



FREE TASTER

Free taster

NED Support Tools

A sample from the hub: a condensed readiness self-check for your first or next Non-Executive Director role

About 30 minutes on your own. You will need your CV and a realistic view of your diary for the next year.

Name

Date

STARBUCK & ASSOCIATES

COACHING & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Practical support for the boardroom

NED Support Tools is for aspiring and serving Non-Executive Directors. It gives you the practical tools to get ready for a board role, win one, and do it well once you are in the room.

It helps with the questions people rarely ask out loud. Am I ready for a board seat, or just flattered by the idea? How do I get noticed by chairs and search firms? How do I read a board pack quickly and ask the question that matters? How much time will this really take?

The hub is online and self-paced, across 15 topic areas. Use it before you apply, during your induction, and as a reference once you are serving.

What is inside

AREA	WHAT YOU GET
NED readiness diagnostic	The full version of the self-check in this taster
Board fit profiler	A way to match what you offer to the boards that need it
Positioning and applications toolkit	Help with board CVs, cover letters and interviews
Portfolio career and visibility	Building a portfolio and being seen by the right people
Time commitment estimator	A realistic picture of the hours a role will take
NED induction checklist	What to ask for and learn in your first months
Board pack review template	A structured way to prepare for every meeting
Governance and board effectiveness	Toolkits on governance, compliance and board reviews
Crisis governance playbook	How a board holds steady when things go wrong
Boardroom articulation 30-day practice	Daily practice to make your contributions clear and concise

HOW TO USE THIS TASTER

Page 3 explains the five areas of readiness. Page 4 is your self-check and time reality check. Page 5 shows where the full hub takes you next.

Five areas of NED readiness

A strong executive career does not automatically make a strong NED. The role asks you to step back from running things and instead support, challenge and hold to account. Readiness is about more than seniority.

AREA	WHAT READY LOOKS LIKE
Governance knowledge	You understand directors' duties, how board committees work, and the difference between governing and managing
Board experience	You have presented to, sat on or worked closely with a board, trustee body or committee, and know how decisions are really made there
Sector insight	You can offer a view the board lacks: a sector, a discipline such as finance, people or digital, or a customer perspective
Independence and time	You are free of conflicts, and you have real room in your diary, including for the unplanned
Network and visibility	Chairs, search firms and existing NEDs know who you are and what you would bring

EXAMPLE

Mark is a finance director who wants his first NED role. He scores himself high on governance and sector insight, and low on network. Being honest about time, he realises that quarter end in his day job clashes with most board calendars.

His next steps are clear: a trustee role to build board experience, three conversations with people already serving, and a talk with his CEO about time before he applies for anything.

WORTH KNOWING

The time a board role takes is often more than the number of meetings suggests. Reading papers, committee work, site visits, induction and the occasional crisis all sit on top. Always ask the chair what the role really takes in a difficult year.

YOUR TURN

Your readiness self-check

Exercise 1: Rate yourself

Tick one box on each line. Be honest: this is for you, not a board.

AREA	NOT YET	BUILDING	SOLID	STRONG
Governance knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board experience	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sector insight	☐	☐	☐	☐
Independence and time	☐	☐	☐	☐
Network and visibility	☐	☐	☐	☐

Exercise 2: Time commitment reality check

WHAT THE ROLE NEEDS	DAYS I THINK IT WILL TAKE IN A YEAR	WHERE IN MY DIARY IT WILL COME FROM
Board meetings and papers		
Committee work		
Induction, visits and events		
Unplanned or crisis time		

Exercise 3: Your next moves

Which area is my lowest, and what one step would move it on in the next three months?

What would I say, in two sentences, if a chair asked what I would bring to their board?

From readiness to making a difference

This taster gives you a first view of where you stand. The full hub takes you through the whole journey, from deciding you are ready to adding real value once you have the seat.

- 1 Assess.**
The full NED readiness diagnostic and the board fit profiler.
- 2 Position.**
The positioning and applications toolkit, and building your portfolio and visibility.
- 3 Plan your time.**
The time commitment estimator, so you say yes to the right roles.
- 4 Start well.**
The NED induction checklist and board pack review template.
- 5 Contribute.**
Strategic influence and value creation, boardroom communication and the 30-day articulation practice.
- 6 Govern well.**
Governance, compliance, board reviews, culture and ESG, and the crisis governance playbook.

Who gets most from it

- Senior executives preparing for a first NED or trustee role
- New NEDs in their first year on a board
- Serving NEDs building a portfolio or taking on a committee chair

HOW PEOPLE USE IT

Aspiring NEDs tend to start with the diagnostic and positioning tools, then return to the induction checklist once they are appointed. Serving NEDs often keep the board pack review template to hand before every meeting.

What I am going to do

Two or three small changes that you actually make will do more than a long list you never start.

My three actions

WHAT I WILL DO	WHEN	WHO I WILL TELL

Coming back to this

Put a date in your diary about a month from now and answer these three questions.

What has changed since I did this taster?

What did I not get to, and what got in the way?

What am I carrying forward?

READY FOR THE FULL HUB?

NED Support Tools

Fifteen topic areas of practical tools for aspiring and serving Non-Executive Directors, from readiness and applications to governance and crisis.

£149 per person, per year, inc. VAT

Enrol at academy.starbuckassociates.com/courses/ned-support-tools

Part of the Starbuck Academy free tasters from Starbuck & Associates. If you would like coaching on your board journey alongside the hub, we would be glad to help. This taster is general learning and development material, not professional advice. © 2026 Starbuck & Associates Limited.