

Board members emotional intelligence ?

Quite often during a Board life, looking at the way to improve it's composition, one member profile, in place, or to be recruited, is studied.

The process recommended by Gouvernance & Structures is to start from the company's already defined strategy and from the existing and foreseen board structure.

The standard approach is to list the factual parameters (age, gender, physical localization, availability, knowledge of the company sector), as well as the rational/cognitive intelligence (training, lived experiences,...)



"I don't want to change. I want all of you to change!"

But what about emotional intelligence ?

All the ones who lived within a Board know how the emotional behavior of each of the participants impacts the behaviors of the others and has a strong influence on the board efficiency.

Some typical examples: the board member who is frustrated because he was not understood and does not participate any more, the talkative who only thinks to be on the scene without feeling that the others are getting nervous, the women board member who is shocked by a bad gender remark, all the ones incapable to see and interpret the non-conscious gestures of the others: empathy or communicative enthusiasm of others.

On Wikipedia, one reads that the first studies on emotional intelligence appeared at the beginning of 1990 years. At that period, the emotional intelligence is defined as a form of intelligence which implies one's capacity to control one's feelings and emotions and the ones of the others in order to be able to cope with the distinction between them and use these information to guide one's own thoughts and gestures"

The emotional intelligence of each of us can be improved.

Without being so ambitious to try to elaborate an "emotional coefficient " for the Board member, searching and presenting the main aspects of this intelligence could be considered as a useful tool within a board structure improvement process.

The average women « emotional coefficient » is recognized to be superior to the one of the men. One can then assume that nominating women on boards have beneficial impacts.