

# TRUSTEE Q&A

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**“There is a lot of value you could add by being part of a Board irrespective of your age or number of years of experience. Boards are made up of people with different backgrounds and the real value is the diversity of thought and perspective that you can bring, also it is a really good way to contribute and learn from other Board members who are very experienced in their fields.”**

## **Why did you choose to take on a voluntary trusteeship?**

Having worked on several corporate governance engagements during my consulting career, I was looking for an opportunity to be part of a Board of a charitable organisation where I could use my corporate governance expertise and make an impact at a community level. I took up a Board position at Let's Get Talking - an organisation focused on delivering mental health services to the community in Dublin and Galway. It was an opportunity to be on a Board and contribute to a cause that I am deeply passionate about - Mental Health.

## **What challenges did you encounter whilst being on a charity board?**

- a. Managing time
- b. Trying to learn all aspects of the organisation in order to fully appreciate the complexities involved in making a strategic decision.
- c. Trying to get familiar with the fiduciary duties and responsibilities as a Non-Executive Director

## **Did it give you a greater insight into the workings and challenges of charities in Ireland?**

Yes. The top 3 challenges that Charities face are:

- a. Focusing on the strategic issues of the organisation - the time spent on strategy is comparatively less than other issues.
- b. Board renewal - getting the right people for the right roles is a challenge considering it is a voluntary position requiring time commitment for Board meetings and sub-committee meetings.
- c. Brand awareness and fundraising

### **How important was teamwork and collaboration in relation to board effectiveness?**

Very important. We as a Board make certain strategic decisions that is going to impact the organisation in the long run hence it is really important to function as a team when making decisions. There are sub-committees that work on certain areas and report to the Board for decisions.

### **Do you feel you gained skills that you could take back to your professional working life? If so, what and how did you implement your learnings?**

Top 3 things that I think I've gained:

- a. Think strategically when looking to solve a particular problem
- b. How to collaborate better
- c. How to manage time effectively and prioritise better

### **What advice would you give to someone considering joining a charity board?**

Do it! It's a wonderful opportunity to learn and contribute to something that you are passionate about. You can learn a lot from other Directors, and it is an excellent way to expand your network as well.