

Diagnose the pressure, choose the right support and create a stronger hiring brief

Governance teams can experience pressure because of workload, missing expertise, weak cover or an unsuitable structure. These problems do not necessarily require the same appointment.

Use this planner to assess the requirement before choosing a job title or reproducing an existing job description.

1. Why is the structure being reviewed?

- ☐ Increased workload
- ☐ Organisational growth
- ☐ New entities or jurisdictions
- ☐ Additional boards or committees
- ☐ Regulatory change
- ☐ Transaction or restructuring
- ☐ IPO or listing preparation
- ☐ Upcoming departure
- ☐ Extended absence
- ☐ Lack of senior cover
- ☐ Retention or progression concerns
- ☐ Existing vacancy
- ☐ Other:

2. Organisation profile

Organisation:

Review completed by:

Date:

Ownership/listing status:

Regulated sector and regulator, if applicable:

Number of legal entities:

Jurisdictions covered:

Boards and committees supported:

Significant activity expected during the next 12 months:

Consider annual reporting, AGM activity, transactions, acquisitions, restructurings, new committees, regulatory change and governance projects.

3. Current Team

Current role	Main Responsibilities	Permanent, interim, fixed-term or external	Available cover

Where is the pressure?

Review the principal areas of work. Mark each as:

- Controlled: Work is being delivered sustainably.
- Stretched: Delivery depends on additional effort or individual knowledge.
- At risk: Deadlines, quality, continuity or advice may be affected.

Area of work	Current owner	Controlled, stretched or at risk?	Credible cover available?
Board and committee support			
Minutes, actions and follow-up			
Annual report and AGM			
Statutory filings and registers			
Subsidiary and entity governance			
International entities			
Shareholder and share-plan work			
Policies and governance frameworks			
Regulatory or listing requirements			
Transactions and restructurings			
Board evaluations and induction			
Governance projects			

Warning signs

- ☐ Deadlines repeatedly depend on last-minute effort.
- ☐ Senior professionals spend too much time on repeatable administration.
- ☐ Work is accumulating or being deferred.
- ☐ Nobody can credibly cover the most senior governance role.
- ☐ Important knowledge is concentrated with one person.
- ☐ New responsibilities have been added without reviewing resources.
- ☐ A transaction or project is displacing recurring work.
- ☐ External providers are being used without clear internal ownership.
- ☐ Responsibilities and authority are not aligned.
- ☐ Team members cannot see a credible progression route.

Is work sitting at the wrong level?

Work that could be delegated:

Work requiring greater experience or authority:

What happens if nothing changes?

Identify the three most significant risks.

1.
2.
3.

Which problem are you trying to solve?

Tick every statement that applies. The category with the most ticks is likely to be a primary issue. If two or more categories share the highest score, treat them as joint priorities.

Capacity

- ☐ The team understands the work but cannot complete the volume sustainably.
- ☐ Recurring deadlines depend on overtime or last-minute effort.
- ☐ Senior professionals are regularly completing work that could be delegated.
- ☐ Annual or project-based peaks overwhelm the normal structure.

Capacity score: / 4

Capability

- ☐ The team lacks experience required for part of the remit.
- ☐ Important work depends heavily on external technical advice.
- ☐ The organisation needs stronger board-level governance judgement.
- ☐ A new transaction, regulation, listing or organisational change requires expertise the team does not currently possess.

Capability score: / 4

Continuity

- ☐ Important knowledge or relationships sit with one person.
- ☐ There is no credible cover for a senior governance professional.
- ☐ An extended absence or departure would materially affect delivery.
- ☐ Key procedures, decisions or escalation routes are insufficiently documented.

Continuity score: / 4

Structure

- ☐ Responsibilities overlap or have no clear owner.
- ☐ Reporting lines delay or weaken governance advice.
- ☐ Titles and responsibilities do not match the authority provided.
- ☐ The structure provides insufficient delegation, development or succession.

Structure score: / 4

Primary issue(s)

- ☐ Capacity
- ☐ Capability
- ☐ Continuity
- ☐ Structure

Which solution should you test?
☐ Permanent appointment

Consider when the organisation has an enduring workload, capability, leadership or succession requirement.

☐ Interim or fixed-term appointment

Consider when the requirement is urgent, time-limited or not yet sufficiently clear for a permanent appointment.

☐ External specialist support

Consider for a defined project, technical specialism, entity portfolio or temporary increase in workload.

☐ Process or technology improvement

Consider when inefficient systems or repeatable manual work are creating avoidable pressure. Technology may reduce the workload, but it cannot replace judgement, authority or accountability.

Which level should you test?

Requirement	Possible level to test
Repeatable operational and administrative work	Governance Administrator, Trainee Company Secretary, Governance Officer or Company Secretarial Assistant.
An experienced owner for recurring boards, committees, entities or projects	Assistant Company Secretary or Governance Manager
Senior cover, delegated leadership and succession	Deputy Company Secretary
Board advice, functional leadership or a first senior governance appointment	Company Secretary, Group Company Secretary or Head of Governance
An urgent vacancy, absence, transaction or change programme	Interim governance professional
A defined specialist or temporary requirement	External project or consultancy support

Most likely route or role:**Why does this appear to be the appropriate solution?****Turn the diagnosis into a recruiter-ready brief**

A strong brief describes the problem to be solved and the outcomes required—not simply the responsibilities of the previous employee.

Reason for the appointment**Why has the requirement arisen?****Outcomes required**

Within six months, or by the agreed interim milestone, the successful person should have:

1.
2.
3.

Within twelve months, where applicable, the successful person should have:

1.
2.
3.

Principal responsibilities

List the five most important responsibilities.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Reporting line and authorityReports to: Access to the Chair and board: Direct reports: Boards or committees supported: Decisions the person will own: Important internal relationships: **Candidate requirements****Essential on arrival**

List the experience or knowledge the person must already possess.

1. 2. 3. **Can be developed in the role**

List experience that would be useful but could be acquired in the role.

1. 2. 3. **Appointment details**Permanent, interim, fixed-term or external: Preferred start date: Location and working pattern: Remuneration or approved range: Interview and decision timetable:

Why should a strong candidate join?

Consider the quality of the work, board exposure, authority, development, flexibility, culture and future progression:

Evidence to test during interview

What must candidates demonstrate rather than merely claim?

Ready to discuss the requirement?

You do not need to have every answer before speaking to a specialist.

Ingen Partners can help you test the appropriate level, resourcing model and search strategy before the organisation commits to an inherited job title or unsuitable brief.

Contact Ingen Partners for a confidential discussion.

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