are we having to re-evaluate the purpose of a company its priorities, indeed the role of governance?

So how would we now define what constitutes a responsible company – and who should it be responsible to?

Arguably, being a responsible business provides the foundation for sustainability, innovation, productivity, because it establishes a culture which has the required mind-set. But what are key characteristics, and how might they change over time?

For a digital book co-commissioned by Beyond Governance, to be published by DECISION magazine, directors from across generations and market sectors share their thoughts.

This is one of the interviews to be included.

Claire Mattinson

Group Regulatory Governance & Compliance Director

Ceuta Group

“Building a supply chain of like-minded, responsible companies isn’t straightforward. It’s hard to really ascertain how – or whether – a supplier really lives its stated ethos and values, unless you actually move in with them. After all, how do you know what really goes on in someone else’s home?”

“But this is where governance plays a part, because it means their approach to business is evidenced.

“A starting point is to pose the question – does the company in question have some form of governance in place to be able to deliver consistently as required.

“Governance could be described as how we get stuff done in the right way, creating equilibrium for a business, internally and externally, and how it is able to meet the expectations of stakeholders. It will provide clarity by defining the levels of delegated authority, serving as a code of conduct if you like.

“The real driver is a culture which wants to do the right thing. Governance holds the business to it.

“In the past, the Cadburys and Rowntrees for example defined for themselves the reasons why a business had to be responsible and how that should be implemented. Today, a business has to react because stakeholders who are influenced by changing social values will be telling it to.

“The drive to make it actually happen has got to come from the top. People are busy doing their work, so if they are simply ‘lectured’ about governance, risk, and compliance, they’ll start tapping their fingers on the edge of their desks, impatiently waiting to get on with the job rather than taking it on board. If governance is to have meaning, it has to be demonstrated by the behaviours of leadership and aligned to a sense of purpose.

“A turning point for a company can be when an entrepreneurial business has grown to a point where there is a realisation that processes have to develop to keep pace, and stakeholders want to know with clarity that it is doing everything the right way.

“Governance should ensure culture and process go hand-in-hand. Process has to make people’s lives easier not more complex, and governance should help build culture by setting boundaries and providing guide rails.

“Governance makes sure people have the right information at the right time to make the right decisions.



Claire Mattinson

“And value comes from people gaining clarity, knowing what they should be doing, how they should be doing it, and having the right tools to do it.

“Arguably, the word ‘governance’, with its direct association with ‘govern’ it’s too full on, and almost equates to the equivalent of commanding. Governance and governing really aren’t the same thing, but they sound so similar, and as human beings sometimes we sub-consciously connect the two. Actually governance is about having a co-ordinating structure delivering clarity with support and understanding.

“Real governance is something that adds value, but it doesn’t follow that companies will necessarily see it as a priority or

anything more than a required administrative process. It comes back to leadership. For most companies governance is still a choice, as it is doing the right thing.

“The influence of the new generation is interesting. One of the ways in which Gen Z is being defined is by its desire to be engaged with the purpose of a company, say a potential employer. Offering a job applicant a car, a laptop, and a nice corner office is not going to be the deciding factor now.

“Gen Z has only known a world where data is available, and can’t understand why company can’t provide information which will back up its statements about its ethos.

“If we go back in time there would have been similar conversations about of the impact of each new generation, but for the reasons I’ve mentioned, Gen Z is certainly more questioning.

“I do believe that while government can support companies to do the right thing, to ensure they are given the tools to effect change, a business needs to want to do it. But simply passing more legislation and then extending the timeframe to implement it can’t be the right approach. New legislation should include incentives for companies to encourage positive buy-in.”

Globally Ceuta Group build brands in the over-the-counter health, wellness, and personal care categories, providing strategy guidance and developing and managing marketing and sales plans which are cohesive.

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Beyond Governance is a multi award-winning full service consultancy that collaborates with the c-suite, chair, board and investors to unlock value, resulting in increased shareholder and stakeholder confidence, increased share prices and achievement of business objectives.

Our three distinct service offerings, are dedicated to addressing the most critical issues and opportunities facing our clients. Our strength lies in creating value that transcends traditional boundaries and connects the silo'd elements within organisations.

Our Boardroom Advisory team specialises in strategy, organisational design, operational efficiency, technology integration, transformation initiatives, digital strategies and analytics, corporate finance and mergers & acquisitions as well as sustainability.

Our CoSec-on-demand group works with governance and secretariat teams to support them on a project basis, working with them on governance frameworks, subsidiary management, software audits, entity rationalisation as well as joining their risk registers to provide emergency cover, all done outside of IR35.

Our Training teams works with institutions big and small to help narrow the gap between theory and day-to-day practice. Industry experts had expressed concerns regarding the future outlook of the governance profession, and we felt we could help address these needs by sharing our experiences. Our training clients include members of the Big 4 and FTSE.

In 2020, Beyond Governance became the UK's first certified B-Corp consultancy in its sector.



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*The interview with Claire Mattinson was
undertaken with Erika Eliasson-Norris,
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About DECISION magazine

First published in 1988, DECISION magazine reflects the business lifestyle, the trials and tribulations, the hopes and aspirations of business owners and directors responsible for businesses with a turnover of £5million and above across the south of England and London.

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