



# The OnBoard Guide to Artificial Intelligence in the Boardroom



# It's Now the Age of Artificial Intelligence

A recent annual National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) [survey](#) found that one-third of board directors believe artificial intelligence (AI) will be one of the biggest trends impacting their organization in the next 12 months. This puts AI on par with other major trends noted by corporate directors, including cybersecurity risk and the threat of economic recession.

AI has the potential to disrupt the world as we know it completely. As AI expert [Tim Kapp](#) put it, “[AI] is going to dwarf any other prior innovation based on the trends we’re seeing now.” Boards must understand the opportunities and the risks for the organizations they serve.

This guide will cover the opportunities AI can present to businesses, organizations, and the boards that guide them; unique AI use cases for boards, directors, and board professionals; and the considerations and risks the board must contemplate.

## Benefits of Leveraging AI

Using AI for business or organizational needs represents a far-reaching technological sea change with potentially millions of use cases. Fundamentally, utilizing AI can deliver benefits such as:

- **Optimized efficiency and productivity:**

Whether it’s for one-time use or designed to support a fully automated process, AI tools such as ChatGPT can help handle routine tasks, analyze data, and summarize lengthy information, saving users time and allowing them to focus on other priorities.

- **Data-driven insights and trendspotting:**

One of the biggest advantages of using AI tools is being able to “see” what may go unnoticed by human analysis. AI tools can process and analyze vast amounts of data and text to provide insights or identify trends the subjective human eye might miss. This can lead to more informed and data-driven decision-making.

- **Consistency and accuracy:**

When reviewing written reports or data, AI tools can ensure the information presented is accurate and consistent, reducing the risk of human error.

- **Quick access to needed information:**

When provided access to large volumes of data, content, or other information, AI tools can quickly retrieve relevant documents and data points, thereby making information more accessible when needed.



# Boardroom Use Cases for Artificial Intelligence

The strategic implementation of AI across a business or organization carries with it the potential for exponential gains in productivity, insights, and efficiency. When using AI and doing so responsibly, the “head” of a corporate or organizational body, the board that governs its strategy, can also benefit from newfound efficiencies and time-saving tools.

However, as we’ll cover later, approach these opportunities with appropriate caution of potential risks, particularly in a boardroom setting, which this guide covers later.

## BOARDROOM USE CASE #1:

### Virtual Assistance within AI-enabled Board Portals

Many are now familiar with the capabilities of AI-based assistance in voice interactions with Siri, Alexa, or Google Assistant. These AI-based virtual assistants can perform routine tasks like composing a text message, setting a reminder, or creating a calendar event.

When the same capabilities are applied within a system like a board portal with calendar integration, board members and professionals can use an AI-enabled virtual assistant to support tasks like scheduling the next meeting, assigning post-meeting tasks and deadlines to committees or board members, or composing messages. This AI-based virtual assistance can quickly reduce the time spent on these manual and repetitive tasks.



Now available in OnBoard:

[Learn more about the OnBoard Intelligent Assistant](#)





## BOARDROOM USE CASE #2:

### Automated Meeting Minutes

One of the most straightforward acts in a board meeting is taking the meeting's minutes. Meeting minutes are an official record of deliberations and decisions made, and they're a critical component of compliance for most boards in regulated industries or organizations.

By combining the capabilities of voice-to-text transcription and an AI tool designed for or trained to take meeting minutes, including the ability to summarize discussions into brief but accurate overviews and record votes or decisions, boards could be more efficient and effective with their time.

While human quality assurance of the final output is a must, reliable and accurate AI-enabled meeting minutes could save countless hours otherwise spent drafting and editing minutes, increase board member engagement by decreasing the need to focus on note-taking, and make record-keeping compliance activities easier.

[See how OnBoard and Microsoft Azure are Introducing Secure AI in Boardroom](#)



[Now available in OnBoard: Learn more about Automated Minutes](#)



## BOARDROOM USE CASE #3:

### Analysis and Summaries of Previous Meetings and Board Documents

Board books are frequently hundreds of pages long, and the volume of documents can become overwhelming with each addition to a board's archive or records.

Consider a scenario where a new board member joins a board and desires to get up to speed on past meetings' deliberations and outcomes by reviewing meeting minutes, past board books, and committee reports.

One way to speed up this process could be to prompt an AI-powered capability to summarize these lengthy documents, providing a "Cliff's Notes" version of past meeting documents.

As we cover later in this guide, this use case would require AI capabilities with robust, proven protections for the board and its organization's data, privacy, and confidentiality.



#### BOARDROOM USE CASE #4:

### Review of Pre-Meeting Documents

Like the previous use case, board members could speed up preparation time by prompting a secure AI tool to assist and support reviewing the pre-meeting board book or related documents. In most cases, a board member's duty of care would oblige them to review and analyze the materials themselves to reach the expected level of preparation before a board or committee meeting.

However, AI tools built for the boardroom could support pre-meeting preparation by summarizing documents already reviewed by a board member. Through its analysis, AI may identify an outcome, opportunity, or challenge that may have been missed in the board member's initial reviews.

#### BOARDROOM USE CASE #5:

### Compliance and Risk Analysis

Not only can an AI-enabled board portal support new member onboarding or pre-meeting preparation by scanning, analyzing, and summarizing board books, minutes, or other materials, but when configured correctly, an AI-enabled board portal can also help support compliance within regulatory frameworks and adherence to the board's charter and bylaws.

When enabled in a compatible board portal, AI capabilities can consider your board's unique profile within its regulatory responsibilities when delivering responses. For example, a public company with a charter in Delaware can prompt a board portal AI capabilities to list specific duties and obligations for board directors required to comply with that region's regulatory environment.





# Considerations and Cautions for AI-Enabled Boards

The use of artificial intelligence for organizations, their board governance activities, or within the boardroom itself is still a relatively new concept. However, for many board professionals, this isn't their first encounter with technological disruption. Within recent living memory, many advances in technology have fundamentally changed how businesses and organizations operate.

Before 2000, most organizations operated without the widespread use of the Internet or communication channels like email or social media. However, even as these new technologies carry risks (cyber attacks and data breaches), their benefits vastly outweigh the downsides. So long as the organizations and boards who use them consider the risks and develop safeguards against them.

Adopting the potential benefit of AI capabilities for your organization and its board governance needs should be no different.

1

## Data Retention, Confidentiality, and Privacy Protections


Concerns around data retention, confidentiality, and privacy protections are the foremost considerations for using artificial capabilities within a boardroom setting. If considering the use of AI, boards and their members should fully understand the solution provider's terms of service (ToS), security capabilities, and data handling protocols.

Due to data retention and confidentiality concerns, publicly accessible tools like OpenView AI's ChatGPT and Google's Gemini should be avoided when using AI to augment or support board governance activities. These tools are trained on large language models (LLM) that ingest all user inputs (prompts), including their data or content, for future training and outputs. When board members upload or share board-confidential data or sensitive content with a publicly accessible AI tool, board members should assume this information could later become available to other users.

Boards and directors should seek AI tools within secure and private solutions, preferably with accreditations or certified compliance with widely accepted data and privacy standards or specific standards for their industry.

For example, when considering data handling and control protocols, look for tools that comply with standards such as SOC 2 Type II, ISO-27001, ISO-27701, and GDPR. Also consider industry-specific standards, such as HIPAA for U.S.-based health care networks.

[Learn more about how OnBoard provides users secure, confidential access to AI-based capabilities powered by Microsoft Azure.](#)





## 2

### Over-Reliance on AI

Whether they use AI-powered capabilities or not, board directors and professionals must still practice their duties of care, loyalty, and obedience as part of their board practice. In a scenario where a director is augmenting or supporting review of pre-meeting materials with AI-enabled tools and capabilities, over-reliance on AI could lead to diminished critical thinking and analytical skills.

Over-reliance on AI can lead directors to neglect their responsibility to understand complex issues that impact the organizations they serve fully, trusting algorithms instead of engaging in critical thinking.

While AI can streamline data analysis, the director's ultimate duty is to interpret the findings, ask probing questions, and ensure decisions align with the organization's mission and legal obligations. Directors must use AI to enhance — not replace — their judgment, maintaining their duties of care, loyalty, and obedience to uphold strong governance and informed decision-making.

## 3

### As a New Technology, AI Still Requires Caution

Board members who are skeptical of AI-generated insights often prioritize human judgment because they trust the nuanced understanding and experience that people bring to decision-making. They may be concerned that AI, despite its data-processing capabilities, lacks the intuition and context that human professionals possess.

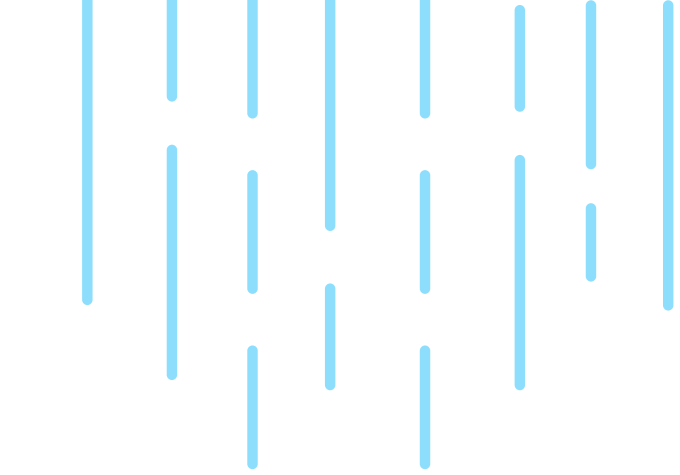
This skepticism can also arise from concerns about the transparency of AI algorithms, potential biases in data, or the occurrence of "AI hallucinations," where the technology generates false or misleading information without a factual basis. Such risks highlight the need for directors to be cautious when relying solely on AI for critical insights.

Additionally, some directors worry that AI could oversimplify complex issues or miss key variables that only experienced board members would recognize. The risk of AI hallucinations further emphasizes the importance of human oversight in reviewing AI recommendations to ensure accuracy and relevance. Again, AI should be viewed as a tool to support, but not replace, the thoughtful analysis and judgment that board members provide. This balance is crucial to maintaining the integrity of the decision-making process and ensuring that governance remains informed and reliable.

[Learn how OnBoard develops responsible, ethical, and secure AI capabilities for boards and directors.](#)







# Tips for Enabling AI in the Boardroom

Boards can't afford to ignore artificial intelligence; now is the time for boards to act. This technology will transform how we do business, and it's time to navigate this transformation actively.

But how can boards get started? Here are several recommendations for boards and their members.

## 1

### Discuss AI in the Boardroom

This should support the organization's overall business strategy and should focus on building capabilities. The strategy should include guidelines for implementing AI responsibly and plans for managing and mitigating risk.

Many boards have yet to discuss artificial intelligence despite its disruptive potential. Boards should question what this new technology can mean for their organization. As the primary decision-maker for organizational strategy, the board's role is to leverage AI's opportunities while minimizing potential harm.



#### TIPS

- Include the topic of implementing AI in regular board or committee meetings.
- Assign a committee to consider the ethical and competitive risks AI might bring and the urgency, if any, required to remain competitive in your company or organization's industry.
- If necessary, schedule additional sessions to explore the topic further.

## 2

### Define the Board's Strategic Stance

For many boards, the issue is not if AI is used, but how. Boards should set guidelines for their organizations and consider ethics and policies.



#### TIP

Draft an organizational AI usage policy by asking key questions, such as the organization's priorities regarding AI's impact, current AI usage, AI's disruption in the market, and the ethical concerns for AI in the industry.



# 3

## Implement Training Programs for Employees

Training programs should cover data security, confidentiality for sensitive information such as intellectual property, and how to recognize and defend against AI-generated social engineering threats.

Many people still need to become more familiar with AI technology, so a proactive approach is required. Consider inviting a subject matter expert to train employees or participate in strategic discussions about implementation.

The goal should be to foster AI literacy throughout the organization. Understanding the implications of AI is critical to making informed decisions.

Engage with stakeholders, including customers, employees, and regulators. This will help you understand their concerns and expectations regarding AI.



### TIPS

- Validate the expert's credentials.
- Promote open dialogue and prepare questions beforehand.
- Stay informed about the latest AI advancements.
- Consider additional training for board members.

# 4

## Balance Risk and Opportunity

AI offers great opportunities for operational efficiency and gaining a competitive edge. However, following data management best practices, implementing robust security measures, and maintaining transparency about AI usage is crucial. Consider potential biases and work toward fair, transparent, and accountable AI.



### TIPS

- Conduct comprehensive AI risk audits. This will help identify potential risks related to data privacy, security, bias, transparency, and compliance with national, international, and local regulations.
- Prepare a detailed crisis management plan. This plan will outline the steps for AI-related issues, including data breaches, ethical concerns, and legal disputes.
- Partner with the experts. AI experts, legal counsel, or consultants can help you stay informed about emerging AI risks and mitigation strategies.



## 5

### Safeguard Your Data & IP

With the increased use of AI tools, it's vital to consider the organization's policies regarding sensitive data. It's important to understand the terms of service and data privacy standards for any AI-enabled tool your board or the organization uses and review updates frequently, as these terms may change as part of an AI solution provider's business strategy evolves.



#### TIPS

- Understand the AI tool's data policies and terms of service.
- Limit the amount of data employees share with the tool and ensure they appropriately handle confidential information such as intellectual property.
- Utilize AI in secure environments, especially when handling sensitive data. Look for compliance or accreditation in data and privacy standards such as SOC 2, ISO-27001, and ISO-27701, as well as other data-specific regulations such as GDPR and HIPAA.

## 6

### Get in the Game: Digital Transformation Isn't Just for CIOs

Digital transformation, including AI's arrival, isn't just an IT project. It's part of the organization's strategic business model. View digital transformation, including AI, from a board perspective where innovation is integral to strategic execution.

The board plays a significant role in guiding, understanding, and addressing AI's technical and ethical challenges and ensuring the organization it serves can reap the benefits.

## Want to know what's next for AI-powered capabilities in the boardroom?

Ask for a demo of OnBoard and the OnBoard Intelligent Assistant and Automated Minutes, two new innovative and confidential ways to leverage AI in the boardroom — without sacrificing security.

Encrypted and encoded in Microsoft Azure and accredited with certifications in SOC 2 Type II, ISO-27001, and ISO-27701, as well as HIPAA-compliant, OnBoard gives every board enterprise-grade security to ensure board meetings are simple, secure, and effective.

[Visit OnBoard to learn more](#)

