

“The Law of Diminishing Board Impact:
The more boards on which an individual
serves, the less impact that individual
will have on each board.”

Dan Busby & John Pearson



“Christ-centered ministries with Trusted Governance, Trusted Resource-raising, and Trusted Resource Management experience elevated Kingdom outcomes.”

Dan Busby



“Within Christ-centered organizations, governance is the stewardship of powers to accomplish the mission in service of the Church’s calling.”

David Tiede



“Our attention to governance in general and the Board Policies Manual in particular revolutionized our board—and I feel that I am the greatest beneficiary. I am still on a honeymoon with the board after eight years!”

Richard Stearns



“The problem is, most board cultures are developed by default, not by design.”

Jim Brown



“If you have more than five goals,
you have none.”

Peter Drucker



“The best way to predict the future
is to create it.”

Peter Drucker



“In the long run, only integrity matters.
In fact, without integrity, there will be no long run.”



“A leader needs to know his strengths as a carpenter knows his tools, or as a physician knows the instruments at her disposal.”

Donald O. Clifton



“A good board will measure the appropriate inputs as well as the outputs. Failure to measure what matters damages our future.”

Max De Pree



“I’m a great believer that management should be invited into the board’s world but that the board should not go into management’s area.”

Max De Pree



“Sameness isn’t strategy.
It is a recipe for mediocrity.”

A. G. Lafley and Roger L. Martin



“Like a one-stringed banjo player, the chair will always sound the note reminding the members that the board’s role is policy, no execution.”

David McKenna



“If you don’t know what your top three priorities are, you don’t have priorities.”

Donald Rumsfeld



“What you measure improves.”

Donald Rumsfeld



“For every hour spent on creating and maintaining a Board Policies Manual, at least three hours of board and committee meetings will be saved before too long. It’s a “living document” always reflecting the latest wisdom of the board.”

Robert C. Andringa



“Boards don’t need to hear how busy the CEO is—they need to hear about results.”

Jim Brown



“Self-assessment is the first action requirement of leadership: the constant resharpening, constant refocusing, never been really satisfied.”

Peter Drucker



“Self-assessment can and should convert good intentions and knowledge into effective action—not next year but tomorrow morning.”

Peter Drucker



“Social sector leaders are not less decisive than business leaders as a general rule, they only appear that way to those who fail to grasp the complex governance and diffuse power structures common to social sectors.”

Peter Drucker



“Governance is a collective effort, through smooth and suitable process, to take actions that advance a shared purposes consistent with the organization’s mission.”

Richard Chait, Thomas Holland, and Barbara Taylor



“My best friend is a person who will give me a book I have not read.”

Abraham Lincoln



“What ways are we spending time in these meetings that are good and helpful but not the best use of our time together?”

Henry Cloud



“What should be the board’s job outline?
It seems to me the best way to look at that
question is to see it through the prism
of the agenda.”

Max De Pree



“Humility is the only soil in which the graces take root; the lack of humility is the sufficient explanation of every defect and failure.”

Andrew Murray



“If we are to engage in meaningful spiritual discernment with others and listen well for His will for our shared ministry life, we first need to tend to the state of our own hearts.”

Stephen A. Macchia



“The more you prepare for the meeting before the meeting, the less time you will have to spend doing damage control after the meeting. A leader never has to recover from a good start.”

John Maxwell



“Almost all [board members] look promising before they enter the boardroom, but not all perform equally well once inside.”

Ram Charan, Dennis Carey, and Michael Useem



“Execution is where management starts and
the board stops.”

Ram Charan, Dennis Carey, and Michael Useem



Dakota tribal wisdom says that when you discover you are riding a dead horse, the best strategy is to dismount.”

Elmer Towns and Warren Bird



“Board members who leak confidential information about the ministry they serve disqualify themselves from board service—period!”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Greatness is an inherently dynamic process, not an end point. The moment you think of yourself (or your board) as great, your slide toward mediocrity will have already begun.”

Jim Collins



“A friend of mine often jokes that a greeter at Walmart gets more orientation than most board members ever do. We all know that’s no joke. It’s true for boards of every description. And it is appalling.”

Patrick Lencioni



“Boards need to understand basic strategy,
but it’s not their job to create it.”

Ram Charan



“If you board the wrong train
it is no use running along the corridor
in the opposite direction.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer



“Underlying the professional qualifications for the board chair are three sensitive areas of board leadership that depend directly on personal character . . . integrity, trust, and humility.”

David McKenna



“Take full advantage of the opportunity provided to become settled in God’s presence.”

Ruth Haley Barton



“Listen to others with our entire self—senses, feelings, intuition, imagination, and rational faculties.”

Ruth Haley Barton



“Pause between speakers to absorb what
has been said.”

Ruth Haley Barton



“Speak for yourself, expressing your thoughts and feelings, referring to your own experiences. Avoid being hypothetical. Steer away from making broad generalizations.”

Ruth Haley Barton



“Leave space for anyone who may want to speak a first time before speaking a second time yourself. ”

Ruth Haley Barton



“When I run, I feel His pleasure.”

Eric Liddell, *Chariots of Fire*

When your board members serve,
do they feel God’s pleasure?



“Many people seem to feel that a good board structure enables high performance. This is simply not so. What’s crucial is the quality of our personal relationships.”

Max De Pree



“I have always thought of board members as perpetual volunteers. The best of them are like lifetime free agents.”

Max De Pree



“When someone serves on more than one board at a time, it often causes the Law of Diminishing Board Impact to kick in.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Great boards invest time on their knees to discern direction. They are mindful of Ruth Haley Barton’s wisdom, ‘Just because something is strategic does not necessarily mean it is God’s will for us right now.’”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“I have found it very helpful to think about designing an agenda by following the lines of a bell curve. At the top of the curve (that’s my shorthand for the way energy at board meetings starts out slowly, then rises, then declines) for regular board meetings we will want to focus on the future and plan time to be thorough.”

Max De Pree



“Few boards have the intestinal fortitude to address the elephant in the boardroom. Board service is not for the weak of heart.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Many people seem to feel that a good board structure enables high performance. This is simply not so. What’s crucial is the quality of our personal relationships.”

Max De Pree



“Board bullies wreak havoc and create dissension. They often maneuver into leadership positions, such as the chair of the board or a committee. Amazingly, some bullies can even do damage without holding a leadership role.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Watch for three changes outside of your organization: (1) demographics, (2) changes in perception, mood and meaning, and (3) new knowledge.”

Peter Drucker



“Great boards appoint a ‘Readers Are Leaders’ champion—a book zealot who inspires the board to read and discuss at least one future-focused book each year.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“As the leader goes, so goes the organization.
As the soul goes, so goes the leader.”

Stephen Macchia



“Great boards engage the board and senior team members in trend-spotting year-round but especially at the board’s annual planning retreat.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Celebrity will seduce you before you know it. If you have to self-promote in order to get the opportunities you seek, you are selling out. Your capacity to move people toward God will be slowly supplanted by your ambition.”

Ralph Enlow



“In many cases, soul care does not make the agenda until a crisis happens.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“The blind pride of putting oneself at the center of the universe is the hinge upon which the entire world of the ruined self turns. When we are lost to God, we are also lost to ourselves.”

Dallas Willard



“Should a board address discipline issues or let them fester? Most boards go with ‘fester’ and trudge along with no relief in sight.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“How do you refresh a meeting that’s grown rote? Break the script.”

Chip Heath and Dan Heath



“If you decide there are no big rocks to address at the next board meeting, perhaps it is time to consider moving to a less frequent meeting schedule.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“It was more than a little bit helpful to keep the phrase ‘created in the image of God’ in the back of my mind as I listened to someone criticize me or my policies.”

Gov. Bill Haslam



“Most boards have at least one dysfunctional board member. If you don’t know who that person is, it may be you.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Shoot for the ‘no surprises’ standard. The top leader and the board chair should have a roadmap well before the next meeting. This will allow for content to be delivered in such a manner that the discernment process begins early.”

David Wills



“Without written policies, boards are left to rely on institutional memories or to presume that the policy at any given time is whatever the board chair says it is.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“A guiding principle is that when the board is making a decision the process should be fair, open, and recorded.”

Robert C. Andringa and Ted W. Engstrom



“To the novice observer, every board has the potential to experience the swing of the governance pendulum at any time. In reality, opportunities for substantial change only occur when the board pendulum oscillates in a positive direction.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Effective boards don’t spin their wheels rehashing the past or even belaboring the present—instead, they look forward to where the organization will be in three to five years.”

Pastor Tim Lucas, Liquid Church



“Refine big rocks—don’t design them. The boardroom is not an appropriate or effective venue to design programs or address complex issues from scratch. Let the staff design and the board refine.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Boards would rather approve new programs, review the financial reports, adopt new policies —anything but set the top leader’s compensation.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“The technology we carry with us into board meetings significantly contributes to Board Attention Deficit Disorder (BADD).”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Most board members find it especially challenging to turn off their technology and be truly present in the boardroom.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Few things will kill the attention of board members like a meeting that seems to continue into eternity. Plan shorter meeting times to ensure the board’s maximum attention for the duration of the meeting.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Relationships happen in the margin, sometimes called ‘white space.’ Plan for adequate time for board members to reconnect with each other before delving into the agenda.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Every organization has and takes risks. Neil Simon once said, ‘If no one ever took risks, Michelangelo would have painted the Sistine floor.’”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Ask board members to name the top three risks facing the organization they serve, and their responses will be varied. While many risks will be projected, few board members are prepared to crisply identify the highest risks.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“If all risks are considered to be equal, then all risks will get the same attention—the major risks and the minor risks. The major risks will receive too little attention and the minor risks will get too much attention.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Boards often become convinced that they are making a decision in the best interest of the ministry. But they fail to consider how the decision will appear on the internet and social media.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“When the boardroom doors are closed, transactions with related parties often take on a golden hue. When the same decision is subjected to the bright light of the internet and social media, it can take on an entirely different look.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Sensitivity to the atmosphere is one of the most critical competencies for any board member. Some people feel a room easily and others have little or no sensitivity to the atmosphere.”

Danny de Armas, Senior Associate Pastor,
First Baptist Church, Orlando



“At least annually, board members should be required to provide a written acknowledgment of the confidentiality policy and their commitment to abide by that policy.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“The greatness of any board experience turns on two key hinges: the quality of the organization itself—including the significance of its mission; and the specific composition of board personalities—including the mix of competence and chemistry.”

Thomas Addington, CEO of Givington’s and
Omega Apparel



“In baseball, batters get three strikes before they are out. When a board member leaks confidential information and it has been addressed with the member, the second offense should be the end of the line. It is the ‘two strikes’ rule.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Board members often express frustration over unrealistic expectations. As Michael Anthony says, ‘It was as if the day I was elected to the board, the board assumed that a mantle of wisdom and discernment came magically on me from on high.’”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“One of the key dangers for boards is the temptation to micromanage, which does not allow staff leaders to do their jobs or execute the responsibilities for which they were hired.”

Steve Stroope



The best board members are almost always the busiest of people. If Leaders fail to recognize the often frenzied lives of board members, they do so at their own peril.

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Boards must say no to most issues that could create agenda clutter. While saying no to agenda items is not easy, the health of the board, and perhaps the ministry, is at stake.”

Steve Stroope and Kurt Bruner



“Avoid Rearview Mirror Syndrome! The best boards have a very strategic 80/20 rule. Great boards invest 80% of board work on the future. And great boards allocate only 20% of board work on the past.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Great boards engage the board and senior team members in trend-spotting year-round but especially at the board’s annual planning retreat.”

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Ruth Haley Barton



“Great boards appoint a ‘Reads Are Leaders’ champion—a book zealot who inspires the board to read and discuss at least one future-focused book each year.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Can board members discern and discuss important issues and clearly hear from the Holy Spirit while multitasking with their technology during a board meeting? We doubt it.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“The first consideration for meetings is whether to call one at all.”

Donald Rumsfeld



“Few boards can meet in a tranquil, mind-clearing location with a view of Pike’s Peak or of the ocean. But most boards can and should meet in surrounding that are well-lit, appropriately decorated, and with adequate space.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“If you don’t know what your three priorities are,
you don’t have priorities.”

Donald Rumsfeld



“Even seasoned board members do not always agree with one another. However, after the debate is over and a decision has been made, everyone must row in the same direction—this means speaking with one voice.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“Without adequate advance preparation to fully address an issue, boards tend to function as a committee of the whole, often resorting to painfully circuitous discussion.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“When a board veers into operational discussions, a bright line has been crossed by addressing topics that should be reserved for the top leader. A precedent may be set for future inappropriate board action.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“When a board member meddles in operational details, the board’s collective value is wasted.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson



“One very common leadership mistake is to think that we can take a group of undiscerning individuals and expect them to show up in a leadership setting and all of a sudden become discerning.”

Ruth Haley Barton



“Leading from the board chair is like being the conductor of an orchestra. A conductor must imagine the sound of the music when all the instruments are playing as one. Like an orchestra, each board member must be leading from the same page.”

Dan Busby and John Pearson





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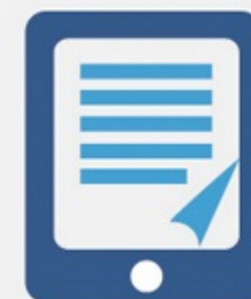
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