

6 Questions to Prepare Technology Leaders For Their Next Board Meeting

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It's no secret that planning and running effective board meetings takes a lot of time and research. But how much do meetings these accomplish? Not as much as they could, according to research by Korn Ferry. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that board members are well briefed. Even though board meetings can be scary for people who aren't used to them or aren't ready for them, if handled correctly, they can be an excellent chance for the technology leaders to share updates, come up with new ideas and get the support and opinions of other important people in the company. In this article, I'll provide a list of key questions you need to be prepared to answer in your next board meeting.

But first, here's perhaps the most essential tip you need before going into a board meeting: Know your target audience. It is vital to research the past experiences of each member of the board and the other boards they serve before having your first meeting with them.

Even if most board members have only a basic understanding of information technology, they are aware of the most pressing issues since they keep up with the latest developments or what they have acquired from serving on other boards. If you keep an eye on those companies and do some research before you go in front of the board, you should have no problem answering their questions.

After knowing the target audience, it's also important to be ready to answer these tricky, timely questions below to show your board members that information technology is being led in the right direction:

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1. How well are we prepared against current cyber threats?

Board members continue to prioritize cybersecurity, which is particularly important given the increasing turbulence worldwide. Technology leaders should always be ready for this complicated question but shouldn't give doomsday predictions or seem too sure of themselves.

Be prepared to answer cyber-risk-related concerns. Stress that even if the risk is unlikely, it could have a significant impact, so you should plan for what you'll do to reduce it. Discuss where you aren't as secure, but quickly follow up with how you're improving, your strategy and how they can hold you responsible for improving and minimizing any cyber-attack threats.

Given the present state of the economy worldwide, some boards may wonder whether cyber-attack defense measures can be implemented more affordably. Most of the time, the answer is "no," especially if the company needs to keep its expertise or keep itself safe. Time, cost and quality make up the balance triangle, and technology leaders must stress how important each one is.

2. Are we investing in technology

that supports our strategy?

The board members may demand reassurance that the technology leaders have command of the IT investments that support the company's strategy. Because of this, it's essential to show how these investments fit into the overall investment plan and guarantee as good a return as possible.

Board members could also come up with their ideas for new technologies after hearing about them from competitors or other boards they are already on. As a result, technology leaders must be ready to respond to their questions.

A business context, not a technological context, should be used to address questions of this kind. The response may be determined by how well the company is performing and how well it is positioned economically. And in the digital space, is the company aiming to lead or follow?

3. What strategies are you employing to retain and recruit IT skills?

Due to the talent shortage in the IT industry on a global scale, board members may ask technology leaders what their company is doing to grow talent from within and what strategies they use to keep the talent they already have. They may even enquire about the rates of staff turnover and the companies' processes to attract new staff. Are you only offering a higher salary, or do you also have other enticing benefits?

Related: [**The Employee Retention Master Tip for Technology Companies**](#)

4. Should we automate to fill hiring gaps?

Some board members could also ask about automation or robots as alternatives if there aren't enough competent staff. The question may be, "Could we do it more effectively with automation because we can't find enough people to perform these tasks anyway?" Would it help the company become more robust or allow us to run more affordably in the medium- or long-term, not just today? Technology leaders should list the company operations that might or ought to be automated.

5. How are you cultivating an inclusive, equitable and diverse IT team?

With a growing focus on diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) as a critical workplace goal and productivity driver, technology leaders should be ready to explain their DEI initiatives, including how they recruit this talent.

Questions of sustainability may also be covered in these corporate responsibility issues. For example, they may ask "What are you doing to manage a more sustainable IT organization, lowering your data center footprint or switching to the cloud?"

6. What should we be worried about that we don't know?

The board of directors depends on your report to assist in developing the company's strategy. Things should begin with a clear top-three list. Always consider your choices before answering. Start with a statement, "Externally, there is a

potential revenue growth possibility by a given percentage.” Alternatively, inquire about what your competitors are doing, and elaborate. Or say something like, “The competitor we don’t even see today is likely doing this.” Never make up a response if a question arises out of the blue that you are ill-equipped to respond to.

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Technology leaders must conduct IT board meetings with more organization, planning and teamwork than they do in-person meetings. Making preparations will pay off. The first impression is always the most important. If you can get off to a good start in the first three meetings, your life will be much easier. Otherwise, it will become problematic down the road.

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