

**NACD Northwest  
Program Takeaways  
2018-2019**

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**Fireside Chat with Brian McAndrews**

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Seattle, WA

Submitted by: Liz Huebner, NACDNW Board member and Program Captain

Brian McAndrews shared many thoughts with the audience related to his CEO and board experience. The key points were:

1) He selects board opportunities based on his interest in the company, his ability to add value and his assessment of the CEO and whether his vision/values are aligned. This has worked most of the time but he shared that he has made mistakes in his assessments in the past. His advice was to make the best of the situation by figuring out the best way to be effective.

2) Brian sits on the boards of several consumer brands and discussed how he deals with unsolicited feedback from people regarding their experiences. The key is to use judgment on what comments have merit and then pass them along to the right people in the company.

3) When asked why he chose to leave a very successful career in large companies to take a CEO position at a small start up, he cited the fact that he wanted to make more of a difference and was willing to take a risk. He enjoyed shaping the culture of the company and remained committed to it even when the stock price plummeted during the dot com bust. His biggest surprise was realizing his every move and comment was scrutinized given he was the CEO. He realized quickly that he needed to be very aware how his comments impacted the employees.

4) When asked what makes a good board member he cited: being prepared and present during meetings (not checking email) and understanding the difference between management and the board. His biggest frustrations with board members stems from those who won't let an issue go even after it has been discussed and decided. The role of the board is to give advice and provide insight and then let management decide which course to take.