



## KEVIN HANSON

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### *Fun fact:*

*I chaired the board of directors at The Varsity newspaper at U of T for a year in the 1990s. The support of then-editor Naomi Klein was instrumental to my survival of an attempted ouster in what was, shall we say, a somewhat politicized and contentious governance environment. Great learning experience.*

### **Why have you joined GPC?**

For professional development and networking opportunities, and a sense of community within the governance profession. I run an independent and essentially one-person consultancy, and my work encompasses a couple of other fields in addition to governance. GPC gives me a line of sight on best practices and emerging issues in governance, and I've been impressed by the breadth and scope of the membership and the events and PD opportunities. I can serve my clients better thanks to my membership.

### **What does governance mean to you?**

It means many things - it's an encompassing function after all. But the aspects that interest me most relate to, on the one hand risk management, and on the other hand transparency and accountability to an expanding universe of stakeholders. Those imperatives have never been stronger and more demanding to meet than they are today. Climate risks and outcomes are probably the leading example of a recently-ish emerged challenge of that type. Diversity-related issues are another, and we haven't plumbed the full depths on that one by any means. Who knows what tomorrow will bring?

### **How did you get into governance and your current role?**

It was a gradual progression. I'm a former lawyer, so developed an understanding of many of the underlying principles way back in law school. I began to take a more serious interest in corporate governance as a facet of the extensive work I've done developing corporate social responsibility reports and disclosure frameworks, beginning in the early 2000s. Then in my last job I had a great cross-appointment as both communications director and corporate secretary for a large industry association. And I've made governance a bigger part of my service offerings during my current stint in consulting.

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## **What is the most fulfilling part about your role in governance? What do you love most about your job?**

I take gratification in smooth-running processes. So even some of the more mechanistic – but still crucial – aspects of the corporate secretary role are satisfying for me. But I suppose the biggest fulfillment comes from opportunities to step back and to either help improve governance frameworks, on fundamentals like representational or decision-making models; or to design a governance framework for a new entity from the ground up. And I love the engagement with senior decision makers. Some of the most impressive thought leaders I know I've met in governance contexts.

## **What is the best career advice you have received?**

Your personal brand is an enduring thing, and you'll be remembered for the performance you deliver and the character you demonstrate. Vancouver/Toronto/Ottawa/Fill-in-the-Blank is a small town at the end of the day, and over time reputations become widely known and well entrenched.