



eGuide: The Executive Assistant's Playbook for Board Meeting Prep

Helping Your CEO Excel Before, During,
& After the Board Meeting



INTRODUCTION

Why You're the CEO's Secret Weapon

Board meetings are one of the highest-stakes moments for a CEO. As an EA, you are uniquely positioned to reduce stress, streamline prep, and elevate the CEO's performance.

1 - Understanding the Board Meeting Cycle

Board prep follows a predictable rhythm.
Knowing it helps you anticipate.

Typical Timeline:

T-30 Days: Agenda finalized

T-21 Days: Draft deck begins

T-14 Days: Financials and KPIs confirmed

T-7 Days: Final deck and materials circulated

T-0 Days: Meeting day

Pro Tip: Keep a recurring “Board Prep Calendar” to align all tasks and deadlines every quarter.

2 - Building the Master Checklist

A CEO needs clarity, not chaos. A single prep checklist keeps everyone on track.

Checklist Must-Haves:

- + Deck content deadlines
- + Financial report delivery date
- + Talking points draft
- + Travel or virtual setup
- + Board package distribution date

Pro Tip: Share a living version (Google Sheet, Asana, Notion) so the CEO can see progress at a glance.

3 - Managing the Materials Creation Process

The board materials are the centerpiece of board prep—help keep it moving.

Your Role:

- + Track deck versions and changes
- + Ensure slides are visually clean and consistent
- + Manage input from finance, product, and operations

Pro Tip: Establish a “single source of truth” deck file—avoid multiple versions floating around.

4 - Anticipating Board Member Needs

Every board member reads differently—some skim, some dig deep.

Actions:

- + Identify “summary readers” (highlight key points for them)
- + Identify “detail readers” (make sure appendices are ready)
- + Pre-load CEO with board member priorities or concerns

Pro Tip: Ask your CEO’s Chief of Staff or investor relations who tends to ask which type of questions.

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5 - The 3–7 Day Rule for Distribution

The #1 complaint from boards is getting materials too late.

Your Role:

- + Confirm distribution date with CEO
- + Double-check permissions on shared files
- + Ensure correct audience gets the deck (no wrong versions)

Pro Tip: Set a reminder 48 hours before send-out to do a last detail review.

6 - Prepping the CEO for Q&A

The meeting is as much about answering questions as presenting slides.

Actions:

- + Help CEO review potential “hot topics”
- + Arrange quick role-play Q&A sessions with leadership team
- + Collect anticipated questions from functional heads

Pro Tip: Maintain a “Board Questions Log” to track recurring issues across quarters.

7 - Logistics & Tech Setup

Smooth logistics = calm CEO.

Checklist:

- + Confirm physical location or virtual link
- + Ensure technology (Zoom, Teams, AV) is tested
- + Provide CEO with backup access (hard copies, alternate links)

Pro Tip: Keep an emergency kit—chargers, backup deck on USB, hard copy of agenda.

8 - Day-of Support

The CEO needs mental space, not operational distractions.

Actions:

- + Guard CEO's calendar—no new meetings on board day
- + Handle incoming requests and emails
- + Have all materials queued and ready

Pro Tip: If in-person, station yourself near the room. If virtual, stay online to troubleshoot.

9 - Post-Meeting Follow-Up

The board meeting doesn't end when the room clears.

Actions:

- + Collect board feedback
- + Track follow-up items and assign owners
- + Archive final deck and materials for compliance and future reference

Pro Tip: Create a “Board Meeting Closeout” checklist to ensure nothing gets lost after the meeting.

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CONCLUSION

Your Role Is a Force Multiplier

As an Executive Assistant, your work in board meeting preparation goes far beyond scheduling and logistics—you are a strategic partner. The way you organize information, anticipate needs, and keep the process running smoothly has a direct impact on the CEO's ability to perform at their best.