

Effective Board Governance: Principles and Practices for High-Performing Boards

14 February 2025, Friday

9.00am - 1.00pm

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

Virtual

Course code: CG140225W1

Closing date: 12 February 2025

**4 CPD
HOURS**

Introduction

In today's complex and dynamic business environment, the role of a board is more critical than ever. Boards are expected to provide strategic oversight, ensure accountability, and foster sustainable growth while navigating an increasingly intricate landscape of regulatory, ethical, and stakeholder expectations. Effective board governance is the cornerstone of organisational success. It is the art of balancing compliance with strategic vision, fostering a culture of collaboration, and upholding the highest standards of ethical leadership. High-performing boards don't just meet minimum governance requirements; they actively contribute to shaping and steering the organisation toward its long-term goals. This training programme, *"Effective Board Governance: Principles and Practices for High-Performing Boards,"* is designed to equip board members, executives, and governance professionals with the tools and insights needed to excel in their governance roles. Through this program, participants will gain a deeper understanding of the principles of good governance, the dynamics of effective board functioning, and the practical strategies that drive board excellence. Key areas of focus include:

- Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of board members.
- Enhancing board dynamics and decision-making processes.
- Addressing emerging challenges such as ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), risk management, and digital transformation.
- Building trust and accountability with stakeholders.

By the end of the programme, participants will be equipped with actionable knowledge and best practices to elevate their governance impact, fostering resilient and forward-thinking organisation.

Course objectives

The objective of this course is to explore and develop an understanding of the evolving and strategic role of the company secretary in shaping and implementing corporate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) strategies. Participants will learn how company secretaries can move beyond traditional governance functions to become key drivers of sustainable business practices that align with corporate goals and meet stakeholder expectations.

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

1. Understand the growing importance of ESG factors in modern corporate governance and business strategy.
2. Identify the critical role of the company secretary in advising the board on ESG issues, regulatory requirements, and best practices.
3. Develop the skills to integrate ESG into corporate governance structures, ensuring alignment with organisational objectives and long-term sustainability.
4. Learn how to facilitate ESG reporting and disclosure, ensuring transparency and compliance with global standards and regulations.
5. Analyse the company secretary's role in stakeholder engagement, risk management, and fostering a culture of sustainability within the organisation.
6. Explore the emerging trends and challenges in ESG governance, and how the company secretary can help navigate these complexities to drive long-term corporate success.

This course will equip company secretaries, governance professionals, and business leaders with the knowledge and tools needed to strategically influence ESG strategy, ensuring that their organisations thrive in a rapidly evolving business environment focused on sustainability and responsible governance.

Course objective

1. Understand Core Principles of Board Governance

Gain a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental principles that underpin effective board governance, including transparency, accountability, and strategic oversight.

2. Clarify Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

Define the distinct roles and responsibilities of board members, including their duty to provide oversight, ensure compliance, and guide organisational strategy.

3. Enhance Board Dynamics and Decision-Making

Learn strategies to improve board interactions, encourage constructive discussions, and facilitate decision-making processes that lead to effective governance outcomes.

4. Strengthen Governance Frameworks and Policies

Equip participants with tools and frameworks for developing, implementing, and monitoring governance policies that align with legal, ethical, and strategic requirements.

5. Address Emerging Governance Challenges

Develop insights into current governance trends and challenges, including Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors, risk management, and digital transformation.

6. Foster a Culture of Accountability and Ethical Leadership

Promote the establishment of a strong ethical framework within the boardroom, emphasising the importance of integrity, transparency, and accountability in all board activities.

7. Build Effective Stakeholder Relationships

Explore how boards can manage and enhance relationships with key stakeholders, including shareholders, management, and regulatory bodies, to ensure organisational success.

8. Drive Organisational Performance through Strategic Oversight

Learn how boards can actively contribute to strategic decision-making and organisational performance, ensuring long-term sustainability and growth.

By the end of the course, participants will be empowered with the knowledge and best practices to be proactive, effective, and high-performing contributors to their boards, fostering a culture of good governance and driving long-term organisational success.

Course outline

Module 1: Introduction to Effective Board Governance

- Overview of board governance: Importance and impact on organisational success
- Key principles of effective board governance
- The evolving role of boards in today's corporate landscape

Module 2: Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

- Defining the roles of board members, executives, and management
- Legal and ethical responsibilities of board members
- Governance structures: Committees, subcommittees, and their functions
- The relationship between the board and management

Module 3: Enhancing Board Dynamics and Decision-Making

- Fostering a collaborative board environment
- Effective communication and decision-making processes
- Encouraging diverse perspectives and constructive conflict in discussions
- Managing board meetings: Best practices for agendas, minutes, and follow-up

Module 4: Strengthening Governance Frameworks and Policies

- Developing governance policies that align with organisational strategy
- Risk management frameworks and their role in governance
- Internal controls and compliance management
- Governance structures for sustainability and ethical practices

Module 5: Addressing Emerging Governance Challenges

- The role of boards in addressing ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) issues
- The impact of digital transformation on board governance
- Navigating complex regulatory landscapes and compliance challenges
- Crisis management and governance during uncertain times

Module 6: Fostering Accountability and Ethical Leadership

- Promoting transparency and accountability in board activities
- Building a culture of ethical leadership and governance
- Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its integration into governance
- Case studies on boardroom ethics and decision-making

Module 7: Building Strong Stakeholder Relationships

- Engaging with shareholders, employees, and external stakeholders
- Stakeholder communication and reporting strategies
- Building trust and maintaining positive relationships with key stakeholders
- The board's role in managing public perception and reputation

Module 8: Strategic Oversight for Organisational Performance

- Understanding the role of the board in strategic decision-making
- Aligning board actions with long-term organisational goals
- Setting performance metrics and monitoring organisational health

- The board's role in driving innovation and growth

Module 9: Preparing for the Future of Governance

- Emerging trends in corporate governance
- Adapting governance structures to a rapidly changing business environment
- Preparing for technological disruptions and future governance challenges
- Continuous professional development for board members

This course outline is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of board governance principles and best practices, offering participants the tools and insights to become effective contributors to high-performing boards.

Who should attend

Company secretaries, directors, corporate advisors, corporate governance professionals, lawyers, auditors, accounting professionals, risk management professionals and compliance officers.

About the trainer: 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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