**Transforming Governance Q+A**

The following document collates the comments and questions at the *Transforming Governance Workshop - Recruitment of Trustees and Succession Planning* and a summary of the responses given by the host, Ian Joseph, from Trustee Unlimited.

*Please can you share ideas for simple appraisals/reviews?*

In terms of the appraisals for your board members, there are very different ways you can do that. I like to ask my trustees these four questions:

* Do you feel you have been provided with enough information to enable you to fulfil your role as a trustee? Or is it too much, or too little?
* How do you feel the charity is doing? Enabling them to share thoughts confidentially with the chair.
* How do you feel your own performance has been as a trustee and have you valued your contribution?
* Are there any areas where we can support you as a trustee in your development? That is a really great opportunity for issues such as mentoring or further training to be raised.

*I would be interested to hear more about the Young Trustees Movement, as it sounds like a great initiative.*

* You can find out more about the Young Trustees Movement here: <https://youngtrusteesmovement.org/>
* That organisation has 4,000 followers. They do some fantastic events and I think you can post your vacancies on their LinkedIn group.

*How do you go and interview your potential trustee candidate and what sorts of questions might you ask?*

There are three fundamentals I look for when interviewing potential candidates:

* One is motivation and really seeking to understand why they want to engage with the organisation. Unfortunately there are people who want to join a board, particularly if it's a fairly well-known organisation, not because of the objectives of the organisation, but because of the ‘halo effect’ it confers. They are not the people you want! Also on this point, sometimes people can be too emotionally invested or connected to a particular organisation and that prohibits them being really objective.
* Secondly, where can they add value? You want people to demonstrate the professional skills they bring to the table as well as some of the soft skills. On the soft skills, I always like to understand people's approach to teamwork and, as you know, a good board will have different groups of people on there. So, what you really need are people that are a little bit more sophisticated in terms of their ability to interact and work with others.
* The final thing is clarity over their understanding of the role. One doesn't expect all applicants to have read the Charity Commission guidance on the six fundamental duties of trusteeship, but you would hope that most people who apply for a trustee role have some understanding of what is required. Crucially, if your organisation has any scale, the difference between a non-executive versus an executive role, but for a very small organisation, the trustees wear two hats – a strategic governance hat, but also sometimes they will need to be tactical and operational too.

*You can work hard to bring your Trustee opportunity to a wide range of qualified candidates, but how can you be confident that, when they’ve joined your Board, they’re going to pull their weight?*

* Good HR practice! This applies to executive hires as well. So the more steps you put into a [recruitment and induction] process the more likelihood the outcome is positive.
* Be very clear upfront. Have a well-written advert and candidate information pack, explaining what the expectations are for the role, and be clear at every stage of the process, whether it be interviews with a headhunter or yourself, informal meetings etc.
* Some organisations keep a register of attendance, some organisations include that in their Annual Report and accounts that is published and in the public domain, even to the subcommittee level e.g. “Johnny is on the Finance Committee, but he has only turned up once this year after four or five meetings.”
* A Code of Conduct for the trustees could be helpful, and this could include, for example, if you miss three board meetings in a row without good reason you are expected to step down. Check your governing instrument for what you can and can't do.

*Our group discussed the issue of remunerating trustees & the suggestion that this is seen as good practice.*

* Remunerating trustees is very contentious.Charity law notes that trustees cannot be remunerated unless our charity gets permission from the Charity Commission, which is only for very specific circumstances and is often quite hard to do.
* Some people say that remunerating trustees rips the voluntary spirit out of trusteeship.I don't necessarily agree with that.There is an argument for remunerating trustees that really can't afford it.So if you are a young person, or a single parent, but that creates issues around fairness for all.
* I came across one organisation where the chair was paid £10,000 a year and the trustees weren't paid anything. I just thought that was terrible. So, it's a live discussion, there isn't a clear answer and there also isn't any evidence to say that paying trustees leads to better outcomes for the charity. Housing Associations have been paying their board members for 15 years or so, I don't think there is any evidence that the performance has improved.
* I can see a case for it and I can understand why some people are against it. I don't think it's as simple as just saying "we are going to do it.”

*If ‘only 10% of charities conduct open recruitment’, do we know either the success rate of open recruitment processes, and why the other 90% don’t?*

* There is very little data on the success rates of open recruitment and why more don't advertise their vacancies.
* However, if we look at the broader charity sector, so not just the arts sector, there are c.165,000 charities in England and Wales of which 96% have an income of less than £1million per year. The reality is if you are a small organisation and most of that 96% have an income of less than £100,000 a year, having the resources and the wherewithal to run an open recruitment process is not on people's minds. I think for a lot of organisations they don't have capacity, it's held together on a shoestring by a few volunteers.
* It's very rare now for larger organisations not to recruit openly and often there is an expectation from funders about this. Increasingly, even in places like the sport sector, the governing bodies are under pressure to make sure it's as open as possible.
* Do we know the success rate? No, there are no metrics on that, it's a fragmented industry. If you go to our website you would find 66 adverts today. If you go to Reach Volunteering you would probably find another 100. But I think the chances of being successful are much higher when recruitment is more open. I think that is partly to do with supply and demand. A lot of people who know what trusteeship is don't know where to look to find a role. We need to do better as a sector to reach out.
* It's hit and miss. I have just done a piece of work for an organisation based in a very small geographic area near Stafford. Through working with us, we were able to delve into some of the tools we have and reach out to about 200 people who live within six miles of Stafford town centre. We already have some real interest in the role.
* I think it depends who you engage with and whether you can afford to invest a little bit in that process, but it's not easy. Recruitment can be very resource heavy... that goes back to the point that some organisations don't do it. I think in time we will find that as more organisations start to advertise publicly and as more individuals come forward to say we really want to engage and become trustees, you will find that supply and demand will get better and better and the matching will get easier and easier.
* One a positive note... We run a programme called *Step on Board* with big multinationals. We are currently working with 17 organisations such as KPMG, Deloitte, EY, Google, Barclays and lots of others. We have found there is demand from professional people wanting to become trustees but they haven't a clue where to find the opportunities. That gives me great heart that there is a wonderful supply of people out there, but we have to find a better way of marrying them up.