

Take on Board - Dominique Hes

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Dominique Hes, Helga Svendsen



Helga Svendsen 00:00

Hi, everyone. Today on the take on board podcast, we're doing something a little bit different to usual. So instead of interviewing one of these amazing women and getting their wisdom, I'm having a chat to the fabulous Dr. Dominique Hes about an application that she is making for a board role at the moment. So many of you know that I do strategy sessions with people to work through applications or work through challenges that they're having at the board. And today, you get to eavesdrop on one of those sessions and pick up some of the insights from me and from Dominique, and from our discussion about how to apply for a role. So in this session, we will be talking about her letter of application and how to make it stronger and assertive. So in this session, we're going to be talking about the three parts of a job application, answers to questions, the covering letter and her resume. So we'll talk about in the answers to questions here, you actually don't need to answer them all, how you should just really focus on your strengths, and just provide the information you need no more, no less, make the readers job as easy as you can, by not putting it out and just adding in that really key information. On the letters of application. My advice to Dominique is to really strengthen it and make it confident take out some of those soft burners like I believe, or I think, take them out and really strengthen the confidence in that application. And finally, I talked to Dominique, about my top 10 for your board resume and some of those sections and headers and how to bring that in and to really make your your resume sparkle and stand out to the person who's reading it. So I hope you enjoy today's episode. And I would love to hear your feedback about these sorts of strategies. So I hope you enjoy enjoy today's episode and

the slightly different format that we're doing it in. I would love to hear your feedback about this episode. And I'd also love to hear about any strategy sessions you would like to hear in the future. What topics would you like explored? And maybe you'd like to be part of one of those strategy sessions? If so, send me a voice message. And we'll see what we can sort out now on with the show. So to start with, can you just introduce yourself to our listeners.

D

Dominique Hes 02:28

So my name is Dr. Dominique Hes. I am an academic at the University of Melbourne. I have degrees in botany, Engineering and Architecture. And I tend to bring an interdisciplinary strategy and sort of future focus to any board work, really thinking about how to approach sort of resilience and adaptation with a sustainable built environment, ecological kind of lens,

H

Helga Svendsen 02:53

and how can I be of service today?

D

Dominique Hes 02:56

So the reason I'm talking to you today Hillier is that I saw the advertising for the ROI for trust for nature that you put on your fabulous Facebook group. And I thought, this is something that I possibly would be well suited for. I'm on the currently on the board of green fleet. And we do carbon offsets by planting ecosystems. And my background being initially in ecology and ecological thinking, really suits what trust for nature and doing. But I can also bring the human design systems thinking through engineering, and then I can also bring this sort of creativity, synthesis, design type thinking into any role. And I thought, look, I'll give it a crack, it'll be the first sort of position within a board that I am actually going for the other two positions I've had, have just come through my network. And so I thought, well, I'll speak to Hillier and see what I need to do to be competitive.

H

Helga Svendsen 03:54

Yeah, fantastic. Well, there's nothing I love more than a woman who's going to give it a crack for a board role. And with you experienced dominate, I would think you're in with a really good chance. So if we treat it like a practice run, where you can get some of this stuff, right, then you might end up with a bonus of a board role, which is always a fantastic outcome. So just before we go into your application, can you just tell us a little bit about trust for nature and what it does.



Dominique Hes 04:19

So my understanding from reading up on trust for nature is that they're an organization that have been around for 75 odd years. And I'm just note there, I might need to check that up and say that trust by nature is one of the longest standing organizations that has been planting ecosystems bringing nature back, dealing the land caring for country, within Victoria. And I'm really excited about their approach. They take land and they re vegetated, they look after it. And then they resell it with a covenant, that means that that land is protected in perpetuity. And then they use those funds to buy the next block of land. And it just sounds like an incredibly worthwhile addition to the sorts of work that I already do through green fleet. And the other thing about trust for nature that I really think that I can bring is, I've been working for the last 10 years in the ideas of regenerative development, how to increase adaptation and resilience within ecosystems, and thinking beyond the site to how to read broader patterns. And I think that will be really important for trust for nature as it goes forward in our changing climate.



Helga Svendsen 05:34

As I understand it, you need to provide three things to trust for nature, a resume a cover letter, and a statement addressing key selection criteria.



Dominique Hes 05:44

Is that right? So my understanding is there's there's three things, the last one slightly different from my understanding. So the first one is a CV. The second one is the cover letter. And the third one is answers to very specific questions. Those specific questions do address some of the criteria within the LI process, but they also go slightly beyond the criteria in the UI process. And each of the questions within the third section is up to 4000 characters, which is two to three pages.



Helga Svendsen 06:16

Each question is



Dominique Hes 06:18

a link both sorry for the people that have to read the submissions from those interested but also thinking, I can probably summarize how I can contribute in a paragraph or two for each questions.

H

Helga Svendsen 06:31

So shall we start there? Given? We've spoken about that a little bit? Because I was going to say, Where should we start, but given with kind of go into that in a bit more detail, should we start there? Sure. So firstly, my advice is, you absolutely do not have to feel 4000 characters. And as you have very rightly pointed out, the people who are reading this will thank you for your brevity. So the other thing, I just wanted to check whether you know from the application process so far, with all of these skills, so when I'm looking through it, you know, do you have skills in conservation environment? Do you know about agribusiness? Do you know about fundraising and philanthropy? Do you know about Aboriginal and cultural heritage? I'm guessing that this is essentially the skills matrix for this board. And that they don't expect that somebody has all of these.

D

Dominique Hes 07:23

Yes, that would be my assumption that they don't have all of them and I have had a brief look at their current board. I did try and touch base with one of the people on that board that I know, we haven't been able to meet up, but I will restart trying to get hold of her over the next few days. So I've looked at that. And there is some overlap with my skills with some of the people on the board. But I think particularly that resilience, future focused adaptation, regenerative development aspect is something that's unique, plus the work that I've been doing around modern custodianship, which is how do we bring together indigenous ways of understanding country and modern ways? LIDAR, GPS, all of that? And how do we have a conversation together. So those are the things I can think I can really bring to this position.

H

Helga Svendsen 08:12

Today, my advice is for those that you don't have a depth of experience to talk about, don't like if you've got limited experience, or have limited experience in this example, x, y, z, but don't feel you have to know all of this stuff. The idea is that the board knows all of these things. That's my guess. And if you're talking, the other thing I really loved hearing in there is that you're talking to one of the other board members, that will give you some real depth of knowledge around these things. So my panties, it's a shopping list. It's a shopping list that the board collectively needs to fulfill and not you individually. So really play to your strengths in that if there's other bits and pieces and some of the others that you've got something to say, say that you've got limited experience, but you definitely don't need to write 4000 words on each of them. The reviewers will definitely thank you for it. That's what I was hoping to hear. Where would you like to go next, your resume or your letter?

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Dominique Hes 09:09

Resume, please. I'm an academic. And my resume has been very academic focused for the last 20 years. So just having a sense of I have had a go, my normal resume is about 10 pages with all the publications listed. So I've tried to summarize that and my list of projects. I split out. And I've tried to summarize that. But I don't know if that's actually whether they'll want more than two pages and all of the detail or whether they'd appreciate again, something brief or into the point.

H

Helga Svendsen 09:35

Yeah. Okay. So rule of thumb for any board or governance resume is two, maybe three pages. So first of all, well done on getting it down to two pages. That is awesome. and dare I say it, particularly for an academic resume, which are often well more than three pages, I've got a bit of a framework for one of a better word, that standard headings that I always suggest to people that they use in their governance resumes. So how about I take you through those different sections, and then we can have a bit of a chat in each of them about what you might pop in there. Wonderful. So there is 10 sections that I suggest, although the first one is just a header, just your name and contact details. So that's not too much of a difficult one, having name contact details, personally, I would just have mobile phone number and email. Personally, I don't include a street address anymore, because no one really uses them anymore, unless the role that you are seeking has a particular geographic significance. And you need to show that you're from a particular geographic area.

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Dominique Hes 10:41

So not the various degrees?

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Helga Svendsen 10:44

Or will come to that. So the next section that I suggest is a very brief profile summary. And this should have a governance lens. So it might be I mean, you've talked about this when you introduce yourself about your governance experience, and building on your governance roles and the skills that you are seeking to bring to this role. So I would condense that down into 234 sentences and have it as a profile summary with a governance lens.

D

Dominique Hes 11:13

And would you make that section personal or third person so currently I have a doctor has blah, blah, blah, blah, she did blah, blah, blah, blah, she won blah, blah, blah, blah, she wrote, blah, blah, blah, blah. It shouldn't be more personal.

H

Helga Svendsen 11:27

Oh, Dominique, ask 10 people and you'll get five saying one and five, same the other or possibly for saying one false and the other into saying something else entirely. In my resume, I say I, on my LinkedIn, I say hello. So even I have a bit of a mix in amongst my own things. I don't think there is a firm rule of thumb around this, I think whatever makes you feel comfortable. Great. So after the profile summary with that governance lens, then move into your non executive director and governance roles. So you want that upfront interface about your governance experience. You're already on the board of brain fleet. I think you've had other board roles as well. Yeah,

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Dominique Hes 12:09

that's right. I was a founding member of the living Futures Institute of Australia, where I served for three and a half, four years.

H

Helga Svendsen 12:18

Right. Okay. So put your green flag roles, put the living Futures Institute roles on there, and have that with a separate heading governance experience. It's separate to your employment experience? Because you really want to pull that up, including there any committees that you are on for those boards? And in particular, any committees that you chair for those boards. Okay, and is there any other governance experience that you can draw on from longer ago that you might be able to pull in there any other committees you've been involved in? Is there any other any other governance experience you can draw on?

D

Dominique Hes 12:55

So I've been director of a research center and director of the current place agency, which is a two and a half year project across five universities. But they're not a non exec, Executive Director roles, not non executive director roles? That's correct. And and if they're quite small organization, so I don't I don't want to make it sound bigger than it actually is.

H Helga Svendsen 13:19
That's fine. I would then leave those ones in your employment experience. For green flag, which committees have you been on?

D Dominique Hes 13:25
So I'm on the vegetation committee, and I have been since the start, and our main focus is looking at, you know, how do we improve practice? How do we improve how we deal with land and supporting those staff within green fleet that need to respond to issues. So for example, looked at drones, and how we could use drones to better monitor sites, we've looked at improving the practice, you know, currently, we use plastic things around trees, protect them when they young, most of those end up in the streams as the wind blows them away. And so can we do something better? Can we do something better around pest control and weed control. And so that's the sorts of things that we do very practical.

H Helga Svendsen 14:10
In this governance section of your resume, I would list the boards list, the committee's that you are on and then maybe just one or two achievements. Now, if it's around this regurgitation working committee, or if it's around, you know, I can say from what you've written here, that you're leading the development of strategic research framework, indigenous issues being discussed at board, just choose two or three achievements to highlight there, and make sure it's focusing on that governance lens. So having something that is around the strategic direction of the organization, or the risk in the organization. So for example, if you're talking about the vegetation working committee, I would really make sure you're focusing on the governance issues around that as one of the achievements.

D Dominique Hes 14:56
Thanks for the feedback on my CV, I've really changed the order of around and under the governance experience, I'll talk about the two things that I've introduced into the green plate board, which is a research framework, and how to bring ideas of country from indigenous custodians into our mindfulness whenever we have a meeting. But what I'll focus on is on the governance and risk aspects, and what I will try and do is be brief with that, because I think I can pick those up in the answers to the questions.

H Helga Svendsen 15:27

I think that's a great idea. Although do remember that repeating yourself between your answers to your questions and your resume, and your covering letter, feel free to do that. Because, you know, sometimes people don't read all of the documents. So mentioning it, between all three of them isn't necessarily a problem, because they might read your letter, but not your answers, or they're not read your answers, but not your resume. So feel free to repeat, but I think that's a great idea to keep them brief.

D

Dominique Hes 15:55

Yes. Now, I felt that when I'd finished writing the cover letter and the CV, when I was answering the questions, I was like, Oh, well, I kind of did that there. But ok, I'll expand a little bit more in the questions.

H

Helga Svendsen 16:06

Perfect, great. Alright, so the fourth section that I always suggest is just a bit of a list, a short list of your key skills and attributes, again, with a governance lens that suit this role. And again, when you introduced yourself before you listed off a number of things, that would be perfect. So just highlighting those real strengths that you have for this role in maybe three or four dot points with just align with for each of them. The next part that I suggest to people is a career summary, your employment summary, your career summary, and you've already outlined that beautifully. So you've got your employment experience here, in reverse chronological order with the roles that you've had. Because this is a governance role, not a professional role, the way you've outlined it on your resume at the moment, which is basically just naming the roles and the years you've had it, I think is perfect. Now the next part, and this is just some reordering, I've then suggest after your governance, summary, the key skills and attributes, and then your career summary, then I would put in your education and qualifications. So moving them down your resume from your current one a little bit. And I do that because you know, for this type of role that kind of just expect that there will be some, so you pop them in there, you don't need to highlight them so much. You just need to show people you've got them.

D

Dominique Hes 17:27

And do you think that I need to split the qualifications with the secondary qualifications? Or should I bring the governance Institute training that all about to do into the qualifications and don't worry about teaching specific stuff?

H Helga Svendsen 17:41
I would definitely just have one hitting. So qualifications, I would actually put your governance Institute at the top, your cert for in teaching and learning and your other accreditation? Is there. If you think they're specifically relevant to this role, I would include them if you don't, I would dump them.

D Dominique Hes 17:56
Yep. Good dumped, done.

H Helga Svendsen 17:59
Never next that I suggest is around memberships. So there might be memberships of some organizations that are particularly relevant to governance, or particularly relevant to this role that you might like to highlight?

D Dominique Hes 18:12
Is there anything you can think of there? I'm a member of the RFID. But that's the only one otherwise, I'm members, a member of the air conditioning Industry Association and a member of the Institute for living futures Australia, which we set up. So those are less relevant.

H Helga Svendsen 18:29
Well, the air conditioning Association, does that have any direct impact in this role? I does at the Institute for living futures, I'm guessing March. Yeah, they might. So I would list the definitely the Institute of company directors, that is a classic one to list in there. And the Institute for living futures, because again, wants to set up the role. Don't assume that everybody has read all of your resume or all of your other documentation. So they may not have noticed that that you have set up the organization, but they may notice that you're a member. So I think it worth mentioning it even though you've got different roles in each of those. Great. The next section that I suggest is around any awards or presentations that you have, or have made my panties, you will have a number of presentations that you will have made and quite potentially some awards in there as well. All publications actually, which again, I'm sure you will have a number of them. So giving you will have a number of really drawing out dates that are most relevant to this role.

- D** Dominique Hes 19:30
Yes, I want a national award of Bob Brown, any green award, sustainable practitioner, and a bunch of teaching awards, which are less relevant, I have published six books and you know, hundred or so papers, chapters, etc.
- H** Helga Svendsen 19:47
Oh, and the hundred papers dominate.
- D** Dominique Hes 19:51
That's part of the life of an academic how useful those areas and other question, one of the books, designing for hope didn't receive an international award, which is also a nice recognition. And that book specifically talks around
- H** Helga Svendsen 20:05
The things that I can bring to this this role. It really talks about that adaptation, resilience, future thinking, and so forth. So I'm pretty proud of that one. Absolutely. So they are exactly the sorts of things that you would want to include there. Yeah, some of those awards, some of the presentations, you might then just want to put a line in saying, a full list of publications is available at and I'm not sure if it would be you know, whether it's a university profile, or a LinkedIn profile, or something along those lines, that lists them all out. So the ninth area that I recommend to people, and this also is contentious in some circles, but is a personal section. Again, normally just a couple of lines or a couple of points around some of the things that you're interested in a personal way. Some people will argue vehemently that this is a professional resume, and you shouldn't put that in there. My view is I like when I'm looking at a pile of resumes. To know a little bit about the whole person. So I like it. So things that are on mine, I things like bush walking, traveling, you know that I've done things like you know, walk decoder and done the Mary river marathon things that kind of people might relate to, there might be some things in there that you like, might like to pop in any thoughts. I was thinking family.
- D** Dominique Hes 21:22
I'm about to go kayaking around Hinchinbrooke Island in August. So that's something that I'm very much looking forward to. I do love being out in nature, camping, kayaking, and walking. As he said, I love cycling, I love reading and tend to be involved in community activities and supporting communities. Fantastic.

H

Helga Svendsen 21:43

So again, it's a personal thing. Some people think it's not a good idea, I think it is a good idea. putting down some of those activities like the cycling and your bush walking in your community activities. I think it just gives life to it. And often, when people are sitting down with 100 resumes and plowing through them all, anything that just makes them go, Oh, I think is a good thing. So I would recommend to do so.

D

Dominique Hes 22:07

Great. And number 10.

H

Helga Svendsen 22:09

Number 10. That's like the top 10. Number. 10 is just referees. Again, my recommendation is just referees available on request. However, if there are particular referees that you think will really stand out in a crowd, and they are happy to be popped on the resume early, then you might want to put them on. Can I just mentioned in their governance referees? So for example, you the Chair of the Board of gameplay? Know, right, so ideally, the chair of the board at crane place, maybe the chair of the board at the Institute for living futures, or might be the chair of a committee at Green flight that you're on. But governance referees are what you're looking for there. Okay. Thought of this. Some of the sections that I haven't mentioned, what have you got for me?

D

Dominique Hes 22:58

So I have a funding question, because one of the categories within the questions is philanthropy. So I have just done a summary of my career, or at least the last 13 years at Melbourne University, I've brought in almost \$3 million from various sources. So again, if they want the list of exact projects, they can request it, but I just thought that would address one of the things that they're looking for.

H

Helga Svendsen 23:24

Yeah, it's a great one, I actually wonder, spend a little tricky on it. But I wonder whether you put that under your governance section as an achievement, in that fundraising, is often a something that the boards are looking for. And it is particularly in this one, it's something that they've asked for. So under your governance section, as you list your your roles and have maybe a couple of achievements, I would think about popping it in there, done.

- D** Dominique Hes 23:54
I'm doing this while you're speaking. So and then the other thing is I listed the experience government and environmental teams, specific projects that I have done with federal, state and local governments thinking that that aspects might be useful, particularly as potentially were collaborating across state boundaries or, and so forth with land is caring for country doesn't know where the boundary is between New South Wales and Victoria.
- H** Helga Svendsen 24:25
They just don't know where the borders are.
- D** Dominique Hes 24:27
That's right. That's right. And so I thought that might be useful again, that potentially could go under the achievements.
- H** Helga Svendsen 24:34
Now that I think of it not that first section around governance. The next section around key skills, key skills and attributes are both of them in a your philanthropy achievements. And your however you want to call it cross government, collaboration, or government, stakeholder management, or whatever it is, however you want to pull that together, maybe pop that under one of your key skills and attributes in that fourth section, because if that's something they're looking for, and that is something you've got a strength in that is, this is the game of mix and match. That's exactly what you want to highlight for them.
- D** Dominique Hes 25:07
Okay. And so I also had a section around ability to collaborate and work with diverse stakeholders. So I think that should also then go under skills.
- H** Helga Svendsen 25:16
Yes, definitely, definitely. I think, for me, I like that section being around skills and experience and attributes. So it's kind of that mix of I don't really like the terminology that hard skills, soft skills, but people know what they mean. But I think that that section is a mixture of those two things, the hard skills and soft skills that are going to make you an awesome director and awesome part of the board of this organization.



Dominique Hes 25:41

Great, great. Yep, no good one. I'm not that comfortable with hard and soft skills. Anyway, I'm one person and they Yeah, kind of bleed into each other. So I will just stick to the specifics of what their skills. The next section I had was the various books that I'd written. Rather than, you know, just say six books actually giving some details behind it. But that might just be the, the recovering academic from of my academic that I am.



Helga Svendsen 26:11

Look, again, I would pull out the key ones that you have in that section around awards, presentations, publications, I would pull out the key ones that are relevant for this area, and then have a link that goes across to you know, look here for my full list.



Dominique Hes 26:28

Great. And then I had awards, which we've discussed already. Fantastic. That's the survey done.



Helga Svendsen 26:33

And then the trick is, of course, still maintaining that two pages. The other thing that I would say is, have a look online for some templates for resumes. There are some fantastic ones on there, and they just make it look a little bit snazzy. And not that your current one doesn't look absolutely beautifully neat and lovely. that perhaps a little bit more snazzy, this might also be a good thing, and it just makes it exactly it is beauty beautifully functional. And I would like to see a little bit more sparkle.



27:06

Magic,



Helga Svendsen 27:08

remember, and look, you will have done this a million times before, no doubt, you will have sat down with that pile of 100 resumes and you know, there may well be 100 resumes for this role. And you will have sat down with that pile before and you know that after 10, little and 2030 4050 they all start to merge into one. So you want to be able to stand out in the crowd?

D Dominique Hes 27:29
Do you put photo?

H Helga Svendsen 27:31
Oh, great question. Personally, no, I don't put a photo mostly because I think everyone these days goes to LinkedIn. And there's a photo on LinkedIn.

D Dominique Hes 27:41
The space is precious.

H Helga Svendsen 27:43
Yeah. And I certainly don't think you will be penalized for not having a photo. So again, I normally say to people, whatever you are most comfortable with personally, if you would like to put a photo up go for gold. If you don't, that's fine and dandy, you're not going to be penalized. I think either way.

D Dominique Hes 27:57
Great,

H Helga Svendsen 27:58
fabulous. So anything else on your resume that might be of help?

D Dominique Hes 28:01
No, that's it, I will need to do two things, I will rewrite it based on those 10 points. And then I will set up somewhere where everything can be reached online. I think LinkedIn is got a few things. But then the academics have a separate database for all the publications and money and so forth, guys. So I may need to integrate those into one space. So I'll have to look at what that looks like.

H Helga Svendsen 28:24
You can put documents in your LinkedIn profile, you can obviously also put links to other sites. So I would make sure they talk to each other my panties, people are much more

likely to look at your LinkedIn than the academic site for this type of role. So if you can include the link to your academic side, in your LinkedIn, I think that's probably the better way to go.

D

Dominique Hes 28:43

How much do you feel that the network that you have is important to a role such as this? Because I have an extensive network of colleagues around Australia internationally? Is that something that goes under the skills and accent variance? Yeah,

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Helga Svendsen 29:01

actually, I think it is an extensive network, you know, locally and internationally, I would bet under gills experience attributes, whatever it may be, it is part of your value add. And I would reference it in your leisure as well, or the answers to the questions or all of the above, depending on where it falls most neatly. But I think it is worthwhile. I loved hearing that you've reached out to somebody who's already on this board, I think it is worth looking kind of broadly at that if you if there are other people involved in the organization. And getting some feedback from people around the organization will also help to frame some of this stuff. So if there are other people that have worked there, either former board members, maybe that might be able to give you some insight, there might be funders who have been involved in the organization that might be able to give you some insight, I think it's really worth drawing on that amazing network of people that you have, and drawing on them to get as much insight into the organization that will help you really tailor these application to what they

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Dominique Hes 30:00

I think it's due in about two weeks, it will be what I can

H

Helga Svendsen 30:03

as much as possible. And even once the application is in if and when you get called in for the interview. That is another key time to start drawing on those networks for some of those. Another podcast them Yes. Gonna be a read interviews. Absolutely. And then it could be around your first board role in your induction. But I think really drawing on the on some of those networks. I remember going to an interview some years ago now. And they started with this data questions, basically. And I'm like, right? Well, you know, I've spoken to your alumni, I've spoken to your funders, I've spoken to former board members have spoken to current and former staff members and some other stakeholders. And what they

told me is your challenges are blah, blah, blah. So I want you to tell me what the board has done to face them. And they just kind of looked at me with a only slight twinge of terror in their eyes about some of the questions that I was asking them because I've done the research, I really done the research. So it's well worth doing if you're able to do

D Dominique Hes 30:59

the Absolutely, I am a complete believer in that the interview goes both ways.

H Helga Svendsen 31:03

Yes, you are interviewing them just as much as they are interviewing you. All right, shall we turn to your letter, I've got just a little bit of feedback there. It's not so much about content. I think once you've popped your resume in order, and then done some cut and paste between the questions that you need to respond to and the letter, you'll be able to work out what the right kind of level is around that. The thing that I picked up when I had a read through your letter is there are some what I call soft earners. So your very first line, I believe I will be a great addition to this board, you know, but I'm sure you do believe it. And I believe it as well. But take the believe out. I will be a great addition to this board. They say my husband's gone through this.

D Dominique Hes 31:46

And he's already taken off a bunch of words like this. Yay, well done husband, habit to always kind of soften Yes. And not made to worry alike in this. So things. Yes.

H Helga Svendsen 32:01

So be very confident and assertive in this. So of course you believe it. But it's well, I it's superfluous words, and be it softens it, and you don't want to be softened. Do you want to be confident, you don't want to be arrogant, but you definitely want to be confident and taking those words out. Just makes it sound a little bit stronger. That's my primary feedback to you. In this one, there is a number of soften as it sounds like most of them have probably already been taken up by your husband, which is fantastic. Well done him and be very confident in the way you present. And like I said before, in your letter, the answers to the questions and your resume, absolutely do not be afraid to repeat yourself because some people won't read the other. The only other thing I would say in your letter is consider not firmly because it's not a hugely long letter, which is a good thing. But consider maybe some sub headings. For example, there's a paragraph here we've talked about in responding to setting the strategic direction for trust for nature, maybe maybe

that a subheading, the next part is around budget process and evaluation of performance, maybe make that a subheading, it just makes it a little bit easier to read. And again, when they've got 100 of these resumes and letters sitting in front of them, you want to make it as scalable as possible, because they will not read the whole thing, they will definitely not right word for word that will scan it. So if you can make some things stand out that will really help to grab their attention.

D Dominique Hes 33:25
Okay, great, great suggestion.

H Helga Svendsen 33:28
Is there anything else in terms of the application that I might be able to help you with today?

D Dominique Hes 33:32
It's the first time that I am doing one of these types of applications and anyone else who's considering doing it. Every time I did one step, I found that there were a whole bunch of other steps to go through. So I hadn't expected the questions. I thought it was just the CV and the letter. And suddenly, here are all these questions that wanted 4000 characters per question. So that might be going up there for a minute when I thought I was done. suggestion, start early. And even if you don't answer everything, and just put dot dot dot, just walk yourself through the whole process.

H Helga Svendsen 34:06
It is fabulous advice dominate. Because for those that are listening, this is a Victorian Government role board, they have a standard website where they do lots of their applications. And this commonly happens, you think you've got to the end of the application process, you hit next and all of a sudden, there's 10 more questions. So I agree wholeheartedly just put an X in a box flick through so you know exactly what questions need to be answered. And leave yourself plenty of time to do it. It is fabulous advice.

D Dominique Hes 34:35
And also, I started a separate document where I just listed the questions and started working on the questions because just doing it online, meant that I couldn't check and sort of look at the typos and things like that. But also, it was hard to lose sight of repetition,

and so forth. So just having a separate document where you put all of the questions, then answer them and then putting those answers back into the document, I think I think will be a good way of going forward. Having said that, you do need to be careful with cutting and pasting. So maybe you have to report back on that. Next chat.

H Helga Svendsen 35:09

Absolutely, when we're talking about your interview, but I think it is great advice. I always like to recommend to people to have a master copy for one of a better word of your shopping list of achievements and so on. And then to shop from that list about what you want to draw out for the answers to your letter, whatever it may be. So yeah, it's a great suggestion.

D Dominique Hes 35:29

Great. Yeah. And a suggestion back from you to me. Yes. Because I currently have for CBS on the go. But if I had a master CV, then I could just draw from that what I needed. So thank you for that.

H Helga Svendsen 35:41

Yes, absolutely. So then in thinking about the conversation that we've had around the application process around your resumes, around the answers to the questions and your cover letter, just as we're wrapping it, I'm wondering, what's your fresh thinking, following our conversation?

D Dominique Hes 36:00

So the CV will look a lot different to what I had it. So there is some great thinking around that. So that that will be my main take home. What's been great is just talking through the questions within the EOI. And having that realization that I don't need to answer every question. And that's fine, because it's a shopping list. And I should really just focus on the things that I can contribute to this role.

H Helga Svendsen 36:24

We've already listed some of them, but what are your actions following this conversation?

D Dominique Hes 36:29
So I've been making notes while you've been speaking, so I will be revisiting the CV, I will be taking out the softness in the letter. And I will be going back to the questions that they've asked for, and really thinking around how to bring a stronger governance narrative within those questions. And also to still continue to be brief, but with backup examples.

H Helga Svendsen 36:54
Fantastic. And you've used it a lot, but don't be afraid of the good old dot point to do some of those things.

D Dominique Hes 36:59
Okay, that's good. That's good. We tend to avoid points in academia. So it's good to have that reinforced,

H Helga Svendsen 37:05
it makes it just makes it easier for people scanning. Because again, I mean, I don't want to, I don't want to cast aspersions on the people that might be reading these resumes, but I would I think it's better to bank on a shorter amount of time being given to each one than a longer amount of time. And then if they get a longer amount of time, that's a bonus.

D Dominique Hes 37:23
And as he said, I've gone through hundreds of other people's surveys. So I do know how the scanning work. Yes,

H Helga Svendsen 37:29
absolutely. Window applications closed on an echo. You said this just a moment ago. But when did they close?

D Dominique Hes 37:34
In about two weeks? It's early August, I'd have to double check the date. Exactly.

H

Helga Svendsen 37:39

So no. The other thing that you need to know about government roles unless there is a, they've already publicized the timeline for this, it may well take quite some time for feedback. Don't panic. I know for for example, as some know, I'm on the board of the row Women's Hospital here in Melbourne. And the application process when I first applied for it back in what of the year was 2016? I think I applied in November. And I think I was interviewed probably I can't quite remember maybe May or June the following year, so good six months later, and wasn't actually appointed until October. So it was almost 12 months now. That was a longer period than is usually the case. However, yeah, don't panic, if you haven't heard for some time already. But do let me know because I would love to have this conversation again, around interviews, you know, you've got so much that you can contribute. You've got governance experience, you've got subject matter expertise that could really help this organization. So I'm very happy to look at a final copy of your application. And I would hope that as it sits there in that pile of 100 resumes and applications that somebody is flicking through them and going Oh, would you have a look at this one. This person looks fantastic.

D

Dominique Hes 38:55

Great. Thank you so much. I look forward to seeing this process of really is the first steps on this journey and I'm loving it and testing