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Harvey Weinstein: Board complacency and incompetence is the larger issue

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Too often in the worlds of business and non-profits, the focus is on an individual's wrongdoing. Frequently overlooked is the fiduciary duty of board members who choose to ignore bad behavior.

Examples of board behavior include:

- Equifax and the theft of birth dates and Social Security numbers of potentially more than 148 million Americans.[1]
- Not knowing senior Penn State "leaders" allowed children to be violated.
- Directors who permitted Wells Fargo to scam consumers.
- A financial collapse occurred several years ago because banks got big and greedy. It resulted in the nation's financial meltdown and the destruction of financial security for millions of middle-class Americans.

These are just a handful of examples where boards did know or should have known there were problems. Examples of this nature exist in every industry, whether for- or non-profit and regardless of size. Directors need a better understanding of governance and management. Educating board members requires patience and persistence.

The media coverage of Harvey Weinstein's behavior is not only about an individual's ability to emotionally and physically commit violence; it also reflects the failure to spotlight and hold accountable board members and directors. One of the central questions posed by the media and advocates against bullying, harassment, and sexual assault (including acts done by women against men[2] and men against gay men[3]) is: "What did individual board members know and when did they know it?"