



JamesDruryPartners

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## THE 10 MOST ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES OF HIGH-PERFORMING BOARD DIRECTORS

*SOURCE: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH 30 OF AMERICA'S MOST PROMINENT AND RESPECTED BOARD DIRECTORS*

- COMMUNICATION SKILLS** – *Priority of Emphasis: 73%*  
Thoughtful, logical, and articulate. Does not dominate boardroom conversation or comment just to get credit. Not compelled to contribute to every topic discussed. Speaks only when has something valuable to contribute. Able to build on the commentary of others and take it to the next level. Does not rush to conclusions.
- PROFESSIONAL COLLEGIALLY** – *Priority of Emphasis: 67%*  
Collaborative. A team player. Contributes to the success of others. Not a “gotcha” type. Discreet, diplomatic, and tactful. Respectful of tradition. Sensitive to the views of others.
- RELEVANT EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE** – *Priority of Emphasis: 63%*  
Leads from competency. Track record of high accomplishment and success, ideally in business. CEO experience and business intelligence most relevant. Seasoned, mature, and resilient. Capable of boardroom leadership impact when necessary and appropriate.
- HIGH INTEGRITY AND HONESTY** – *Priority of Emphasis: 57%*  
Strong character and high ethical standards. Genuine and authentic. Uncompromisingly fair. Trust-worthy in safeguarding boardroom confidentiality.
- HUMILITY** – *Priority of Emphasis: 57%*  
Ego under control and in check. Does not take self too seriously. On the board for the right reasons, not for the money. Puts the greater good first. Leaves personal biases at the door. Never tries to prove he/she is the smartest person in the room.
- PREPARATION AND SUPPORTIVE ENGAGEMENT** – *Priority of Emphasis: 50%*  
Does the homework. Attentive, prepared, and informed. Asks the right questions to surface relevant issues. Respectful of the management/CEO relationship. Never diminishes the views of the CEO in front of management. Knows how to challenge management, while making them feel good about it.
- COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE** – *Priority of Emphasis: 50%*  
Courage to say what they mean. Exercises initiative to ask questions that no one else will. Courage to be silent when there is nothing better to say.
- APPRECIATES DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOVERNANCE OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT'S ROLE** – *Priority of Emphasis: 40%*  
Understands a CEO runs the company, not the board. “Nose in, fingers out.” Stays out of the weeds. Wants to help make the company better, and the CEO successful.
- RESPECTFUL OF PEERS IN THE BOARDROOM** – *Priority of Emphasis: 33%*  
Self-assured, but realizes no one is always right. Open-minded, willing to change one's opinion. Can disagree without being disagreeable. Can challenge without being offensive.
- INQUISITIVENESS** – *Priority of Emphasis: 30%*  
High intellectual curiosity; loves to learn. Genuine interest in the company's business. Finds nothing about the business boring.