

# THE ELEVATOR

Volume 1 Issue 1: February 2019

## Introducing The Elevator

A newsletter buzzing about board governance and management of condo and not-for-profit boards.

We have decided to collaborate on a newsletter. Not just any newsletter, but a useful newsletter, a fun newsletter - one that makes you think and is enjoyable to read. Periodically we'll send out a quick hit of news, tips, thoughts, and connections to important resources and interesting information. There will be entries that relate primarily to condo boards, and entries that relate primarily to not-for-profit boards. Some will cover both.

We hope it lifts your day, offers you inspired ways to manage all the day-to-day duties, while elevating your practice of governance.

There is a theme to The Elevator. Watch it evolve over 2019. There will be hints scattered throughout our issues this year, and if you are the first to contact us and spot the theme, there will be an opportunity to win a mystery prize!

Pat Crosscombe & Bonnie Oakes Charron, Co-Editors

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## About Pat Crosscombe

Pat Crosscombe is the Founder and CEO of BoardSpace, a board portal for condos and not-for-profit boards. Pat started BoardSpace as a result of her experience on her condo board. Pat is currently in between boards, after serving on her condo board for seven years. Her faithful companion is Bill, the #unicornmascot for BoardSpace who arrived on Pat's lap in a rather unconventional manner.



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## About Bonnie Oakes Charron

Bonnie Oakes Charron is a governance specialist and information professional, creating business solutions for the space where governance meets administration. She was granted the Fellow in Governance designation from the Canadian Board Diversity Council (FGOV), is a member of Governance Professionals of Canada, and has an information science degree (MLIS). Bonnie currently sits on the Board of Directors at Odyssey Theatre, where she is the Chair of the Governance and Nominating Committee. Her faithful office companion is Heike the Munsterlander.



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## 1st Floor: "If you should do it, just do it."

Let's start 2019 with a look at what boards "must do" or "must review" on an annual basis. These can take the shape of an annual checklist or work plan and are based on your board's governance framework. These are requirements dictated by legislation, regulations, or other agreements and policies, and simply must be done.

Two items required by most boards is to establish an annual operating budget and hold an annual general meeting. There are many more and getting all of them done can lead to long checklists, automatic approvals, and over-use of valuable board time. If you're planning to start the year with a focus on checking those boxes, or creating the perfect documentation, maybe think again. The amount of effort and energy involved in all that paperwork might be reduced by just doing the right thing. Keep it simple - "if your board should be doing it - just do it".

Leverage the technology available in board portals such as Boardspace, and reduce paperwork to the essentials. Document what you must, but use most of your vital energy for developing and achieving your board's key outcomes this year.

"If you should do it, just do it." We are applying this guiding principle in everything we do in 2019.

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## 2nd Floor: Shake up your Meeting Format



## **Shake any *boredom* out of your *boardroom* this year - 5 wellness principles to energize your meeting format for 2019**

Does your regular meeting format include heavy meals, hours of meeting time with little exercise, or a lengthy checklist of approvals and reports with minimal participation or debate? Make wellness one of your first ‘board resolutions’ in 2019.

Boards come together and meet for one reason – to make decisions – and to make decisions that provide the best possible guidance to an organization and its stakeholders. Before people can make well-considered, thoughtful decisions, they need to have the right information, the right tools, a safe environment for frank discussions, and clarity of mind. The atmosphere in your boardroom should support and stimulate this critical thinking role. If the mood in your meeting space has become dull and sluggish, consider leveraging basic wellness principles to recharge and revitalize your upcoming board schedule this year.

[Read more](#)

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## 3rd Floor: Elevate your Game - Elevate your Board

What's your condo board's strategy for communicating effectively with owners?

Directors serving on the best condo boards make communications a priority and have internalized the philosophy that good governance includes communicating effectively.

Most condo boards complain about the lack of communication from their boards. Don't let your condo board be one of these - read more to uncover five simple ways to build good communication:

[Read more](#)

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## Rooftop: Getting Unstuck & Sparking Creativity

Do directors sit in the same chair at every meeting of your board? Chances are good that people choose the same seat time after time. Once in the corner, always in the corner? Across from the same face every single meeting? Next to the same director making the same conversation each time? Are the seats formally assigned? Or is it just habit? If there is no assigned seating, but everyone falls into their usual pattern - try asking everyone to move one seat to the right, or left. New perspective can be as simple as breaking out of auto-behaviours. This one change might foster new creativity, or at the least, spark fresh conversation.

Let us know if you experiment with this, and how it turns out. Share your wins, or lessons learned, so all our readers can reflect on it. We'll feature your feedback in an upcoming newsletter!

Until then:

“Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.”

— Winston S. Churchill

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## Resources

Are you looking for candidates to serve on your not-for-profit board? Find out more about Volunteer Ottawa’s Diversity in Leadership (DLO) program that seeks to identify, recruit, and train qualified individuals from diverse communities, and then matches them to not-for-profit Boards. Find out more at this link:

<https://diversity.volunteerottawa.ca/>

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Yours in good governance

Pat & Bonnie