



Past experiences, future impact

Chairs' research report

December 2020

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Foreword

In a year marked by turbulence, there has never been a more important time to reflect on the role of governance in providing businesses with a strong compass.

Boards have been subject to new challenges, navigating both operational disruptions driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the long-term strategic challenges of guiding and energising organisations to thrive in the future. Decisions made by board chairs during this period are helping to determine what kind of future awaits businesses and the wider economy and society.

Over two months in late 2020, Deloitte New Zealand interviewed chairs of some of this country's most significant organisations to understand their experiences with COVID-19, the role they played in supporting their organisations to respond and recover, and the lessons they've learned.

The findings from these interviews have been compiled into a compelling report, showcasing perspectives from similar research conducted concurrently by the Deloitte Australia and United Kingdom firms.

While certain responses were specific to the relevant geographical markets, overall, the collective perspectives from chairs around the world presented similar themes, particularly around collaboration, the need for rapid decision-making, and supporting their organisations to transition to more digital ways of working.

Locally, the focus on people was paramount both during and after the lockdowns, as was the recognition COVID-19 isn't going anywhere soon, and new ways of working must ensure a continued ability to adapt as the market requires.

Our aim with this report is to showcase the resilient leadership demonstrated by New Zealand's chairs and boards as they responded to the crisis and resulting business disruption, and to generate ongoing conversations about corporate governance and business continuity in an unpredictable world.

We hope the report offers a snapshot of New Zealand's navigation of the COVID-19 pandemic – marking a point in time from which business will be able to reflect and consider their evolution in contrast to what may have been anticipated in pre-pandemic times.

My sincere thanks to those who participated in this research and shared their experiences with the wider business community.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping initial 'R' followed by a series of connected loops and a final flourish.

Ross Milne

Chair, Deloitte New Zealand

Executive summary

This report is based on a series of interviews with board chairs in New Zealand. The cohort of interviewees included 17 chairs overseeing 35 significant local organisations – with 28 per cent of NZX 50 companies represented and 20 per cent of the Deloitte Top 200 index for 2020.

Interviews were conducted with chairs between September and October 2020. They provided individual perspectives on leading boards and businesses through a crisis and their thoughts on strategic implications for the future.

Unsurprisingly, the experiences highlighted by the chairs varied depending on the industry in which they operate; however, clear themes emerged regardless of sector:

- The impacts of the pandemic on business are far from over and will persist into the future. There is a need to build a new level of agility and risk sophistication into business as usual processes, which will ultimately provide benefits beyond the immediate crisis.
- The board and management – particularly chairs and CEOs – formed deeper, more collaborative working relationships through the crisis, while still maintaining governance and management separation.
- Diversity of thought, skills, experience and background became more important than ever during the crisis. Many chairs felt that boards already embracing diversity and inclusion were able to respond more effectively to the crisis.
- There is a need to manage multiple time horizons using scenario planning and risk management. This helps ensure the long-term strategic priorities of the business provided a 'north star' to the immediate tactical responses required.

- Supply chains were rapidly disrupted and ensuring supply security on an ongoing basis is critical. Chairs agreed the growth in localisation and regionalisation (as opposed to globalisation) has been a solution to the global disruption predicted to persist for the foreseeable future and aligns well with the desire to support local business.
- Digital ways of working organisation-wide are the 'new normal' and making this functional for the business, employees and customers cannot be ignored.
- The talent pipeline is critical – including developing local leadership capabilities and understanding the impacts of border restrictions on access to global expertise.

This report is organised to reflect on the three timeframes over which a crisis plays out, based on Deloitte's COVID-19 Resilient Leader Framework:

- **Respond:** Accelerated strategic change to respond to the crisis
- **Recover:** Embedding change and restoring focus on other priorities
- **Thrive:** Building resilience and opportunity for future success

Overview

How organisations responded to the crisis



Respond

Accelerated strategic change to respond to the crisis



Recover

Embedding change and restoring focus on other priorities



Thrive

Building resilience and opportunity for future success

What changed

Pace of strategic change

- Rapid decision-making required to navigate change in business environment and business plan
- Quick decisions became the 'new normal'. Board governance processes had to adapt to reflect the demands of the time

Business continuity

- Pace of change accelerated in crisis-management mode, testing organisations' ability to respond to uncertainty

Managing risk

- Increased willingness to accept more short-term risks and relax normal risk constraints

Scenario planning

- Increased need to accept the reality of changing business models and adopt future focused thinking

Financing

- Financing and capital adequacy models viewed through a new, uncertain lens

Supply chains

- Consideration if supply chains remained fit for purpose

Digital capabilities

- Importance of working virtually advanced digital strategies

Operational impact

- Change in meeting style – more frequent, targeted meetings to increase speed of decisions
- Focus on operational fundamentals, and overseeing management on:
 - Financial liquidity
 - Operational resilience
 - Supply chain

- Strategic decision-making became more interwoven with business continuity and disaster recovery plans
- Increased focus on scenario planning sessions exploring the future of business and moving beyond traditional business models
- Balance sheet and funding agreements were reviewed
- Assessment of adequate liquidity needs in response to disrupted revenue streams
- Boards discussed whether to pay dividends to their shareholders

- Exploring the value and importance of supplier relationships and loyalty, and regionalisation of supply chains
- Accelerated use of digital platforms and systems

Respond

Accelerated strategic change to respond to the crisis

When COVID-19 arrived in New Zealand, the Government quickly imposed one of the world's toughest lockdowns. This meant boards were forced to adapt, adjust and respond with agility amidst a rapidly changing situation both domestically and internationally.

The new reality meant traditional ways of working needed to be modified – lengthy board papers were reduced to just a few pages, and meetings using virtual platforms became frequent and often arranged at short notice. Boards across the country rose to the challenge, quickly adapting their processes, responding in real-time and most importantly, supporting their people through the uncertain environment they were all navigating.

Command centre

Board processes

Amid the chaos, boards needed to adjust their established processes. The rapid changes brought on by the pandemic required them to be dynamic and agile, with a focus on protecting and providing support to their people, staff and stakeholders.

While this support was critical, boards needed to remain cognisant of their requirement to maintain a degree of independence and not overstep into operational management. Our findings suggest chairs were able to maintain this separation, balancing the needs of their people with the pillars of strong and effective governance.

The shift to using virtual tools for meetings meant they occurred on an as-required basis, more immediately and more frequently than traditional processes typically allow. Changes and iterations to documents and projects occurred in real-time with involvement from management where required. The adoption of new ways of working also extended to board-level decision-making,

and judgement calls were made under urgency with greater efficiency. However, in some cases the rapidly changing requirements introduced by the Government in response to the pandemic replaced decisions a board would normally have control over.

Agility in decision-making

Chairs reflected on a new approach to decision-making, with boards operating in a more flexible and responsive manner. Shorter virtual meetings, where verbal briefings were preferred over the standard board papers, supplemented by frequent communication (outside of board meetings) between chairs, directors and management teams drove efficient decision-making in response to the crisis.

For some boards, decisions were delegated to and owned by newly established sub-committees. This approach meant relevant expertise and skill-sets were aligned with priority areas for the business. In addition, a delegated approach to decision-making meant the workload was shared across all directors, further enabling decisions to be made in a timely manner.

Accelerated digitisation

Digital tools meant boards could connect immediately when needed and quickly deal with matters at hand through shorter meetings and condensed agendas to avoid screen fatigue.

While these tools were easy to use, they brought with them their own challenges. Chairs reported that it was harder to interpret body language, read the room and follow social cues compared to face-to-face meetings. Many chairs noted it is during these times of crisis that being together in person as a board is considered the preferred and most effective way of working.



Boards that had previously managed disruptive events prior to COVID-19 were able to **quickly pivot to the 'respond' mode** of operating, allowing them to efficiently tackle a range of issues.

Grant Frear, Strategy Partner, Deloitte New Zealand

The board's relationship with management

The importance of an effective working relationship between the chair and CEO with open lines of communication is essential. During the tremendous uncertainty of the pandemic, chairs reported closer and more frequent dialogue with their CEO. Conversations acted as a 'check and balance' for one another, with chairs often proactive in asking their CEO challenging questions while being conscious of not stepping outside their role and hampering executive action. Chairs reported that while at times this approach led to disagreements with the CEO, it also forged greater trust between them.

Several chairs noted the crisis brought boards and management together, with greater collaboration and meaningful two-way communication flows. Management teams communicated more with boards over this time, and their direct updates from the front line of the business helped inform decision-making.

Value of diverse perspectives and extensive governance backgrounds

Many of the chairs interviewed spoke about the importance of having diversity at the board table. They said that having diversity of thought, broad perspectives on issues and a variety of experience and expertise on a board leads to faster and better decisions.

Numerous chairs pointed to the value of having experience in crisis management on the board to help navigate the repercussions of COVID-19. Whether this experience came from the Christchurch or Kaikōura earthquakes, the global financial crisis, or the stock market crash in 1987, the experience of those who had navigated a crisis before was invaluable in dealing with the uncertainty of the pandemic and providing guidance to the board.



There is a business resiliency risk related to executive team talent retention driven by sustained border closures. **The conversation is not only about recruiting offshore labour,** it's also about being mindful of New Zealand's relatively small domestic talent pool for executive leadership and retaining the talent already here.

Richard Dorset, Financial Advisory Services Lead Partner, Deloitte New Zealand

COVID-19 has provided boards with a unique opportunity to consider an alternate route forward, maintaining and building on the agility experienced during lockdown. Chairs suggest boards should be encouraged to challenge themselves as well as management to determine what is important to their organisation, and to consider how to embed these new practices and ways of working into the business.

People and talent

COVID-19 acted as a reminder for everyone that an organisation's greatest asset is its people. Regardless of industry or business size, the health and wellbeing of individuals became more important than ever in 2020.

Health and safety

All chairs noted health and safety was a priority on the board's agenda – for most, it was already on the radar and COVID-19 pushed the topic to the forefront.

Meeting regulatory requirements as a PCBU (Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking) proved challenging during lockdowns when it was difficult to understand the working conditions of team members. Checking in with team members, supplying equipment to assist with home office set-ups and use of dedicated health and safety committees (many were already established) were some initiatives used as a means of mitigating the challenges in this space.

Mental health is an area boards are paying increasing attention to, as remote working and lockdowns heightened stress levels for many people. Organisations went above and beyond to ensure they offered substantial and sufficient support for their people.

Talent

For many organisations, the pandemic highlighted both top talent and gaps at the management and board level. Those which had already been investing in their talent found the pandemic response reinforced their talent strategy and recruitment decisions.

Chairs spoke of hiring experts to assist with areas such as investor relations, people management and digital transformation as an immediate way to cover talent gaps and support both the pandemic response and future considerations. Some organisations redeployed team members to under-resourced areas of the business in the short term to ensure they retained their people.

Concerns were raised about overseas talent who had been recruited to New Zealand prior to the COVID-19 disruption. Additionally, chairs have concerns around sourcing the right expertise with border constraints, particularly in industries which traditionally rely on overseas talent to fill roles.

COVID-19 has challenged the responsibilities of employers for the wellbeing of their people, particularly around the psycho-social response. **Boards have an opportunity to set a new tone from the top** redefining their role as employer beyond just a set of commercial and economic parameters.

Thorsten Engel, Health Lead Partner, Deloitte New Zealand

Thinking ahead, boards and executive teams will be considering what the pandemic means for talent in the future and who they need on their teams as they move ahead and look to drive the business forward in the 'new normal'. It has highlighted the need to ensure local talent is brought through the pipeline and that opportunities are provided to learn from overseas experts.

Strategy

The pandemic required boards to refocus and strategise in order to adapt to the evolving situation. Boards used this time of uncertainty to test and validate their strategy and provide clarity of focus and purpose – which chairs reported as both exhilarating and exhausting.

While some boards saw their organisational strategy withstand the disruption brought on by COVID-19, others say the pandemic acted as a catalyst for achieving faster progress and impetus to implement change. For organisations that either had benefits-driven initiatives in the pipeline or had started them, the crisis provided the urgency to implement these projects more quickly.

Irrespective of industry, chairs say the pandemic provided a licence to change and challenge the status quo and stressed this opportunity should not be wasted.



Recover

Embedding change and restoring focus on other priorities

Following the initial 'respond' phase, organisations shifted into 'recover' – the phase in which change is embedded and focus begins to return to other priorities.

Business continuity

In the wake of the first lockdown, organisations focused on business continuity, contingency and disaster recovery planning. Crisis management saw the pace of change accelerate, testing the ability of organisations to respond to the unexpected. Chairs reported they were able to repurpose resources within the organisation to maintain the strength of the balance sheet, which allowed organisations to effectively navigate the uncertainties of the pandemic.

Scenario planning

A focus of boards has been to encourage senior management to put their organisation in a stronger market position by aligning strategic decision-making to business continuity and disaster recovery plans. Given the uncertainty of the pandemic, boards and management had to act decisively to mitigate risks and plan for recovery across multiple scenarios.

Some chairs noted that as organisations moved into recovery mode, discussions turned to the future of business. This led to an examination of traditional business models as well as scenario planning sessions.

Chairs collectively agreed that boards increasingly challenged management to adopt a future-focused mode of thinking to strengthen the resilience of the organisation. They expressed the need for boards to accept the new reality of changing business models and the likelihood that uncertainty will continue for some time.

Managing risk

In the initial 'respond' phase, the chairs interviewed almost unanimously said keeping the business running was their immediate reaction to the crisis. Chairs reported a greater willingness for boards to relax normal risk constraints and accept a higher number of short-term risks. Entering the recovery period meant organisations were generally able to return to their core risk management principles.

COVID-19 forced leaders to explore how their strategies would perform under different, disruptive scenarios over shorter time frames. **Helping management to be clear on the choices that could be made confidently** in all scenarios became a key output of the board process.

Chris Rodgers, Strategy Partner, Deloitte New Zealand

Organisations that understood the importance of communicating and consulting with stakeholders were able to **maintain or improve their overall market position**, despite significant financial constraints. Future governance might evolve towards more impact-driven models in order to realise these benefits.

Deborah Lucas, Corporate Responsibility Lead, Deloitte New Zealand

Financing

In the recovery phase, organisations, management and boards faced a new reality. Changing business models, risks and opportunities meant financing and capital adequacy models needed to be reviewed through a new, uncertain lens.

A number of chairs spoke about the need to assess what adequate liquidity looked like under a variety of scenarios that would disrupt revenue streams. Many reported their organisations drew down against facility headroom and looked to equity providers to access sufficient cash reserves. Others focused on reviewing balance sheets and funding agreements, with some chairs recounting challenging discussions on whether to cancel previously announced shareholder dividends.

There was recognition among chairs that boards had maintained a strong long-term focus on financial sustainability while addressing immediate business needs. They utilised government assistance such as wage subsidies and loan extensions where needed and available.

Social responsibility and purpose

COVID-19 underscored the growing societal expectation on business to demonstrate social responsibility and the importance of putting purpose before – or at least alongside – profit. Many chairs reflected that society is looking to see businesses taking meaningful action and authentically making Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance commitments.

Social responsibility became a tension point for some industries and companies balancing business and regulatory obligations with supporting their people and communities. Some chairs noted boards and management teams were faced with navigating the realities of accessing financial assistance from the government and sustaining a commercial entity.

People were a priority for all boards and organisations with additional support being made available for both employees and customers. Such assistance included providing alternative accommodation and remunerating employees for not coming to work if unwell and being flexible with customers struggling to pay bills or supporting those unable to access critical products or services.

For some boards, their existing community focus was enhanced in the pandemic response with additional funding and product donations offered to those in need.

Executive remuneration

While remuneration and incentives for executives had been considered prior to COVID-19, the pandemic added weight to the discussion – particularly the short-term nature of incentives. Business disruption meant many executives didn't meet KPIs and therefore did not receive short-term incentive payments. This was despite significant efforts and commitment made to navigate the crisis. Given investment decisions are focused on the long-term, some chairs have suggested executive incentives should also be aligned with this same long-term perspective.

Thrive

Building resilience and opportunity for future success

COVID-19 provided organisations with a unique opportunity to leverage the current climate to accelerate and thrive. For some, this resulted in new solutions that advanced their digital transition, forced the adoption of new ways of working and helped prepare for future challenges. Chairs remarked on the new set of parameters that now exist for business, where fundamental assumptions have been challenged and, in some cases, completely rewritten.

Supply chain

COVID-19 disrupted supply chains and organisations are now faced with the challenge of determining if their current model is fit for purpose. Chairs are exploring the notion that supplier relationships and loyalty is more important than ever, reflecting on the trade-off between point efficiency and effectiveness versus a more resilient, elastic service.

Those organisations with existing supplier relationships have withstood some of the challenges together, mutually leaning on one another to provide opportunities to extend payments or amend contractual terms when required. Chairs agreed the growth in localisation and regionalisation (as opposed to globalisation) has been a

solution to the global disruption predicted to persist for the foreseeable future and aligns well with the desire to support local business.

Digital capabilities

In the wake of the pandemic, chairs have witnessed increased demand on digital capabilities required within their organisations.

The sudden reliance on virtual tools accelerated the use of digital platforms and systems for many businesses, also acting as a catalyst for culture change and the progression of their own digital strategies. Chairs reported quickly adapting to these digital ways of working as the new normal, with digital transformations already planned or underway in many organisations prior to the pandemic.

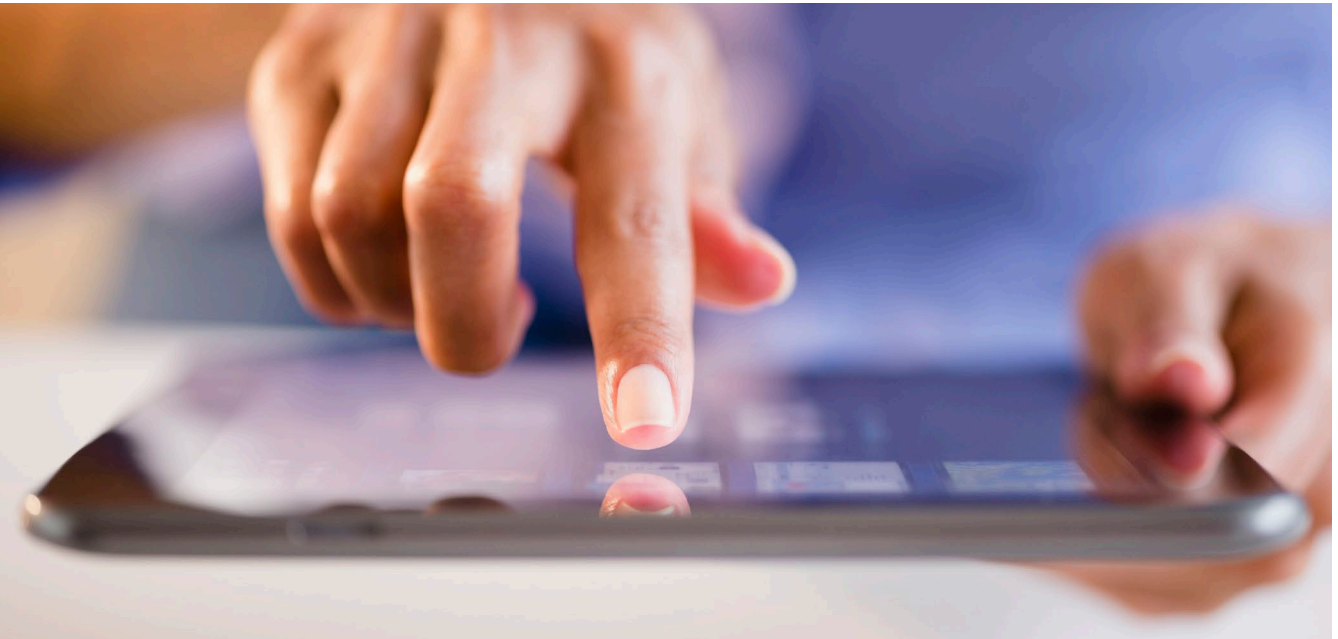
Permanent shifts

Chairs say since the beginning of the pandemic they have experienced an improvement in the quality and effectiveness of communication between board members as well as between board and management. The pressures of the pandemic response and lockdown have created greater cohesion between leaders who went

Supply chains are being impacted in ways never seen before as societal needs change and consumer preferences evolve.

Certainty and security of supply of critical items is now a global imperative as manufacturers ramp-up output and look to logistics providers to ensure fast, effective delivery of products.

Paul Shallard, Operations Transformation Partner, Deloitte New Zealand



through the crisis together. This is expected to enhance resilience and provide opportunities for shared learning – something chairs pointed to as a positive outcome from the pandemic that should be retained.

A further shift has been a movement towards employees working from home. Chairs reported many employees enjoy the flexibility that working remotely allows, and organisations are now exploring how to balance the impact of flexible working practices on internal culture and productivity.

Boards are looking to utilise the momentum gained during this period and the shared experience everyone has been through to influence culture shifts across their organisations.

Concerns and levels of optimism for the medium term

Chairs have a balanced view on the future, acknowledging the uncertainty ahead while also recognising the opportunities created by the disruption of COVID-19.

The ongoing challenge for boards is the unknown period of uncertainty and being prepared for a range of different future scenarios. Some chairs expressed concerns over New Zealand's ability to continue attracting offshore capital and felt the pandemic exposed weaknesses due to our isolation and reliance on certain industries. Appreciating these concerns, they feel there is a chance to capitalise on opportunities created by the pandemic's impact.

Opportunities

Chairs say by retaining a long-term focus, boards can assess how their organisation can capitalise on opportunities when better economic conditions return. Some have reported their organisations are undertaking

a review of skills and expertise, products and services, and business models to ensure they will be fit for purpose in the future.

Many boards have continued to invest in strategic projects which were already in progress prior to COVID-19, recognising the long-term value these will bring.

While the future will be viewed through a different lens by each company and industry, all chairs interviewed recognise the pandemic has provided the business community an opportunity to reset, reconnect and rebuild.

The pandemic has seen a shift in the momentum toward digitisation and how work gets done. Barriers to new ways of doing things have come down and **many people have embraced and developed a more digital mindset.**

**Sonia Breeze, Human Capital Partner,
Deloitte New Zealand**

The way forward

In summary, we have found the impact of COVID-19 has significantly shaped the way the chairs interviewed are thinking about the future.

When the pandemic struck, chairs focused on:

- Recovering and rebuilding businesses more effectively
- Adapting board operations and governance to be fit for purpose in an environment of constant change, and
- Securing supply chains.



Their focus has now shifted to:

- Exploring the future of business and moving beyond traditional business models
- Shaping boards effectively for the new ways of doing business, including accelerating the use of digital platforms and systems
- Understanding risk appetites and tolerance, and preparing for risks and uncertainties in the future, and
- Building and maintaining trust with all stakeholders.

While the introduction of a COVID-19 vaccine was not something chairs were interviewed about, it is important to acknowledge the role it will play in economic recovery. The New Zealand Government has indicated the first vaccines could arrive in New Zealand as early as the first quarter of 2021.

As vaccinations are rolled out, immunity to the disease will slowly start to build within the community and border restrictions may begin to be eased. As a nation dependent on cross-border trade, easing such restrictions will provide business with more confidence in their trade security and some economic relief should be seen. However, it is important to note this process is going to take time and it is likely restrictions will remain in place for many months, if not years, to come.

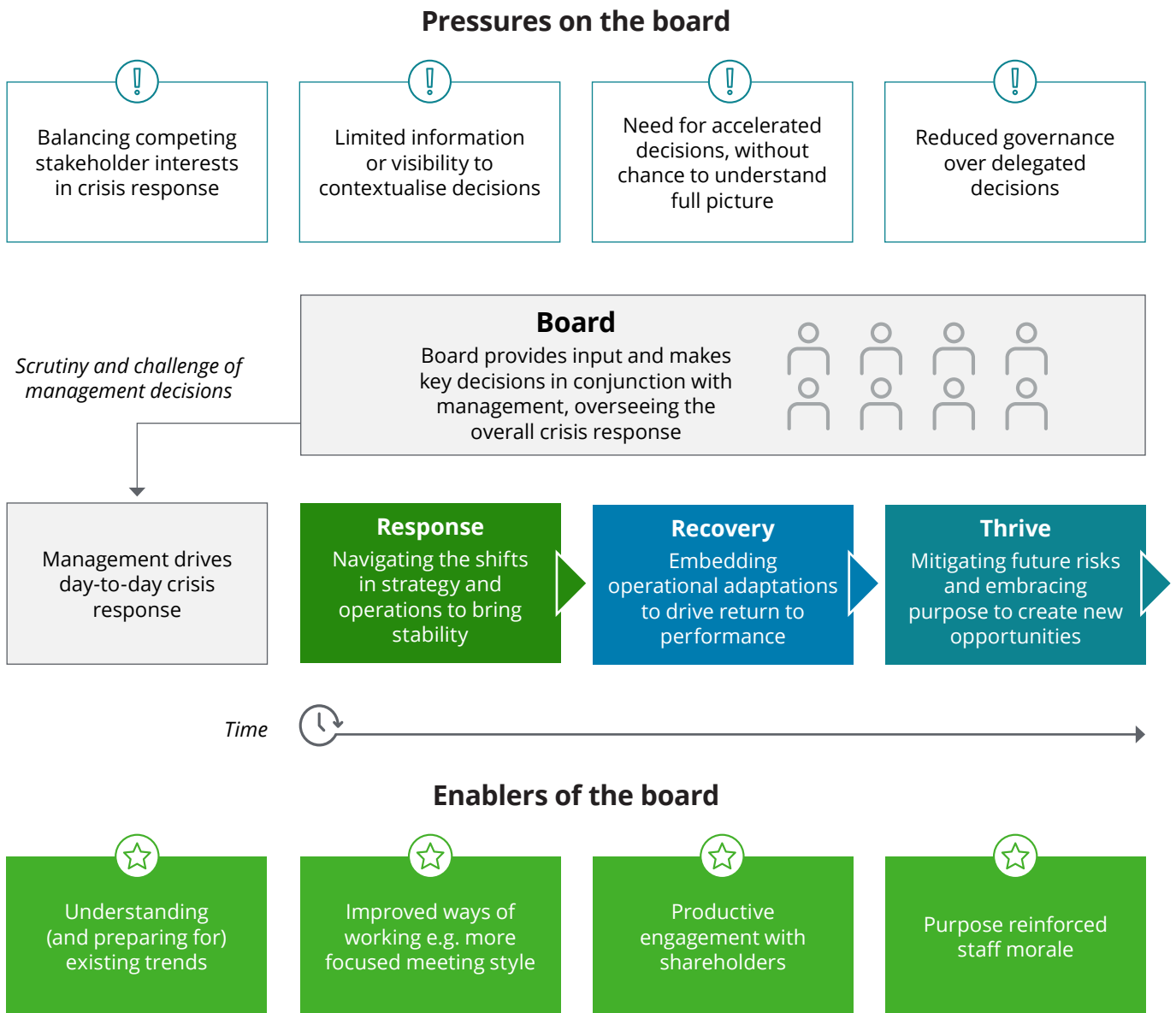
The road to economic recovery from COVID-19 will not be straightforward, but it brings with it opportunities for business to grow, implement lessons learned and move into the future with purpose.

In the crucible of crisis, **resilient leaders are defined first by who they are and what they do** at different times and across multiple priorities.

Resources for resilient leadership, Deloitte Global

Decisive decisions

How COVID-19 changed board thinking



Advice for future chairs

During the interviews, we asked chairs for advice they would offer future chairs. We have compiled their collective experiences to provide guiding principles for directors taking the next step into chairperson roles.



Focus on people

- Actively engage with people at all levels to gain a thorough understanding of the organisation. Being present in the business and providing opportunities for engagement with employees will help you add greater value as a chair and inspire the wider team.
- Build a strong relationship and trust with the CEO from the beginning to take the company forward together. When the organisation is inevitably hit by a crisis, you will be able to overcome it as a team.



Have open conversations

- Communication is essential to be a successful chairperson, whether in a crisis or generally. Open conversation with the management team helps the chair to understand their views and ensures a productive working relationship.
- Diversity of thought supports a productive board. Consider the need for both diversity and broad capability around the board table to drive productive debate and discussion and avoid groupthink – facilitate board meetings in a way that enables all directors to have their say.



Be committed, inside and outside of the boardroom

- The role of chairperson is not just a job, it is a significant commitment focused on delivering value to an organisation and its shareholders.
- Thought should be given to how many directorships can be held at one time to ensure the appropriate time commitment can be given – particularly during times of crisis. This commitment includes a willingness to invest time into being out and about in the business and a passion to leave the organisation in a better place.
- Getting out of the boardroom is essential. Learning from other experts and organisations can provide insights that help to generate new perspectives.



Learn from other chairs and directors

- As a new or incoming chairperson, regularly seek advice and feedback from other experienced members of the board and collect multiple points of view to form your own perspective.
- Businesses have been through many crises before and leveraging other chairpersons' and mentors' experience can help organisations survive and, in many cases, thrive through disruption.



Composition and capability is critical

- The composition of the board and management team is critical to achieving growth aspirations. Having the appropriate processes, culture and incentives to attract the right mix of experience and skill in an organisation's leadership teams.
- Encouraging current board and management team members to take up learning opportunities, such as other board roles or development programmes, can assist with generating new ideas and bringing new perspectives.
- Chairs and boards want to add value to their organisation. Achieving this will require listening to others around you, challenging the agenda, and ensuring the board focuses priorities that will improve the business.



Prepare, prepare, prepare

- Environments change rapidly and it is up to the board to ensure the organisation can adapt and transform when it needs to. This may require running crisis simulations to ensure the appropriate response is in place and that communication is effective.
- COVID-19 has highlighted the need to go beyond compliance. It is essential to have up-to-date business continuity plans and risk registers that are regularly tested rather than waiting for a crisis to begin before the organisation develops the tools it needs to survive.

Perspectives from chairs in the United Kingdom and Australia

Despite the differences across the geographies participating in this project and their respective interviewees, overall, the three firms found similar themes coming through in the research – including accelerated digitisation, the need for new levels of risk management, and enhanced relationships between chairs and CEOs.

RESPOND

“ We found chairs were giving considerable thought to the continuum between centralisation and decentralisation, especially in global businesses where there had been an increase in autonomous decision-making at the local level in response to geographical variations in conditions. Boards need to assess whether local and central governance and risk processes are sufficiently robust for this new style of devolved decision-making. ”

Insight, Deloitte United Kingdom research

“ Overwhelmingly, chairs confirmed their strategies remained relatively unchanged. What had shifted was the pace, with COVID-19 accelerating productivity and efficiency and challenging the ambition of execution. ”

Insight, Deloitte Australia research

“ Seasoned board members with crisis and recession experience ... played a critical role in advising CEOs and C-suites on operations and strategy during the initial response to the pandemic. Newer directors and executives who had not previously experienced a crisis felt very supported by directors who provided insight in dealing with a deep crisis. ”

Insight, Deloitte Australia research

RECOVER

Chairs are grappling with the implications for risk management, relationship-building and nuance that relies on face-to-face interaction...some changes have included asking more operational questions and expecting more granularity of information from management... and adapting the risk register into a more active management tool.

Insight, Deloitte United Kingdom research

Unsurprisingly, several interviewees reported an increase in the number of scenarios they explored – up to 50 different scenarios, from Doomsday to off-the-chart recovery.

Insight, Deloitte Australia research

Chairs are aware of the attention paid to stakeholder capitalism, and the view that companies should address the interests of employees, customers, local communities and society in general and not just shareholders and other investors.

Insight, Deloitte United Kingdom research

THRIVE

What has emerged [from the crisis] is a sense that companies and boards may be able to do things differently, taking a fresh look at business models and revisiting traditional assumptions.

Insight, Deloitte United Kingdom research

Four issues emerged which are anticipated as priority areas for board attention in the near future: cyber risk, board skills, reputation and the future of work.

Insight, Deloitte United Kingdom research

Boardroom leaders are optimistic about Australia's prospects to bounce back quickly from this crisis and many are justifiably bullish about their aspirations for growth. The enviable health response here positions us well for a sharp recovery and business leaders should be confidently poised to take full advantage of this.

Insight, Deloitte Australia research

Advice for future chairs



Australian perspective

- Lead with purpose and prioritise people
- Focus on the fundamentals of governance with accelerated agility
- Be brave, passionate, curious to learn, and seek diverse perspectives
- Know and empower your CEO and team
- Embrace the long view with a global outlook



United Kingdom perspective

- Be agile and responsive
- Actively lead the articulation of the broader purpose of the company
- Fully embrace diversity of thought
- Participate in continuous education and keep abreast of emerging issues
- Demonstrate added value to the business

“New ways of working must ensure a continued ability to adapt as the market requires”

Ross Milne, Chair, Deloitte New Zealand

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