



ECLECTIC MIX OF SKILLS BRINGS FOCUS

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ONE CAN'T help but be impressed when you meet Dr Judith MacCormick. How can someone so youthful looking have more than 40 years' experience in the corporate world and have done so much in so many areas? Read Judith's bio and you get a real feel for the quiet confidence she exudes in any forum – confidence of a track record with more than just a few goals being kicked.

After high school, Judith was despatched from her Sydney home by a mother passionate about education, to London University School of African and Oriental studies and also to the Cordon Bleu School of Hospitality. This created an early link to both Asia and hospitality, which would later stand her in good stead with family business involving food.

Judith has an eclectic mix of qualifications which underpin her resume including a Social Science degree in Sociology and anthropology and a Graduate Diploma in Science in organisational psychology. She also holds an MBA and PhD where her work interests connected her study to investigating

the impact of mobile technology on organisations, and also what constitutes minimal viable governance for startup businesses.

Interestingly, one of her research theses was on RSI – Repetitive Strain Injury – back in the day when it was presumed to be a psychological symptom used to avoid work. Judith discovered that it is a real physiological

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and psychological ailment that has seriously impacted thousands of individuals in business over the past two decades or more.

In the mid-80s, her interests led her to a position with Alexander Proudfoot, an international consulting firm that focused

on operational and management efficiency, and it was here that her holistic approach to organisational efficiency began to formulate. Judith realised it was not just about operations, but the efficiency of management and the organisational structures in place that could hinder or facilitate efficient business.

Poached by CommBank, Judith began developing and implementing management operating systems to improve all levels of management performance of the bank's Australian-wide Retail Network. Judith took the approach of piloting stuff with the worst branches, then once proved, would roll out from there to all branches. The result proved essential in helping to set up CommBank up for its subsequent public float, after the Government privatised the bank.

Following six years at the bank, she moved to Singapore where she worked on strategy, leadership and culture across Asia. This five-year period was pivotal in Judith gaining more interest in the Governance area, recognising that leadership from the Board

as well as the CEO were essential elements to drive results in any industry.

Interestingly, during this period, Judith and her husband literally fell into the restaurant business, running a prestige Japanese restaurant, which was so successful they ended up with three outlets, in Paddington, Balmain and Kirribilli, before selling the operation in 2005.

Over that same period of the late nineties, Judith completed her MBA and PhD studies focusing on organisational behaviour, trying to find the secret sauce (or source?) for success. Why, Judith wondered, did some companies turn out to be highly successful when managing seemingly conflicting strategies, and yet others fail when they had fewer challenges?

Judith also became intrigued with the minimum level of corporate governance that a startup business should develop, that might help them get over the five-year failure hurdle i.e. 80 per cent of Australian startups fail within the first five years. Could better governance, even rudimentary, minimal governance make a significant difference to this statistic?

The link with the club industry is that many small clubs, like many startups, have little or no effective governance. Yes, they may have a board, but most have no strategic plan, no board performance assessment, limited diversity on the board and no succession

plan in place for the governance team. Critically without an effective strategic plan, small businesses, like smaller clubs, are doomed to failure.

This passion lead Judith to consulting and lecturing to MBA and other post-graduate students at the Australian Graduate School of Management (AGSM) at University of NSW (UNSW) and with Sydney University in Australia, India and Hong Kong.

Following this period, Judith worked as a partner for the international management firm Heidrick & Struggles, leading their Board Practice, where the key focus was advising boards on appropriate composition and leadership succession, as well as board effectiveness reviews. She was able to pursue her passion for guidance on how to improve the performance of the board and orchestrate the smooth transition of directors on and off the boards of large multi-national organisations.

Since 2009 Judith has been a Fellow and Faculty Advisor with the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) and has also worked as a facilitator for Governance, Board Effectiveness, Leadership and many other bespoke programs with AICD for public, private and not-for-profit (NFP) companies. Add to this her position as Visiting Fellow and Alumni Leader for the AGSM, UNSW, a position Judith has held since 2012, and

you can see that everyone wants to tap into her knowledge, expertise and experience in all areas of governance and organisational efficiencies.

As many of you know, Judith was an integral part of the Murdoch Associates team that conducted the ClubsNSW Governance Viability Review, which culminated in the Murdoch Report being presented to the ClubsNSW Board in April 2017. In this capacity, she travelled regionally to talk to club directors, managers and ordinary members to inform their review of the state of governance in today's club industry.

This was not her first experience with clubs, having previously worked with NFPs including the Headland Preservation Society, as well as bowling and beach clubs in the northern metro region, advising on governance and strategy.

As Managing Director of BoardFocus Advisory since 2014, Judith continues to consult to organisations in Australia and internationally, and was recently interviewed on television in Kazakhstan, following a presentation on Governance to a major national corporation there.

Conference keynote not to be missed

With that sort of extraordinary range of education, skills and experience, Judith's keynote session at conference in October is not to be missed. Her focus will be three of the critical themes identified by the Murdoch Report:

- Board Diversity - in all its forms including skills, education, industry background, age, gender and ethnicity – and the benefits that this diversity can bring to the board table
- Effective Board Recruitment and Induction – tools and tips to facilitate the process of successful identification of potential directors, presentation to the members to maximise their chances of election (where appointment is not possible) and how to

most effectively induct new directors to bring them up to speed quickly

- Effective Board Performance Management – an overview of what effective board performance looks like and how clubs can assess their level of performance and address the areas that may need strengthening
- You can rest assured, when you leave Judith's keynote session, you will do so with more than a few tips and strategies to take back to your club for implementation.

You can see Dr Judith MacCormick present her keynote on how to Energise your Board at 12.15 pm Sunday, October 15, 2017, International Convention Centre Sydney.

