**Step by step guide to the Governor skills audit**

There can be a temptation for skills’ audits to be seen as a tick box exercise by some Governors. When asked what the collated results tell their Board, some may comment: ‘not a lot’ or ‘we need someone with whatever skills are missing’.

At present, skills’ audits are most commonly used for Governor recruitment purposes, However, used properly, an effective skills’ audit will:

* Determine whether the Board can meet its goals
* Help the Board understand where they need to improve
* Identify specific knowledge gaps in areas the Board cannot do without
* Identify the strengths and development areas of individual Governors
* Help Governors to recognise the skills they need to develop
* Understand where training and development needs to be targeted
* Identify recruiting needs and be more likely to result in the most appropriate Governor being recruited
* Improve Governor morale, motivation and performance, aiding any restructuring of the Board and allocation of committee membership
* Enable a more effective team
* Aid with more effective succession planning within the Governing Board

Ultimately, the process of running a regular skills’ audit for all Governors, and not just new recruits, encourages the Board to bolster resources in the areas of key strategic importance to their School. Ideally at the conclusion of the audit process, Governors will be able to summarise their findings and identify:

* A profile of the skills currently available within the Board
* The skills base the Board needs now, including highlighting any major skills gaps
* A prioritised action plan

When completed, the results of individual skills’ audits should be aggregated to obtain a statistical view of the Board’s existing skills and knowledge base.

**Step by step guide to completing a skills audit:**

1. Identify a lead person – is this going to be the Training and Development Governor, the Clerk or someone else?
2. Choose the skills’ audit tool to be used, having identified:
   1. projects or new skills needed over the next year
   2. key skills and competencies needed for your Board to be effective
3. Ensure there are clear instructions, and that there is a clear timeline for completion, collation and analysis
4. Brief Governors explaining the purpose, the process and the benefits to the Board when done properly. Highlight the need for accurate self-reflection in order for the skills’ audit to be used as an effective tool
5. Arrange 1:1’s with Governors to identify their personal development plans
6. Collate and analyse Board results
7. Discuss and form action plan to address gaps and increase capacity
8. Repeat the process a year later, enabling effective tracking of the Board’s development over the past year

Finally, make sure it is not just a paper exercise!

**For more information please contact**

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