

10 Must-Reads on Boards: What Makes Great Boards Great



The dynamics of boardrooms have a significant impact on the success of organizations. Whether it's a global corporation or a local nonprofit, a great board can be the driving force behind strategic decision-making, innovation, and growth.

Harvard Business Review (HBR) has compiled a list of 10 must-reads on boards that provide valuable insights into creating and sustaining great boards.

Additionally, HBR offers a bonus article called "What Makes Great Boards Great" to further explore the elements that set exceptional boards apart from the rest. In this article, we will delve into the key takeaways from these resources and discuss how organizations can benefit from implementing their learnings.

HBR's 10 Must Reads on Boards (with bonus article "What Makes Great Boards Great" by



Jeffrey A. Sonnenfeld) (HBR's 10 Must Reads)

by Harvard Business Review (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 8393 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
X-Ray : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 318 pages



1. Board Composition: Aligning Skills with Strategy

Successful boards possess a diverse range of skills and expertise that complement the organization's strategic objectives. This article from HBR discusses how effective board composition can be achieved by identifying the critical skills needed for the board's specific needs and recruiting individuals with diverse backgrounds.

2. Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Boards

Nonprofit boards face unique challenges. This HBR publication argues that instead of solely focusing on compliance and fiduciary duties, nonprofit boards should embrace a leadership role by actively engaging in strategic activities and addressing social issues.

3. What Goes Wrong in Boardrooms?

Boards often face dysfunction and ineffective decision-making. This article sheds light on the common pitfalls encountered in boardrooms and provides

recommendations for recognizing and addressing these issues to ensure effective governance.

4. The Best Performing CEOs in the World

HBR's research on the world's top-performing CEOs offers insights into the critical competencies required to manage boards successfully. By studying the leadership practices of exceptional CEOs, this article reveals how CEOs can build strong relationships with their boards and drive organizational success.

5. Transforming the Performance of Your Board

When a board requires improvement, it's crucial to implement the necessary changes to enhance its performance. This HBR article explores practical strategies for transforming underperforming boards and creating a culture of continuous improvement.

6. Making Your Board a Strategic Asset

Great boards not only support the organization's mission but also act as strategic assets. This article highlights the importance of aligning the board's activities with the organization's strategic goals to maximize their impact on overall performance and long-term success.

7. Turning Great Strategy into Great Performance

Strategy execution is crucial for achieving the organization's objectives. Boards play a vital role in ensuring effective strategy implementation. This HBR piece presents actionable insights for boards to actively participate in the execution process and drive performance.

8. Leading Change from the Top

Change is inevitable, and boards must navigate it successfully to remain competitive. This article explores how boards can champion change initiatives, support innovation, and foster an adaptive culture within organizations.

9. Building Better Boards

Building a better board requires thoughtful planning and deliberate actions. This HBR article delves into the key elements of board effectiveness and offers practical advice on board recruitment, development, evaluation, and succession planning.

10. Strategic Leadership: The Essential Skills

Great boards are led by strategic leaders who possess essential skills for business success. This HBR publication identifies the critical competencies required for effective strategic leadership and provides guidance on developing these skills at the board level.

Bonus Article: What Makes Great Boards Great

This bonus article from Harvard Business Review investigates the qualities that set exceptional boards apart from average or underperforming boards. It explores the importance of a strong board culture, effective communication, relationships with management, and a shared vision for success.

Great boards play a pivotal role in driving organizational success. The HBR 10 must-reads on boards, along with the bonus article, provide valuable insights into creating, maintaining, and enhancing great boards. By implementing the strategies and recommendations from these resources, organizations can strengthen their boards and unlock their full potential for strategic decision-making, innovation, and sustainable growth.



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Serving on a board is like having a second full-time job.

Earning a seat on a board is a rite of passage for senior leaders. Serving on a board is an opportunity to share your skills and extend your reach beyond your own organization as you help select, appoint, and review the performance of an organization's senior leadership team, determine compensation and incentive plans, approve strategic decisions, and ensure the financial well-being of the organization in both the short- and long-term. But in today's increasingly complex business environment, serving on a board also means working to address detailed issues such as increasing diversity on the board itself and in the organization, ensuring a risk-mitigation plan that prepares the organization for everything from hackers to sexual predators, and navigating big-picture challenges such as the unprecedented pace of change and disruption--all while managing financials and shareholder expectations.

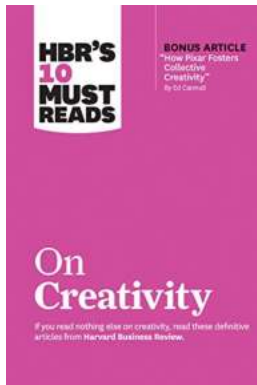
If you read nothing else on boards, read these 10 articles by experts in the field. We've combed through hundreds of articles in the Harvard Business Review archive and selected the most important ones to help you address classic challenges such as increasing diversity, ensuring a culture that reflects company values, and providing strategic oversight while also addressing emerging issues such as shareholder activism, cybersecurity, and ever-shifting regulations.

This book will inspire you to:

- Collaborate effectively with the other members of the board and executive team
- Anticipate and address legislation and regulation issues
- Adopt a company-centered model that prioritizes the health of the enterprise over fattening shareholders' wallets
- Rethink your role and attitude toward risk
- Support leadership transitions
- Foster creative abrasion to keep ideas flowing
- Manage and build relationships with the executive team--and your shareholders

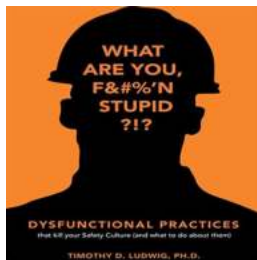
HBR's 10 Must Reads paperback series is the definitive collection of books for new and experienced leaders alike. Leaders looking for the inspiration that big ideas provide, both to accelerate their own growth and that of their companies, should look no further. HBR's 10 Must Reads series focuses on the core topics that every ambitious manager needs to know: leadership, strategy, change, managing people, and managing yourself. Harvard Business Review has sorted through hundreds of articles and selected only the most essential reading on

each topic. Each title includes timeless advice that will be relevant regardless of an ever-changing business environment.



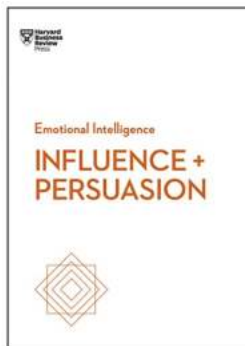
HBR 10 Must Reads on Creativity with Bonus Article: How Pixar Fosters Collective

Creativity plays a crucial role in driving innovation and success in today's rapidly changing business landscape. To excel in creative...



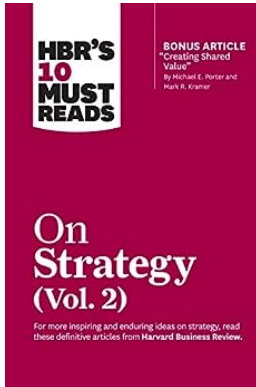
10 Common Mistakes That Kill Your Safety Culture And What To Do About Them

Safety should always be a top priority in any organization. Having a strong safety culture helps prevent accidents and promotes a healthy working...



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Influence and persuasion are essential skills in today's fast-paced and competitive world. In the professional context, mastering these skills can help...



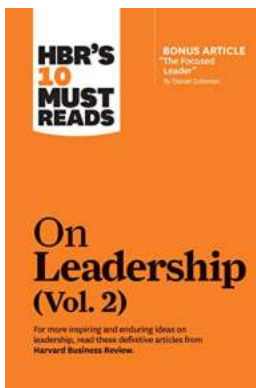
Unlocking the Secrets of Effective Business Strategies:

Building a successful business requires a solid strategic foundation. Without a clear strategy, companies often find themselves directionless and unable to...



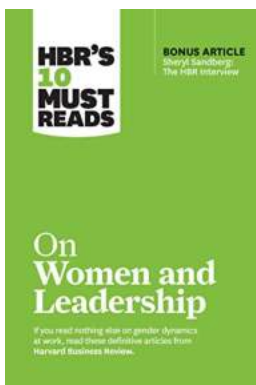
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Women have made tremendous strides in breaking barriers and forging their paths in the corporate world. Despite the progress, gender diversity remains a significant challenge...



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