

The shift in boardroom dynamics: Enhancing governance and strategic leadership

25 April 2025, Friday

9.00am – 1.00pm

Speaker: PROF DR ZUBAIDAH ZAINAL
ABIDIN FCIS (CS) (CGP)

Virtual

Course code: CG250425W1

Closing date: 23 April 2025

**4 CPD
HOURS**

Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of corporate governance, the traditional boardroom structure and decision-making processes are undergoing significant transformation. The shift in boardroom dynamics is reshaping how boards function, collaborate, and make decisions, and it is becoming a critical factor in driving both governance effectiveness and strategic leadership. Today, boards are not just tasked with overseeing financial performance and compliance, but are also increasingly responsible for guiding the organization through complex global challenges, ethical considerations, and long-term sustainability goals.

The changing dynamics in the boardroom—shaped by factors such as increased diversity, technological advancement, evolving stakeholder expectations, and greater focus on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) issues—are influencing how boards engage with management, define strategy, and fulfill their governance responsibilities. These shifts require boards to embrace new skills, foster more open communication, and build stronger relationships between directors, executives, and key stakeholders. This topic explores how the emerging dynamics in the boardroom contribute to enhancing both governance and strategic leadership. It delves into how changes in leadership styles, board composition, and decision-making approaches are not only improving governance practices but also enabling boards to provide more effective oversight and leadership. Through this shift, boards are becoming more agile, responsive, and capable of driving innovation and long-term value creation in an increasingly complex and fast-changing business environment.

Course objectives

The objective of this course is to explore the evolving dynamics within the boardroom and their impact on corporate governance and strategic leadership. Participants will gain an understanding of how changes in board composition, leadership styles, communication practices, and stakeholder engagement are transforming the way boards operate and make critical decisions. By examining current trends, challenges, and best practices, the course will provide participants with the tools and insights needed to strengthen governance, enhance strategic oversight, and foster effective leadership in the boardroom.

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the emerging trends and shifts in boardroom dynamics, including the increasing focus on diversity, technology, and ESG factors.
2. Analyze the role of effective governance in modern organizations and how shifting boardroom dynamics contribute to better oversight and decision-making.
3. Identify how changes in board composition, leadership styles, and collaboration methods influence organizational strategy and performance.
4. Develop strategies to improve board engagement, communication, and decision-making processes to drive long-term value and sustainability.
5. Assess the impact of evolving stakeholder expectations on board responsibilities and governance structures.
6. Learn how to foster a culture of strategic leadership and agility within the boardroom to meet contemporary business challenges.

This course is designed for board members, executives, governance professionals, and anyone involved in the oversight or strategic direction of organizations, providing them with the skills to adapt to and capitalize on the shifting dynamics of the modern boardroom..

Course outline

Module 1: Introduction to Boardroom Dynamics and Governance

- **Understanding Boardroom Dynamics**
 - Definition and importance of boardroom dynamics in corporate governance.
 - The evolution of board structures and decision-making processes.
- **The Role of Governance in Modern Organizations**
 - The changing landscape of corporate governance.
 - Key responsibilities and challenges for today's boards in providing strategic oversight and leadership.

Module 2: Factors Driving the Shift in Boardroom Dynamics

- **Diversity and Inclusion**
 - The impact of increased diversity (gender, ethnicity, skills, and experience) on board performance and decision-making.
 - How diverse perspectives enhance strategic leadership and governance.
- **Technological Advancements and Digital Transformation**
 - The role of technology in transforming board communication, decision-making, and oversight.
 - How digital tools and data analytics are reshaping governance practices.
- **Evolving Stakeholder Expectations**
 - The growing influence of investors, customers, employees, and communities on boardroom decisions.
 - The shift from shareholder primacy to stakeholder capitalism.

Module 3: The Role of Leadership in Modern Boardrooms

- **Leadership Styles and their Impact on Governance**
 - Examining traditional versus contemporary leadership styles in the boardroom.
 - How leadership in the boardroom influences organizational culture and strategic direction.
- **Building Collaborative Board Relationships**
 - Strategies for fostering trust, effective communication, and collaboration among board members.
 - The role of the board chair in facilitating strategic discussions and decision-making.

Module 4: Integrating ESG and Strategic Oversight

- **The Growing Focus on ESG in Boardrooms**
 - How boards are increasingly incorporating Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors into strategic planning.
 - The role of the board in guiding ESG initiatives and ensuring alignment with corporate objectives.
- **Balancing Short-Term Performance with Long-Term Sustainability**
 - Strategies for integrating sustainability into business models without compromising financial performance.
 - Case studies of boards successfully driving ESG goals.

Module 5: Enhancing Governance through Agile Decision-Making

- **Agility in the Boardroom**
 - How boards can adapt to rapidly changing market conditions and crises.
 - Tools and strategies to enhance decision-making speed and effectiveness.
- **Strengthening Risk Oversight and Strategic Resilience**
 - The role of the board in identifying and mitigating emerging risks.
 - How shifting boardroom dynamics improve the ability to navigate volatility and uncertainty.

Module 6: Effective Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

- **Board Communication Practices**
 - Best practices for clear, transparent, and impactful communication in the boardroom.
 - Ensuring alignment between board members and senior management.
- **Engaging External Stakeholders**
 - How boards can engage with external stakeholders (investors, regulators, customers) on governance and strategy issues.
 - Managing stakeholder expectations in the context of evolving boardroom dynamics.

This course outline is designed to provide board members, executives, and governance professionals with a deep understanding of the emerging shifts in boardroom dynamics and the tools needed to strengthen governance practices and enhance strategic leadership. Through case studies, practical exercises, and expert-led discussions, participants will gain valuable insights into the evolving role of boards in today's complex business environment.

Who should attend

Board Members, Corporate Secretaries and Governance Professionals, Governance Committee Members, Regulatory and Compliance Professionals, Consultants and Advisors

About the trainer: Prof Dr. Zubaidah Zainal Abidin, PhD, FCIS

Governance Professional | Academic Leader | Corporate Practices and Sustainability Expert

Dr. Zubaidah Zainal Abidin is a distinguished expert in governance, sustainability, and corporate practices, with over 40 years of experience spanning the corporate and academic worlds. She has held key roles, including Group Company Secretary for Safuan Group of Companies and senior leadership positions at Perwaja Terengganu Sdn Bhd and Malaysia Mining Corporation Berhad, mastering regulatory compliance and governance frameworks. An accomplished academic, Dr. Zubaidah served as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Internationalization) at Kolej Universiti Poly-Tech MARA and earned a Professorship at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), where she contributed significantly for over 25 years. She holds a PhD in Accounting from Curtin University and an MSc from the University of Southampton, reflecting her academic rigor. Her teaching and mentorship have guided countless professionals and students in subjects like corporate governance, boardroom dynamics, and corporate social responsibility. Dr. Zubaidah's areas of expertise include ESG and sustainability reporting, board governance, anti-money laundering compliance, and Section 17A of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act. She is a Certified HRD Trainer, a Fellow of MAICSA, and a Council Member for the Chartered Governance Institute Malaysia Berhad. As a prolific author, her eight books and numerous research contributions have influenced governance practices nationwide. A sought-after speaker, she has addressed global forums on governance risks, sustainable leadership, and ethical practices. Currently, she serves as an Academic Fellow at Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), advancing research and education in governance. Dr. Zubaidah's legacy lies in her commitment to ethical leadership, sustainable growth, and mentoring the next generation of governance professionals. Her transformative work continues to inspire organizations and individuals to navigate the complexities of modern governance with integrity and foresight.

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