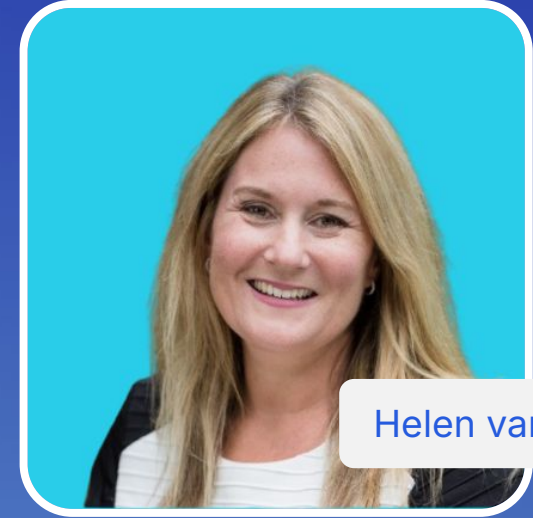




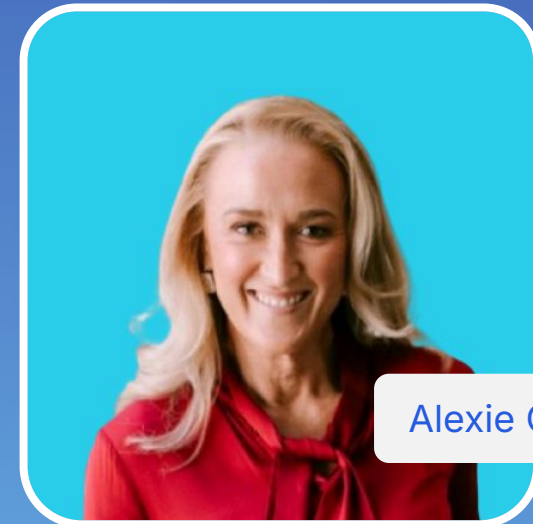
**Webinar**

**485 leaders told us where  
the AI governance gap is.  
Here's what they said.**

With Helen van Orton and Alexie O'Brien



Helen van Orton

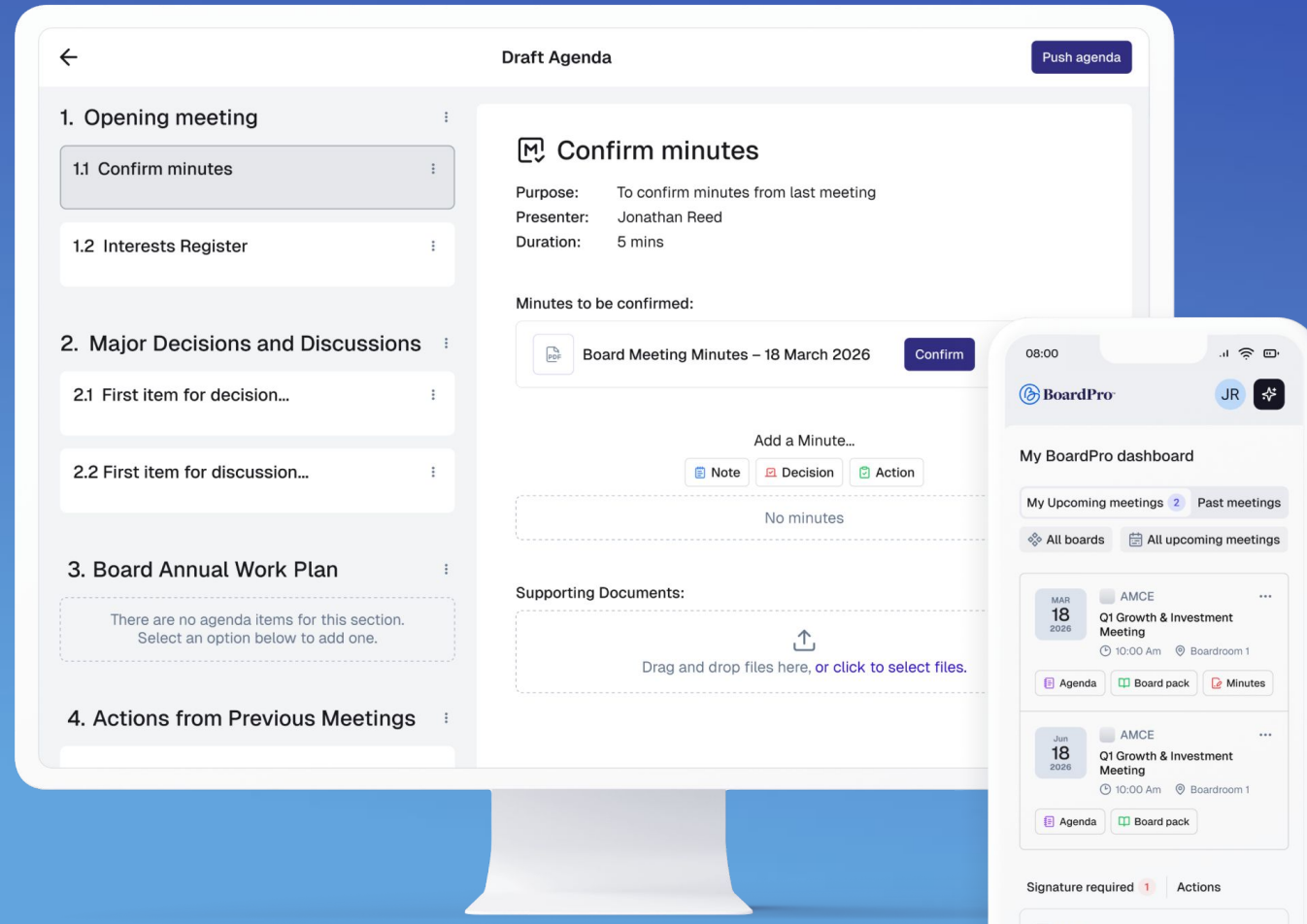


Alexie O'Brien





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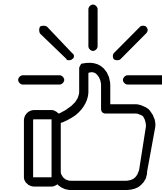
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**Slides, webinar video, and transcript will be sent to you. Sit back, relax and enjoy the conversation**

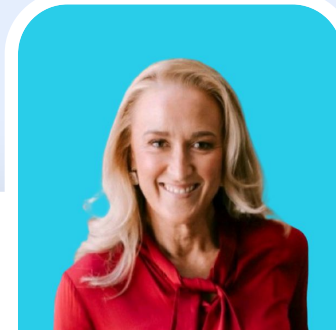
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**Helen van Orton**

Founder / CEO  
**Directorly**



**Alexie O'Brien**

Director  
**Leadership Academy.AI**



# Everyone's Using It. Nobody's Governing It.

53%

use AI daily

79%

use AI weekly or more

4.6%

have full governance

29%

have nothing in place

*Your people are making AI decisions every day. Nobody is accountable for them.*

## WHAT YOU TOLD US

# Where is the biggest gap?

395 people answered.  
These are their words.

*"The Board is AI-aware but not AI-enabled."*

*"Management is well ahead of the Board."*

*"There is a lack of insight, or perhaps a blinkered approach, given how widespread AI use is by individuals at Board and staff level, but no policy, process or direction."*

*"There is a gap between ambition and enablement."*

*"The balance and tension between governance going too slow and innovation going too fast "*

*"It is not a priority until the shit hits the fan."*





# Using It. Not Confident With It.

79%

use AI weekly

9.4%

feel very confident

46%

still figuring it out

---

21%

don't know what staff use AI for

17%

AI is embedded in tools being used, but not mapped

*Staff are using tools they don't fully understand, with data you can't see.  
That is not a staff problem. That is a governance problem.*



# The Board Is Flying Blind

75%

of boards get AI information ad hoc or never

25%

have discussed zero AI-specific risks

19%

Board-level oversight of how AI is being used in the organisation

---

*The risks that could hurt directors personally are almost entirely unexamined.*

17%

discussed directors' liability

8%

discussed D&O coverage gaps



# AI Adoption Has Moved Faster Than Governance.

Most organisations are using AI, but governance isn't keeping pace.

## AI READINESS

# 76%

Exploring or Experimenting with AI

40% Exploring | 36% Experimenting

*AI usage is already operational in most organisations.*

**GOVERNANCE GAP** Adoption is accelerating faster than oversight capability.

## AI GOVERNANCE

# 72%

Still Early-Stage in AI Governance

18% No policy | 27% Aware | 27% Developing

*Most organisations still lack mature oversight, controls, or accountability.*

*(Only 28% have policies or more mature structures)*

**The risk is no longer future AI adoption. The risk is unmanaged AI already in motion.**



# Where Organisations Go Wrong

## No owner

19% have a named person accountable for AI governance

**Fix:** Name one person this week. Not an AI expert. A governance leader.

## Shadow AI as the default

41% say AI is used informally by individuals

**Fix:** Run a simple tool audit before your next board meeting.

## AI disconnected from strategy

56% see admin automation as the top opportunity.  
31% personally use AI for strategic thinking.

**Fix:** Put AI on the board agenda as a strategic item, not an IT update.

*Without an owner, AI governance is everyone's job and therefore nobody's.*

## THE OPPORTUNITY

# What is the biggest opportunity AI could create?

*Your mission doesn't change because of AI. AI changes your ability to execute on it.*

*"Productivity gains to allow humans to use their time to be more strategic and focus on game changing actions." "*

*"Stress test scenarios, support improved research and challenge Exec assumptions and bias."*

*"Using AI in the right way to support staff and help them perform, whilst taking the pressure off by automating routine tasks, can only be beneficial to company culture. "*

*"Enhance human capability while remaining deeply aligned with the Group's values and purpose "*

*"Using AI to materially lift the quality and speed of decision-making at both board and management level."*



# The Building Blocks of AI-Ready Governance

## Informed Oversight

The board understands AI well enough to ask the right questions, not just receive assurances.

## Strategic Enablement

AI is connected to organisational strategy, not parked in IT. The board sees AI as a capability, not just a risk.

## Ethical Leadership

Clear boundaries, named accountability, and a culture where people can raise concerns about AI use.

*Organisations with board-level AI governance achieve 55% higher ROI on AI investments.*

MIT Sloan 2025



YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS



# Start Monday. Not Next Quarter.

## WEEK 1

### See what's happening

You know what AI tools are in use, by whom, and what data they touch.

## WEEK 2

### Name the owner

One person — not an AI expert, a governance leader — owns AI governance and reports to the board.

## WEEK 3

### Set the boundaries

Clear rules on what data must never enter AI tools, which tools are approved, and what needs human review. Staff know them.

## WEEK 4

### Tell the board

The board receives its first AI governance update — even if it says 'we just started.' That rhythm is the point.

*You do not need to be perfect. You need to be deliberate.*



# The Plan Starts in 30 Days. The Work Doesn't.

*What governance maturity looks like across the next 90 days.*

## MONTH 1

### Establish the foundations

Visibility. Ownership. Boundaries. Reporting. The four moves that get you from no governance to baseline oversight.

## MONTHS 2-3

### Build board fluency

Director AI literacy uplift. First strategic AI discussion on the board agenda. Governance framework moves from policy to live oversight.

## MONTHS 4-6

### Mature the governance

AI on the board agenda as a standing strategic item. Quarterly assurance from management. Agentic AI risk reviewed at committee level.

*30 days gets you started. 90 days gets you governed.*



# Close the Gap. Before It Closes You.

## VISIBILITY

Find out what AI is actually in use. Not what has been approved. What is actually being used. The gap between those two things is your exposure.

## REPORTING

Put AI on the board agenda as a governance conversation with a named owner, a defined scope, and a reporting cadence. Not an IT update.

## CHALLENGE

Take the six questions into your next meeting. Do not leave until you have answers. Especially on directors' liability and D&O coverage.

*The cost of inaction is not that nothing happens. **It's that everything happens without you.***



# Put These on Your Next Board Agenda

01

Do we know which AI tools are being used, and by whom?

---

02

What data is going into those tools, and do we have clear rules about what must not?

---

03

Who is accountable for AI governance, and are they reporting to the board?

---

04

Which AI-specific risks have we explicitly discussed, and which haven't we?

---

05

Are we treating AI as a technology issue or as a strategic governance issue?

---

06

Have we discussed our exposure as directors, including liability and D&O coverage, in the context of AI?



# Whitepaper : The AI Enabled Board

**Download the whitepaper and learn the practical outcomes of working with AI — including which AI tools are approved for board-level content, the risks, and safeguards for their use.**



**Included in your resource pack**



# Over to You For Questions?





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**NEXT STEPS**

Helen van Orton and Alexie O'Brien both offer in-person board AI workshops and training, purpose-built for directors who need to govern AI with confidence, not just curiosity.

**It's your next governance priority.**



# Webinar Schedule

2026

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- |      |   |         |
|------|---|---------|
| 281. | <b>The art of presenting to boards</b>                                    | June 4  |
| 282. | <b>Tension Tolerance: fostering healthy debate around the board table</b> | June 11 |
| 283. | <b>Strategic differentiation - How it informs strategy</b>                | June 18 |
| 284. | <b>The importance of culture governance</b>                               | June 25 |



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