



# Boards That Lead: When to Take Charge, When to Partner, and When to Stay Out of the Way

*Ram Charan, Dennis Carey, Michael Useem*

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**Is your firm's board creating value—or destroying it?**

Change is coming. Leadership at the top is being redefined as boards take a more active role in decisions that once belonged solely to the CEO. But for all the advantages of increased board engagement, it can create debilitating questions of authority and dangerous meddling in day-to-day operations. Directors need a new road map—for when to lead, when to partner, and when to stay out of the way.

Boardroom veterans Ram Charan, Dennis Carey, and Michael Useem advocate this new governance model—a sharp departure from what has been demanded by governance activists, raters, and regulators—and reveal the emerging practices that are defining shared leadership of directors and executives. Based on personal interviews and the authors' broad and deep experience working with executives and directors from dozens of the world's largest firms, including Apple, Boeing, Ford, Infosys, and Lenovo, *Boards That Lead* tells the inside story behind the successes and pitfalls of this new leadership model and explains how to:

- Define the central idea of the company
- Ensure that the right CEO is in place and potential successors are identified
- Recruit directors who add value
- Root out board dysfunction
- Select a board leader who deftly bridges the divide between management and the board
- Set a high bar on ethics and risk

With a total of eighteen checklists that will transform board directors from monitors to leaders, Charan, Carey, and Useem provide a smart and practical guide for businesspeople everywhere—whether they occupy the boardroom or the C-suite.

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