



Warning signs in a board meeting

By Paul Chapman

The board meeting should be the place for considered discussion of where the company is now, and where it is going. This needs a clear mind, a primary focus on the big issues, good information and time for board members to think and discuss.

Frequently, however, meetings are dominated by discussions and details that should be tackled elsewhere. Symptoms of a poor board meeting include:

- Not reaching decisions
- Friction
- Rehearsing old arguments in the meeting
- Not having the full facts to make a decision
- Flavour of the month attitude to ideas
- Backward looking
- The wrong environment – e.g. The MD always makes the decisions anyway – no point contributing
- Inaccurate, incomplete or out-of-date information
- We have not launched a new product or service for years
- Our staff don't understand or communicate our vision effectively
- Board meetings are boring
- We are always unprepared
- The same old ideas come out

If you would like to discuss how your board could be improved call me or email me.

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About the Author

Paul Chapman had over 20 years' experience of marketing, sales and general management in the UK, Europe, USA and the Far East in both blue chip and early stage companies. He held managing director and marketing / sales director positions in 3 very high growth companies. He has experienced an IPO on NASDAQ, is a member of the Institute of Directors, and has been a company mentor with the Universities of Southampton and Surrey. He joined the Azure Partners board in 2004.

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"This is goodbye, gentlemen. I have met another board of directors, and we have fallen in love."

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