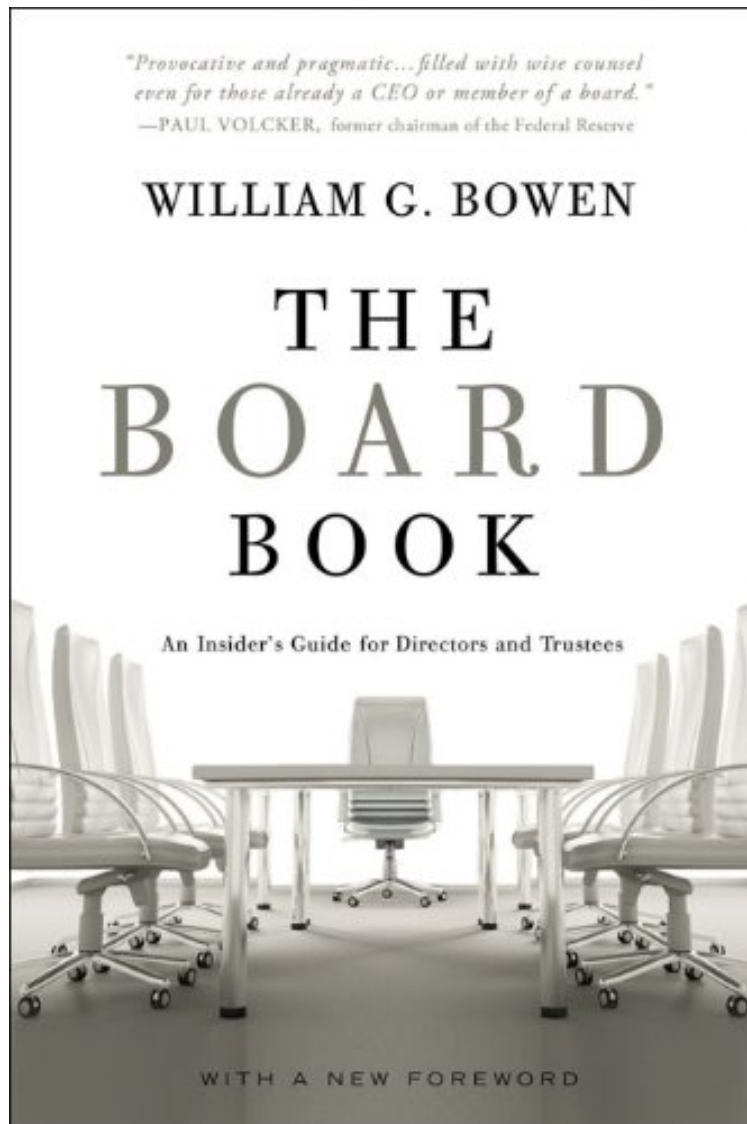


# The Board Book: An Insider's Guide for Directors and Trustees

William G. Bowen

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**William G. Bowen : The Board Book: An Insider's Guide for Directors and Trustees** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Board Book: An Insider's Guide for Directors and Trustees:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must read for Board Members and Senior Corporate and Nonprofit ExecutivesBy Daniel H. Harman IIIIf you are on a for profit or nonprofit board, or if you are a CEO or senior executive who deals with boards, and you have just one opportunity to read a book about boards, this is the one you should read. The author provides valuable insights from his years on various boards, written in an engaging and informative manner but also well-researched. I will forever benefit from his experience, intellect and knowledge. He is

able to show what for profit boards and nonprofit boards have in common and how they are different, a quality of the book which could aid the reader in making the transition from one type of board to another. An absolute MUST READ if you take your responsibilities seriously!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Good Resource for the Seasoned Board Member By Edward J. Barton The book is well written by a former professor and long time board member in both the for and not-for profit space. Bowen does a fine job of identifying challenges and issues for board members to work through and resolve as well as key awareness items in a post SARBOX environment. Many of the recent board level issues of the last decade, such as the NYSE-Grasso and the WorldCom-Ebbers board fiascos are discussed and analyzed. The book is pretty heavy reading, and while relatively short, is not for the "new" or "unfamiliar" board member. The reader is presumed to have some level of board experience, and this book digs into some of the stickier elements of governance and issue resolution. A good resource for the somewhat seasoned board member.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Required reading for directors and trustees By Steven Kirkpatrick This is a very good book, and it is with a certain sense of reluctance that I rate it with only four stars instead of five. Mr. Bowen, a distinguished and highly experienced professional who has served on many for-profit and not-for-profit boards, does a commendable job of sharing his wisdom, insights, and recommendations in this thoughtful and important book. The one frustration that I found with the book is the manner in which it jumps back and forth between issues involving for-profit boards and not-for-profit boards. In jumping back and forth, I felt a bit like my train of thought was continually interrupted. Perhaps a good analogy to explain my sentiments might be the following: You enroll in a foreign language studies program with the hope of learning both French and Spanish only to find that both languages are being taught in the same class at the same time; an astute student will learn a great deal, perhaps, but it might be easier and more enjoyable to separate the lessons a bit more. That being said, let me share some observations as to why this book is so good (in spite of the shortcomings mentioned above):

- \* The depth of Mr. Bowen's experience shines through on every page. This is a man who really knows what he is talking about, and he does an excellent job of sharing his valuable knowledge in a way that readers can easily understand and readily absorb.
- \* His advice is not just scholarly or "ivory tower", but rather very practical. One can put down this book, head straight for the boardroom, and apply its lessons immediately.
- \* Mr. Bowen captures the heart of many cultural, political, and related issues that impact the duties and responsibilities of those who serve as directors and trustees. Indeed, he goes far beyond simply sharing what he has seen and experienced: he offers interpretations and explanations for such trends, and thoughtfully weighs the pros and cons of many important issues. His discussion of the trends, as well as the benefits and potential drawbacks, of the move towards more non-executive chairmen of for-profit companies is one good example.

Overall, the book is rich in useful suggestions and good advice; I could cite many more examples, but instead I suggest that you simply read the book if you have any serious interest in this topic. Indeed, this book should be required reading for any director of a public company, large privately owned company, or significant not-for-profit entity. One of the reasons that I like this book so much might be that I agree with so much of what it has to say. While I do not have experience on not-for-profit boards, I have served on about a dozen small company boards, mostly for private companies. Many issues that I have addressed as a board member are thoughtfully presented and articulately discussed in this book. I found the chapters on "Board Leadership," "Building the Board," and "Board Machinery" to be particularly helpful. Finally, the last chapter, entitled "Themes," is a great compilation and summary of topics covered throughout the book. This chapter alone, while very brief, is nonetheless worth the price of the whole book.

"By far the best book on corporate and institutional governance." —Nicholas Katzenbach, former attorney general of the United States

In his new foreword to *The Board Book*, former Mellon Foundation and Princeton University president William G. Bowen brings his immense experience to bear on the most pressing questions facing boards of directors and trustees today: seeking collaborative relationships and placing a renewed emphasis on sustainable initiatives. The strategies Bowen relates throughout the book foster the collegiality and sense of purpose—more important in today's turbulent times than ever before—that are integral to any effective board.

From *Booklist* Former president of Princeton and of the Mellon Foundation, coauthor or author of more than 20 books, and a Fortune 500 corporation director, Bowen deserves to overhaul his 1994 *The Board Book*. In his review of board roles and responsibilities, CEO evaluations, transitions, compensation, and leadership, among other topics, he minces no words in forcefully expressing his opinions. Corporate America must pay attention to succession planning and how the CEO is paid. Board members need to be chosen not only for their background but for their courage and will to act. The lead director is an important and emerging role model to be emulated. With his words and advice exemplified by such well-known corporate leaders as Hanna Gray, Thomas Neff, Larry Bossidy, and Lou Gerstner, Bowen's facts and straightforward narrative make a compelling and critical read for wannabe directors—and for every student of corporate affairs. —Barbara Jacobs

He minces no words . . . a compelling and critical read for wannabe directors and for every student of corporate affairs. (Booklist)

Drawing on thirty years of experience with both for-profit and non-profit boards, it offers insights on ideal relationships between presidential and

board members. Any business library needs this. (Midwest Book ) Provocative and pragmatic . . . filled with wise counsel even for those already a CEO or member of a board. (Paul Volcker, former chairman of the Federal Reserve)

About the Author William G. Bowen (1933-2016) was an influential educator and the author of more than twenty books, including *Lessons Learned: Reflections of a University President*, *The Shape of the River*, and *Equity and Excellence in American Higher Education*.