

# Lightning Round: Ten Proxy Disclosures That Have Evolved in Recent Years.

January 2025



Jennifer Cooney

## Lightning Round: Ten Proxy Disclosures That Have Evolved in Recent Years

Sometimes it is challenging to define what constitutes a "trend" in corporate disclosures. Most proxy statement developments are the result of incremental changes year over year that eventually accumulate into a noticeable shift in approach. The following are ten examples of proxy disclosures that - whether by regulation, stakeholder influence, self-prioritized governance enhancements, or a mix of the three - continue to evolve in content and presentation.

**Board Skills Matrix** 

**Director Biographies** 

**Re-nomination Process** 

**Director Time Commitments** 

Shareholder Engagement Cycle

Beyond the Boardroom

Sustainability Governance

Selection of Incentive Metrics

**Equity Grant Practices** 

**Compensation Recoupment Policies** 

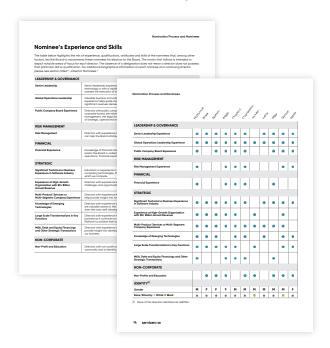
## 1. Board Skills Matrix

The board skills matrix, which presents the qualifications and experience of each individual director, is key to demonstrating that the proposed slate of nominees has the expertise needed to guide the company's long-term strategy and create shareholder value. The initial iteration of the matrix included a list of skills with checkmarks or similar indicator for each of the applicable directors possessing the requisite experience. Later versions of the matrix include, or are supplemented with, a description of each desired skill and (ideally) how the skill is relevant to board effectiveness for that specific company. To emphasize the connection to strategy, some skill matrices now visually present qualifications related to strategy separate from other necessary competencies of its board members.

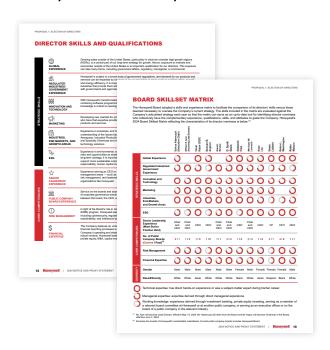
#### Lumen 2024 Proxy Statement



#### ServiceNow 2024 Proxy Statement



#### Honeywell 2024 Proxy Statement



## 2. Director Biographies

As companies enhance their board skillset disclosures, nominee biographies also have been reimagined. To some extent, it seems that disclosure around director experience has come full circle and perhaps the newest presentation of board qualifications and skills in bios most closely aligns with the intent of the rule promulgated 15 years ago requiring "specific experience, qualifications, attributes or skills that led to the conclusion that the person should serve as a director . . . in light of the registrant's business and structure." Bios that once laid out a director's career path, together with a narrative discussion, moved to a bulleted format with career highlights and skills lists or icons. While easy-to-digest, readers needed to make the connection between the director's professional background and the acquired skill. More recently, however, biographies directly and succinctly link qualifications with experience. Some companies even distinguish between type or level of experience.

#### Coca Cola 2024 Proxy Statement



#### CSX 2024 Proxy Statement



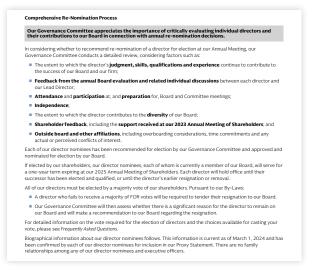
## 3. Re-nomination Process

Director nomination disclosures historically have focused on the nomination and corporate governance committee's recommendation of the slate of nominees for election. Often this section includes a statement that the committee annually considers the current composition of the board, as well as ongoing consideration of the board's collective skills and needs in light of the company's near and long-term strategic ambitions. Many proxies then move directly into disclosure about the process for identifying new director candidates. More recently, however, companies are sharing more detail about how they consider the renomination of incumbent directors, with some companies emphasizing that re-nomination is not automatic.

#### JPMorgan Chase 2024 Proxy Statement



#### Goldman Sachs 2024 Proxy Statement



#### Mondelez 2024 Proxy Statement

## INDIVIDUAL DIRECTOR SELF-ASSESSMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR RENOMINATION OF INCUMBENT DIRECTORS

The Board does not believe that directors should expect to be automatically renominated. Therefore, annual Board and director self-assessments are important determinants in a director's renomination and tenure.

The Governance Committee coordinates annual Board, committee and director self-assessments. The assessment process includes one-on-one discussions between each director and the independent Lead Director. All incumbent director on moninees complete questionnaires annually to update and confirm their background, qualifications and skills, and to identify any potential conflicts of interest. The Governance Committee assesses the experience, qualifications, attributes, skills, diversity and contributions of each director. In coordination with the independent Lead Director, the Governance Committee also considers each individual in the context of the Board's composition as a whole, with the objective of recruiting and recommending a slate of director nominees who can best sustain the Company's success and represent shareholders' interests by exercising sound judgment and informed decision-making.

The Board expects that a director's other commitments will not interfere with his or her duties as a Company director.

The Governance Committee and the Board take into account the nature and extent of a director's other commitments when determining whether to nominate that individual for election or re-election. Under the Company's Corporate Governance Guidelines, directors should not serve on more than three public company boards in addition to the Company's Board (for a total of four public company boards), and a Board member who also serves as CEO (or equivalent position) at another public company should not serve on more than two public company boards in addition to the Company's Board (for a total of three public company boards).

### 4. Director Time Commitments

Most director policies limiting service on other boards reflect the stated guidelines of the company's most influential investors and proxy advisors. Disclosure of company-specific board service policies is common to show alignment. While shareholders still show interest in these policies, there is increased interest in understanding the board's analysis of each director's ability to devote the time necessary for effective service rather than only a bright-line test. Accordingly, proxies are including more information about the board's process for considering director time commitments.

#### Bank of America 2024 Proxy Statement

**Director time commitment.** Our Board understands the time commitment involved in serving on the Board and its committees. Through the Committee, the Board evaluates whether candidates and serving directors are able to devote the time necessary to discharge their duties as directors, taking into account their primary occupations, memberships on other boards, and other responsibilities.

In 2022, at the Committee's recommendation, our Board amended its policy on outside board service set forth in the Corporate Governance Guidelines. The revised policy limits the maximum number of public company boards on which a director on our Board may serve to four public companies (including our Board) and specifies that any public company chief executive officer who serves as a director on our Board may not serve on the boards of more than two public companies (including our Board).

The Committee assesses directors' time commitment to the Board throughout the year, including through the annual formal self-evaluation process and prior to the annual renomination of currently serving directors. Under our Corporate Governance Guidelines, directors are expected to seek Committee approval prior to joining the board of another public company, and directors who change principal occupations must offer to resign from the Board, subject to further evaluation by the Committee and the Lead Independent Director.

The Committee regularly reviews and closely monitors external perspectives and trends on the appropriate number of public company boards on which directors may serve, including the proxy voting guidelines of our major shareholders and input from shareholder engagement discussions, voting policies of the major proxy advisory firms, corporate governance guidelines adopted by other public companies, board trends at peers and other significant public companies, and advice from outside advisors.

Outside board service policy

All directors

CEO directors

1 total

2 total

4 total public company boards (including our Board)

2 total public company boards (including our Board)

Aligns with majority of institutional shareholders' policies. All directors and nominees comply with our outside board service policy.

#### Cardinal Health 2024 Proxy Statement

#### **Additional Board Service**

Directors are expected to commit sufficient time and attention to the activities of the Board. In accordance with our Corporate Governance Guidelines, except as approved by the Board:

- directors who serve as executive officers of a public company, including Cardinal Health, should not serve on more than one public company board in addition to our Board; and
- other directors should not serve on more than three public company boards in addition to our Board.

In addition, no director who is a member of our Audit Committee may, at the same time, serve on the audit committees of more than two other public companies, unless the Governance and Sustainability Committee determines that such simultaneous service would not impair such director's ability to effectively serve on our Audit Committee.

Directors must advise the Chairman of the Board, the Chair of the Governance and Sustainability Committee, and the Corporate Secretary in advance of accepting an invitation to serve on another board or any appointment to an audit committee, a committee chair position, a lead director position, or a board chair position on any other public company board.

Our Corporate Governance Guidelines include a formalized process in which the Governance and Sustainability Committee conducts an annual review of director capacity and outside public

company board commitments. During this annual review, the Governance and Sustainability Committee may consider all factors it deems to be relevant, including the following:

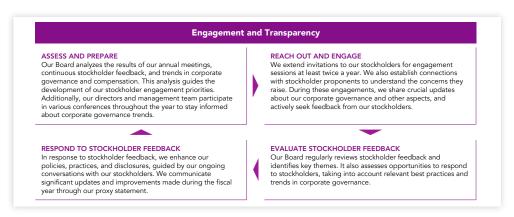
- · meeting attendance;
- whether the director is currently employed or retired from fulltime employment;
- the number of other boards on which the director sits and the commitment levels and time demands of such other boards;
- the role of a director on other boards (with consideration given to public company board leadership positions);
- any industry or other commonalities between outside boards that aid in the director's efficiencies serving on such boards;
- any other outside commitments;
- individual contributions at our Board and committee meetings;
- peer review feedback from directors throughout the year (if any) and the results of the annual Board evaluation; and
- the director's general engagement, effectiveness, and preparedness.

The Governance and Sustainability Committee conducted a review of director capacity for our 2024 director nominees and affirms that they are compliant with our outside board commitments policy.

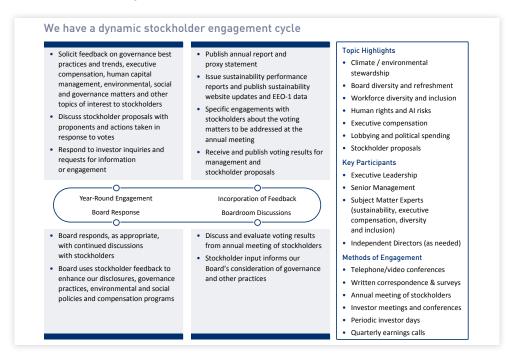
## 5. Shareholder Engagement Cycle

Companies generally want to show that they are actively engaging with their shareholders year-round. While quarterly earnings calls, investor conferences, and conversations with investor relations and management are ongoing, the primary focus of proxy statement disclosure has been around documenting the who/what/ when of the governance outreach program (although some companies also include an overview of their investor relations calendar). The "when" component of the disclosure led to a common graphic showing governance engagement efforts during each of spring, summer, fall, and winter. Recently, this graphic has moved away from emphasizing the seasonality of engagement to instead focus more on how each outreach campaign aligns with the board's calendar and its consideration of feedback.

#### Leidos 2024 Proxy Statement



#### Lockheed Martin 2024 Proxy Statement



## 6. Beyond the Boardroom

Expectations of directors continue to increase with more topics directly falling under the umbrella of strategy and risk oversight. To demonstrate that the board understands the business and is more engaged than a limited quarterly schedule of meetings might suggest, proxy disclosures often show ongoing director involvement. The "beyond the boardroom" presentation in proxies began six or seven years ago, but decreased during the covid period. Recently, there has been an emergence of this practice, which brings together director orientation, continuing education, and meeting attendance disclosure with other director touchpoints such as briefings and updates between meetings, board interaction with management and employees, and onsite visits.

#### Portillos 2024 Proxy Statement

#### **Beyond the Boardroom**

The commitment of our Directors extends well beyond preparation for, and participation at, regularly scheduled Board meetings. Engagement outside of Board meetings provides our Directors with additional insight into our business and our industry, and gives them valuable perspectives on the performance of our Company, the Board, our CEO and other members of senior management, and on the Company's strategic direction.

#### Director Orientation

Following feedback from the most recent selfevaluations, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee is rolling out a new Director onboarding program, which will include an immersive introduction to the Cornpany, meetings with fellow Directors (including an "onboarding buddy"), and a detailed reference guide.

#### Periodic Briefings from Management

Our management team provides our Board with regular business updates and periodic updates on major business developments, milestones, and important internal initiatives to keep the Board informed between regularly scheduled meetings on matters that are significant to our Company and industry.

#### **Access to Management**

All Directors have full and free access to management during and outside of regularly scheduled meetings. In response to feedback from the most recent self-evaluations, additional steps have been taken to ensure that our Directors and management team continue to build strong relationships and maintain an open dialogue.

#### Continuing Education

Directors are encouraged to attend Director development programs and conferences that relate to Director duties, corporate governance topics or to other issues relevant to the work of the Board. We periodically bring in outside experts to speak to the Board on timely topics, such as cybersecurity.

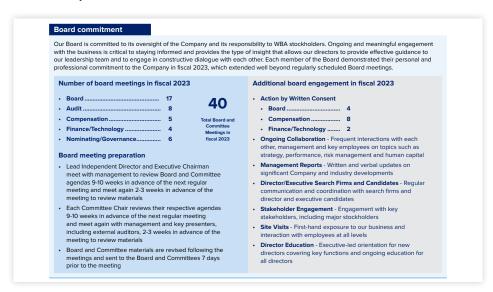
#### Shareholder Engagement

In addition to receiving regular updates on shareholder engagement, our Board and the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee takes an active role in reviewing and overseeing our shareholder engagement strategy.

#### Site Visits

We conduct at least one off-site meeting each year so that Directors are able to visit new sites and restaurants and can better evaluate the Company's strategic initiatives. In 2023, the Board visited restaurants and sites in our Dallas market, which was at the forefront of our strategic growth last year.

#### Walgreens 2024 Proxy Statement



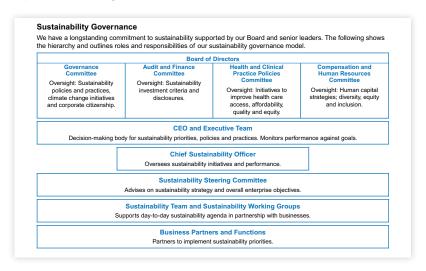
## 7. Sustainability Governance

Remember when most proxies discussed board oversight only in the context of risk? Although not required, it is now common practice to discuss the board's responsibilities more broadly, including at a minimum the board's role with respect to strategy and CEO succession planning. Insight into the board's approach to oversight of specific topics are also frequent disclosures. According to Labrador's recent benchmarking, approximately three-quarters of companies include a section, subsection or callout discussing the board's role in ESG oversight in the proxy statement. This disclosure is often accompanied by a visual element depicting the distribution of specific sustainability-related topics among the board and board committees. Inclusion of the governance framework supporting key initiatives can also be helpful – for example, the board oversight graphic may also include cross-functional management and operating committees tasked with day-to-day ESG responsibility.

#### Mastercard 2024 Proxy Statement



#### UnitedHealth Group 2024 Proxy Statement



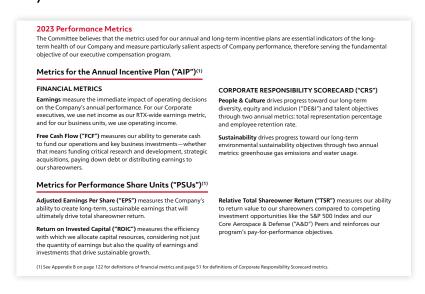
## 8. Selection of Incentive Metrics

Most shareholders cast their executive compensation advisory vote based on an assessment of pay and performance alignment. Accordingly, in addition to required CD&A disclosures about program objectives and elements, including if material, "specific items of corporate performance<sup>(1)</sup>" considered by the compensation committee, it is also necessary to explain the rationale for selecting certain metrics for the company's incentive plans and why they are important performance indicators given the company's unique business and its strategic goals. Given the importance of metric selection, we have noticed recent efforts to make this disclosure more prominent, including use of headers or even dedicated sections.

#### Intel 2024 Proxy Statement

A summary of the metrics and how they align to our long-term strategy is presented below.			
Metric	CEO Weight	Other NEO Weight	Why Included in our Annual Cash Bonus Plan
Revenue	25%	20%	<ul> <li>Aligns to our growth strategy and gives us the ability to measure our progress against our financial plans set early in the year</li> </ul>
Gross Margin Percentage	25%	20%	Ensures that growth is additive to the bottom line and gives us the ability to measure our progress against our financial plans set early in the year
Spend Reduction	25%	20%	Metric reflects our commitment on company cost savings in 2023
One Intel Operational Goals	25%	20%	Goals represent key deliverables or milestones that position the company to successfully execute our long-term strategic objectives
			Includes six operational goal categories that apply across all business groups to promote a "One Intel" mindset
			<ul> <li>The six categories include: financial stability, product leadership, scale growth engines, process leadership, culture, and RISE 2030 related goals. These goals are highly specific and extremely strategic. They cascade throughout our organization and are a core aspect of how we manage the company.</li> </ul>
Individual Performance Goals	-	20%	Provides ability to further promote strong execution of our strategy and drive differentiation in the plan results based on our NEOs' individual contributions to Intel during the performance period
			<ul> <li>Each executive's performance is assessed against the individual's 2023 pre-established objectives</li> </ul>
			Our CEO does not have an individual performance element to his Annual Cash Bonus Plan as he is ultimately accountable for the financial and operational performance of the company

#### Raytheon 2024 Proxy Statement



<sup>(1)</sup> Regulation S-K, Item 401(b).

## 9. Equity Grant Practices

The SEC's 2023 insider trading rules require not only disclosure about Rule 10b5-1 trading arrangements and grants of option awards within four days of reporting material nonpublic information, but also annual disclosure about policies and practices related to the timing of option award grants and release of material nonpublic information. While the latter is not a new requirement in principle, CD&A discussion usually focused on the timing and pricing of specific grants or was embedded in the compensation committee's decision-making timeline. With the new Item 402(x) of Regulation S-K now in effect, we expect more companies will choose to include a separate section dedicated to its equity grant timing practices (irrespective of whether options are currently part of the equity mix).

#### Freeport McMoRan 2024 Proxy Statement

#### **Equity Grant Timing Practices**

The committee's policy is to make annual equity awards under our LTIP at its first meeting of the year, which is usually held in early February following our fourth quarter earnings release. This meeting is scheduled approximately 24 months in advance and targeted to fall within the window period following the release of the company's earnings for the fourth quarter of the previous year. To the extent the committee approves any out-of-cycle awards at other times during the year, such awards will be made during an open window period during which our executive officers and directors are generally permitted to trade company securities as long as they are not in possession of material nonpublic information regarding the company.

The terms of our stock incentive plan provide that the exercise price of each stock option cannot be less than the fair market value of a share of our common stock on the grant date. Pursuant to the committee's policies, for purposes of our stock incentive plan, the fair market value of our common stock is determined by reference to the closing quoted per share sale price of our common stock on the grant date. In addition, our stock incentive plan permits the committee to delegate to appropriate personnel its authority to make awards to employees other than those subject to Section 16 of the Exchange Act.

Our current equity grant policy provides that each of our CEO, president and chief administrative officer has authority to make or modify grants to such employees, subject to the following conditions:

- no grant may relate to more than 20,000 shares of our common stock if the award is a full-value award and not more than 40,000 shares if the award is an appreciation award;
- such grants must be approved during an open window period and must be approved in writing by such officer, the grant date being
  the date of such written approval or such later date set forth in the grant instrument;
- the exercise price of any options granted may not be less than the fair market value of our common stock on the date of grant; and
- any such grants must be reported to the committee at its next meeting.

#### **PVH Corp 2024 Proxy Statement**

#### **Timing of Equity Awards**

Our equity award policy provides that the annual grant of stock options and restricted stock units to our senior executives, including our NEOs, generally will be approved by the Compensation Committee at a meeting held during the period commencing two days after the filing of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the most recently completed fiscal year and ending on April 14 of the current year.

PSU awards have historically been made around the end of the first quarter to provide time to finalize financial goals and, because certain of the goals include stock price performance, so that the end of the performance cycle occurs shortly (and not immediately) after we report our year-end earnings.

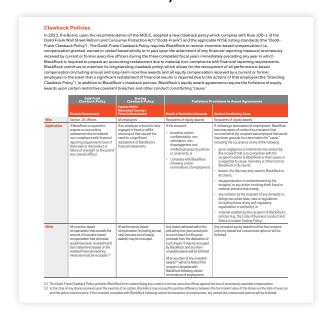
Equity awards may be made to our NEOs outside of the annual grant process in connection with a promotion or assumption of new or additional duties, or for another appropriate reason. All such grants to our NEOs must be approved by the Compensation Committee and generally will be made on the first business day of the month following the effective date of the precipitating event (or on the effective date if it is the first business day of a month).

The Committee retains the discretion not to make grants at the times provided in the equity award policy if the members determine the timing is not appropriate, such as if they are in possession of material non-public information. Additionally, the Committee retains the discretion to make grants, including an annual equity grant, at times other than as provided in the policy if the members determine circumstances, such as changes in accounting and tax regulations, warrant taking such an action.

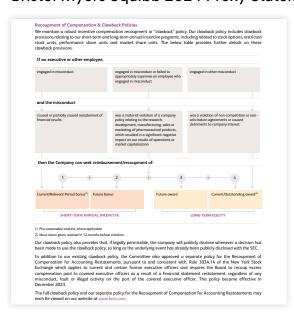
## 10. Compensation Recoupment Policies

Disclosure around companies' recoupment policies slowly have evolved from a high-level bullet in the "what we do" list of compensation best practices to a summary of key terms, mostly to satisfy investor inquiries into whether the policy covers <u>any</u> unearned compensation (e.g., due to an accounting restatement) and/or whether forfeiture is required in situations arising from employee actions. With requirements stemming from Dodd-Frank and related exchanges to adopt compliant recovery policies by December 2023, more robust disclosures were found in the wave of 2024 proxies. Many companies adopted a second policy to comply with the new rules, but also maintained their existing policy, requiring an explanation of the overlap and differences.

#### Blackrock 2024 Proxy Statement



#### Bristol Myers Squibb 2024 Proxy Statement





# About Labrador

Labrador exists to offer the science of transparency to corporations wishing to communicate effectively with their readers.

Our experienced and passionate team is composed of attorneys, designers, project managers, thinkers and web developers. We collaborate together around a process that encompasses drafting, editing, designing and publishing across all digital and print channels.

We are thrilled that communications prepared by Labrador have contributed to trustful relationships between our clients and their readers, whether investors, employees or other stakeholders.

In turn, our commitment to our clients has resulted in meaningful long-term relationships with some of the most respected public and private companies in the world.

contact-us@labrador-company.com

Labrador 1737 Ellsworth Industrial Blvd NW Suite E-1 Atlanta, GA 30318 (404) 688 3584

Copyright © 2025 by Labrador

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, email the publisher at contact-us@labrador-company.com.