

## Take on Board Podcast – Episode 204

# Transcript – Gina Balarin says marketers play a huge role on boards.



Helga Svendsen 0:00

Today on the Take on Board podcast, I'm speaking with Gina Balarin about her unexpected journey to the boardroom. Before we start that discussion, I'd like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we record this podcast today. For me, I'm on the unseeded lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, and I pay my respects to elder's past and present, I acknowledge their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. I support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and I encourage others in the Take on Board community to do the same. Now, let me introduce Gina. Gina Balarin is an inspirational TEDx and keynote speaker, storyteller and B2B marketing leader who sits on the boards of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and Project Displaced. I'm sure we'll hear more about those soon. There's lots of letters here, she's a I don't even know how to say this Gina. She's an FAMI FCIM chartered marketer. She'll probably tell us more about that later as well given she's on the Chartered Institute of Marketing FCM, fellow of the Chartered Institute of marketing, there we go. And she has a master's of education in management communication, and she's a member of the Professional Speaking Association. So she's going to be slick as today. She is the author of "The Secret Army: leadership, marketing and the power of people". And she loves finding the essence of information and distilling it into meaningful communication that makes positive change happen. She's just the sort of person we should have on this pod. She's the director of our own organisation verb realistics. A marketing communications consultancy. Welcome to the Take on Board podcast Gina.

Gina Balarin 1:40

It is my pleasure to be here Helga. Thank you so much for having me.

Helga Svendsen 1:44

Oh, I'm so excited to have you here. We met actually remember that Take on Board meetup up in Noosa, we did not have a show how that came about? How did you know about that meetup?

Gina Balarin 1:55

We connected through Women on Boards, and I started following you. And then you said, hey, people, we're gonna be here. And that was like, That's my neck of the woods. It's meant to be in so off I popped down to Noosa said hello to you and a few select ladies. And it was just so lovely. It was actually the first time I'd gone out and deliberately done a networking event since the beginning of COVID. Believe it or not. So you popped my post COVID networking virginity.

Helga Svendsen 2:24

I'm not quite sure how to take that. But anyway, there you go. Oh, lovely. Well, so great to be able to follow up that informal conversation down on the beautiful Noosa river with this podcast. But of course, before we dig into your journey to the boardroom, let's dig a little bit deeper about you. Can you tell me a story about young Gina, that tells us a bit about how you got to where you are today?

Gina Balarin 2:51

So a few years ago, I realized that there are people who naturally are inclined towards leadership. But that doesn't mean that they actually take on the mantle or the responsibility of leadership. And I was one of those, I could see that it would be easy for me to step into a leadership role. And I'd often select a friend or to someone who I thought deserved it but wasn't necessarily recognized or acknowledged and encouraged them to be in that role instead. And after years of being in business, I realised this wasn't serving me it wasn't helping me actually move forward professionally or personally. And so I dug a bit deeper and remembered something from my early childhood that stung like a slap across the face. And it was someone telling me your are a bossy boots. Now, I don't know if any of the listeners on this podcast have ever been called a bossy boots. But it is a nasty little term that little children will say to each other when they are showing signs of leadership. But the problem is they're showing different signs of leadership. Rather than being engaging and accommodating to other people listening and helping people find a way forward. They're often being dictatorial leaders. And so I think what my little friends were resenting was not me being a leader, they were resenting me being a leader who told them what to do, rather than asking them how we could work together. And from the moment I had that epiphany, it made me realise, wait, hang on a second. I don't have to deliberately step away from being a leader, because someone might call me a bossy boots or whatever the equivalent is an adult language. I can in fact, become a leader who leads consultatively. And that made all the difference. And I think the transformational period took a few years to actually recognize that when I saw stuff that was happening in organisations that I disagreed with, or that I thought needed to change or be somehow different, instead of going I can't change this. I'm going to throw up my hands and leave a job and find somewhere else actually started to think about getting involved. challenging the status quo going, well, if this isn't something that I think is serving the organisation, or the people in the organisation or our purpose or our customers, what how can I change that. And I had an incredible mentor who was my boss at the time, and under his tutelage, I was able to embrace my inner bossy boots, and start realizing that it was okay to be me, it was okay to just stand up for what I believed in and to

make that happen. But she set the framework, she didn't necessarily put me into a leadership role, what happened is that I had to step into a position of absolute terror. And take that step that was so challenging, I never thought I could do it. And that was when I stepped out from being a leader who led without portfolio to actually being a leader who was in a defined leadership role. And over that period of time, I realized that, actually, it's not as hard to be a leader as I had anticipated. It just means making a lot of uncomfortable decisions, especially if you don't have the answers to a lot of stuff. And quite frankly, no leader will ever have all of the answers to all of the questions. It's an uncomfortable position. It's not untenable. But it is awkward. And if you want to live a very comfortable life, then leadership is not for you. But some people don't like to live comfortable lives. There's a difference between an intrapreneur and an entrepreneur, I was working in organisations where I had an entrepreneurial mindset, but I couldn't make anything change in the organisation. When I stepped into a leadership role, all of a sudden, I became an intrapreneur, I could start making change from within the organisation, and bring people along with me and create excitement and make a difference. And that was absolutely transformational. And I think that's when I realized that it was time to stop resenting and resisting being a leader and start embracing that leadership that from a different perspective, embracing a sense of what could we do if we all jump in together and try to make a difference? And now I will help you get there. Let's do it together come. So that doesn't answer the question about being on a board, of course.

Helga Svendsen 7:26

Oo, well, oh, God, there's so much I want to dig into already. But let's do it through that lens of the journey to the boardroom. So let's segue there. Tell us about your unexpected journey to the boardroom.

Gina Balarin 7:38

After being in Australia for a few years, something had shifted in my mind. Now I was born in South Africa. I lived in the UK for 13 years. And I'd learned when I was in the UK to take my chocolate gooey center and coated in a candy shell.

Helga Svendsen 7:56

Such imagery there particularly post Easter Anyway, yes,

Gina Balarin 8:00

Yes to what happens in the UK is that people have a lot of rules, many of them are unwritten. The first thing I learned coming from South Africa is there is actually such a thing as an invisible queue. You can stand waiting for a bus stop. And when you are the first person in front of the doors that opens and you get on first you get this horrible glares and these audible gasps and tats, right?

Because you don't realize that as a South African, the place in the queue is in fact, you have to see who was there before you and who arrived after you and that is the invisible queue. So living in the UK not knowing what the rules and culture was. I realized that the Brits couldn't quite adapt to this big personality that is Jean Avella and so I covered myself in an acceptable cultural way. And that meant dumbing myself down stepping into an organisation where it was finally okay to be my real self in a work home, allowed me to break through that candy coated shell and actually start becoming radically and unforgivably and emphatically Gina. But what I also found was that when I shifted into an entrepreneurial role, it was difficult to find people like me, people who had that same mindset. Once I shifted to Australia, all of a sudden, everything changed. I could go back to being me, melty, runny, gooey chocolate all over inside and outside. And it became more acceptable, but something else almost magical happened. I found extraordinary women willing to help and work with other extraordinary women. And this made me realize, well hang on a second, I don't have to be alone anymore. And something shifted in my mindset going right it's time it's time to step into leadership. I had by that stage moved up to run my own consultancy. It's a lonely journey for anyone who works on their own and doesn't have a team around them, or it can be sometimes and that meant that I wanted to start getting back into organisation but not in a way where I was employed full time, in a way where I could use the wisdom of advice and experience of having been in a leadership role, to change the status quo and to help people accept that sometimes things are not great. And sometimes there's better ways of doing them. So I bravely applied for a board member position at the Chartered Institute of Marketing. I've been a CIM member for several years, when I first realized that marketing was in fact, a thing. Yes, applying for the role was absolutely terrifying. But I did it anyway. And then I thought, you know, what, I probably got no chance of getting in because I looked at all the other board members and thought, I don't have the qualifications. I don't have the experience, I don't have the connections. So I was chatting and looking at other stuff that was going on, I came across a fabulous fellow by the name of Andrew Cohen. And he was running an organisation called Project displaced. And he was appearing in the news because at the time, he was helping people who had been affected, especially by the travel industry with COVID, shutdowns, get back into work. And I saw something that said, Hey, we're looking for coaches, I said, you know, I don't have formal coaching qualifications, but I've got a lot of experience in it. Can I help? He said, Actually, you're a marketer, aren't you? I said, Yes. He said, I need marketing advice. He's a marketer himself. But often, it's hard to see the wood for the trees. Plus, he's also the chair of the board. So we need someone in the formal marketing world. And he said, Do you want to join my board? I nearly fell off my chair. Because this was exactly what I wanted. I said, I wanted to join a board. And there was and literally said, I've got a great group of people come and join me, we're gonna make a difference together. Would you like to be part of this? How could I possibly say, No, a month later, the Chartered Institute of Marketing came back to me and said, Oh, congratulations, you've become a board member. And by the way, you'll have to attend board meetings between 1am and 3am. Are you up for that? And at the time, I got the feeling that the chair didn't really want me to be on the board. I think it was inconvenient for someone for an organisation based in the UK, although they have international arms all over the world, to have someone attending board meetings from Australia. But I said yes. And nearly two and a half years later, I'm still sitting on the Chartered Institute of Marketing board, and really enjoying being there. And, again, challenging the status quo. Because I was in England, I am no longer in England, but I've lived there. And I've understood and experienced what it's like. And I'm no longer afraid to ask uncomfortable questions, and to listen and

learn and know that I don't have the answers. But sometimes, asking the questions is more important than having the answers.

Helga Svendsen 12:49

Key skill for a board director is asking those good questions. It's like, I think it's sometimes akin to being collective coach for an organisation in a way. But before we delve into that, being in the boardroom stuff, Can I skip back a little bit about getting those board roles? So your it sounded like right place, right time for Project Displaced? So hey, do you want to be on the board? Was that it? Were you just on the board? Then? Did you have to apply? Was there a process? And same for the Chartered Institute of Marketers? What was the process there? Talk us through the process.

Gina Balarin 13:21

So Project Displaced is brand new, and hadn't even formed it yet. He knew that he had some people on his board who were very experienced, who could help guide him through, you know, what are the principles and procedures that we need to set up? What are the documents that we need to create? What roles do we have to have? What committees do we have to have? What eyes do we need to dot and T's do we need to cross and so we actually formed it from the very beginning, there was nothing and then all of a sudden there was bored. So it really was as informal as and asking me a question. And me going Yes, absolutely. And subsequently, I met the other board members, we went through all the processes, we did all the form filling in and stuff like that. But it's almost the story of my life, that when there's something I really, really want to happen, I find a way of sneaking it in and kind of going through processes that aren't the regular, earmarked, fun, fundamental, you must do this, you must follow this path. And that was how it worked for me. So when it came to the Chartered Institute of Marketing, it's actually an elected board position.

Helga Svendsen 14:27

Right would be greatly the process there because often people do get involved in the boards of their professional associations or membership organisations of all sorts. So yeah, talk us through this process there.

Gina Balarin 14:39

Well, you might have sensed Helga that there is a little bit of me that doesn't like to do everything by the book. I like to push the boundaries a little bit and find clever or innovative ways of getting around things. I'm not sure if that's a good skill for a board member or not. It is me, quintessentially so when the CIM board application was taking process. I did all of the dotting and T crossing, I found the people who needed to support my application said Would you mind, I wrote the application, as I did looked at all of the other board members looked at what else I could see did my homework and

research and really tailored stuff as much as I could based on the information that I had available. But there was one step that was not prohibited. But it wasn't necessarily encouraged. And I read through all of the charters and the documents, and I couldn't see any language that explicitly prohibited me from talking about it on social media. And so that's exactly what I did. I put an impassioned plea up on LinkedIn saying, chartered marketers, or any members of the Chartered Institute of marketing, you have a responsibility to vote, you have a duty, and it is your job to make sure that you elect a CIM member who represents your values, who helps you stand up for what you believe in? Coincidentally, and again, you're saying Right Place Right Time, I think there's a large element of that in my board career. It was at the time that the American elections were happening as well.

Helga Svendsen 16:18

Speaking of encouraging people to vote, okay,

Gina Balarin 16:21

Exactly. So encouraging people to vote and to do their civic responsibility was exactly the right kind of message in the market. And I think it really resonated deeply with the marketers who were up there on LinkedIn, and those who wanted to participate in that. I think, often membership organisations forget that their members actually have the opportunity to be involved. And they need a little bit of encouragement, because it's easy to be a member, but be a member in name only you pay your subs every year, you might attend a meeting or two, maybe you connect with a few of the people and then you're like, No, so I'm a member. So what, but actually, I think people became members of organisations, because something resonated with them. And it helps to remind them, why they joined in the first place. And I think that was key to being able to get a bunch of people involved and encouraged to actually participate. Now, again, because a right place right time and a little bit of tweaking the Board election process means that the top, I think there were three people who could be elected at the time. And one of those positions was earmarked for an international position. So even though technically, I was not in the top three votes, I was the highest voted international member.

Helga Svendsen 17:49

And is that non UK? Yeah, absolutely. Right.

Gina Balarin 17:52

So I snuck in

Helga Svendsen 17:55

Nice work, which is and meetings at 1am. Hmm. So it's such an interesting role in membership organisations, I think, because I totally agree. People join membership organisations for a whole range of reasons. But I would say it's part of the role of the board to ensure those members are engaged in the process, and fully voting, or just participating in a range of other ways of helping to direct the organisation, you're not just handed over to the board, the board needs to engage members, shareholders, whoever it may be, whoever their group might be. Tell me about your first board meeting with them. It's one o'clock in the morning. Tell me about the first board meeting.

Gina Balarin 18:36

That's a funny memory. I was listening to one of your podcast guests earlier this morning, who was talking about how she was scared about her first board meeting. And she prepared a bunch of questions. And she didn't ask anything. And then she got a board buddy to check through her questions and make sure that she was asking the right ones. And I think that's a sensible and wise approach. It's not my approach. I'm more a jump in feet first kind of person. And I suspect that on my first board meeting, I was asking a lot of stupid questions or not that not that there's any such thing as a stupid question. There are sometimes questions that other people already know the answers to or that you might have been able to find out the answer to via a different platform or tool or by having a conversation with an individual rather than the group. I was super nervous. But that didn't prevent me from actually piping up. And I think that actually is a lesson for women particularly and women on boards, that often we have questions that need answering that if we stay stuck, and we don't say anything, we're not only do we not serve ourselves because no one becomes aware of us and no one becomes aware of the credibility that we carry by asking those questions. And we can also do the boards and anyone who's attending the board meeting a disservice because the question No need to be asked. I'm not sure that everyone was really comfortable with me asking the questions, but they were answered. And people were warm and friendly and engaging. And yeah, I got told off occasionally Oh, Gina, that's a tactical measure, not a strategic one, we don't deal with that at board level. I'm like, oh, wrapped over the knuckles. Okay, now I know.

Helga Svendsen 20:23

But even that, that's actually great that the board was able to do that and to say, so rather than just you know, passive aggressively, moving things along, that's actually fantastic. In a way.

Gina Balarin 20:32

They were actually great about making sure that I'd had my onboarding that I read all the documents, I knew all the statutes and all the background information. And I did a proper induction. And felt like the difference between the two boards is almost been like night and day or chalk and cheese, as you would expect. One is an August, organisation, they've been around for a long time.

They represent a bunch of people internationally, they have very formalized ways of doing things. The other was brand new, and figuring out as they went along. So it has been quite an interesting experience to actually juxtapose the two board approaches, and to see where the conflicts arise within the board itself, and where the conflict arises between the executive and the board. And when I joined the CIA, um, I had actually three intentions. One was, you read out the letters earlier. So I'm an FAMI and an FCIO. So FAMI means I'm a fellow of the Australian market Institute, uh huh, thank you. And FCIM, as you guessed is that I'm a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing. I'm also a certified practicing marketer, that's through the AMI. And I'm also a chartered marketer, through the Chartered Institute of Marketing. So a lot of acronyms basically, which means I've got a bit of marketing experience. But the reason I mentioned this is because when I joined the CIM, I was not here to Fellow. So the way it goes is goes, you're an associate. And usually, that's when people are studying, they join us as an associate member, then you become a full member after doing a certain number of CPD, that continuing professional development hours, and having a certain level of relevant experience in the industry. And then finally, you can become this gusst fellow someone who carries the charisma and the gravitas of fellows, I thought, This is what I want. I want to be a fellow let's bring us on baby. So I wanted to join the board to become a fellow, I wanted to join the board to figure out what happens behind those closed doors. Because it's almost a mystery. There's an element of intrigue and secrecy about being on a board, which I don't think is necessary, of course, boards need to keep the information that goes on behind closed doors confidential in it, that it must not reach the light of day until the right time. But it doesn't mean that board processes or board interactions should be confidential. I wish more people knew that actually, boards are just groups of human beings like any other group you join. So I wanted to figure out what was going on there. And then the third reason I joined the CIM involved was because marketers have a responsibility to make a difference in the world. But they also have a responsibility to be proud of and to champion the role that they play in society. And I thought that while the CIM is a fantastic organisation, there was an opportunity to showcase more marketing pride. And I can say in the two and a half years, I've been there that that is shifting. But I don't think it's just the CIMs role to shift that I think it is the role and responsibility of every single marketer on the planet, to stand up for what they believe in, and to be able to say to their organisation and others, that is acceptable marketing, and no, that is not acceptable marketing. And to turn around and say, This is not good. I will not do this. And here's why. But here's what we should do instead.

Helga Svendsen 23:56

Sit and I'm wondering, because that's marketers within organisations. When we think about boardrooms, often, you know, the first thing that often leaps to mind for people is, oh, we need a lawyer on the board. We need an accountant on the board. We need people with C suite experience on the board, where do marketers fit in, you don't often hear marketers, oh, we need a marketer on the board. Do we need marketers in the boardroom?



Gina Balarin 24:18

Yes, yes. And yes, hell yeah. I'm so glad you asked that question. You have been reading my mind. I'll tell you a story to illustrate this point and how it riles me up. When I was looking for paid board roles. I reached out to some wonderful experienced women who've been on boards for a long period of time. And one of them said to me, you can choose Gina, you can either be a marketer, or you can be a board member but you can't be both oh my goodness know what she said you need to rewrite your LinkedIn profile so that you remove the references to marketing. Now she had some very, very, very good points. She said you need to talk about strategy. You need to talk about leadership. You need to talk about discipline, and rigor and all of the required items. I think T crossing stuff. Fair, fair point. But the problem was that she was actually channeling an inherent bias that to many boards channel, which is marketing is seen as the coloring in department. I can see you laughing for our audience members out there Helga's, nearly falling off her chair.

Helga Svendsen 25:20

Oh my gosh, yep. Okay, yes, continue.

Gina Balarin 25:24

But she's not wrong, because that is the perception that people have of marketing. And I can't tell you how many conversations I've had with a CIM, I'm going we have to train marketers to be board ready. Now, the irony is that if you think about the personality characteristics of a marketer, and a salesperson, they're remarkably similar. But the difference between sales and marketing is that sales is ballsy, and really brave. And they go out and they talk about things and they make waves and ripples. Marketers tend to be behind the scenes, they do absolutely everything. Being a marketer is exhausting. It is 24/7 work. It is running the minute test of minutia that people don't realize, you see an advertising campaign on a billboard you don't realize that may have taken weeks or months to get to market. And the problem is that marketers are so busy at doing the doing that they often forget to promote themselves. And I think that part of the reason why marketers are not represented on boards is because, gosh, there's several reasons, because they haven't done their own marketing for themselves. Because they haven't historically shown the direct correlation between marketing and sales, which is the lifeblood of an organisation. And I'm afraid I have to call this out, because marketers have been women. And historically, boards have been populated by stale, pale males.

Helga Svendsen 26:50

So I don't disagree with any of that. Although I'm also wondering, because you've talked about marketers doing everything. It sounds very much like marketers are in the doing. And we know and you know, from your experience on boards, is that boards operate at that strategic level. And indeed, you reflected some of the board meetings that that's happened. So I'm wondering, what's

your advice to marketers about getting themselves in the boardroom? And leveraging that strategic insight rather than inverted commas just the doing?

Gina Balarin 27:24

It's a very hard question to answer Helga. Because not everyone thinks strategically. Hmm. Can one be taught to think strategically? Yes, but the concept of strategy is one I have a personal problem with. I wrote a lot of chapters for *The Secret Army: Leadership, Marketing and the Power of People*, but the one I struggled with the most was the chapter on strategy, not because I don't understand strategy, but because strategy has been used for the most ridiculous concepts. And I think the problem is that marketers almost see straight through the crap that people label as strategy. I remember reading a book on strategy where they said, strategy has been used for everything from where we're going in six years time to my strategic choice of which tie I'm going to wear with which shirt. It's a problem, because with the Dunning Kruger effect, you get people who think they're really smart and talk about strategies if they know what they're doing, and they don't. But you get the opposite effect. And this happens with a lot of marketers in my experience, where they suffer greatly from impostor syndrome. And so they assume that they don't know that they don't understand strategy, even though they do. I think to shift the strategic perspective of marketers on boards, it's important for marketers to actually respect that what they're doing on a day to day basis has long term consequences. Now, you can't get to be a CMO without understanding the bottom line the ROI, you need to know whether your campaign is moving the needle or not. But I think that what marketers actually haven't done very well is get to know the rest of the organisation. To a certain extent, we're so busy finding out what our customers want, that we're externally focused more than internally focused. And there's also an element of politics. A lot of marketers just couldn't be arsed to do the political wrangling that is required to get to senior executive levels and part because they're too busy doing the doing and managing people who are doing the doing. So in answer to your question of how do you actually get more marketers to be board ready? I think it actually comes down to more marketers finding board ready, marketers,

Helga Svendsen 29:38

More marketers finding board ready marketers? Yes.

Gina Balarin 29:42

Listen to people who are sitting on boards, and who can say this is how you learn from other board members. I've done a lot of listening to Marketing Board members. And it's funny because I sit on boards and yet I still feel unprepared impostor syndrome. Hello. You know, there are a lot of women and a lot of marketers who have that to be fair, imposter syndrome reaches men just as much they just react and respond to it differently. How do you get more marketers on board? How do they think strategically, I guess it comes down to the difference of thinking about a campaign that's a week or a month or three months to thinking about a campaign that's three or five or six years. And

if marketers look at their careers with a longer term view, it's actually quite easy to see where they want to go and how they're gonna get there. And easy to see, well, this is how the organisation wants to get there, too. But I think the nature of being perpetually busy, often prohibits people from taking that step aside. And if there's a lesson that I could leave for marketers, it would be force yourself to stop. A podcast, I was listening to you that you gave earlier, you said, you now set a set time aside yourself to read the board minutes and papers before attending board meeting, you've set it out in your diary and you say, No, that is sacrosanct, you may not have other meetings during that time, because I have to carve out that time. I think marketers need to do the same thing for their future and the future of their career, not just in that organisation. Because remember, as marketers have extremely short tenures of the C suite, the CMO is the one that has the shortest tenure, sometimes two to three years, that's hard to be extremely strategic, when you know that a lot of your efforts are never going to see the light of day because you won't be with the organisation long enough to actually have that happen. But I think marketers need to force themselves to go, I am stopping today, this week, this month, this quarter, whatever it is, and I will do nothing but think big, personally, professionally within my organisation outside of my organisation. And what that does is it forces the person and the team to say no more. And saying no is a vastly under estimated skill. And I wish more marketers learned how to say no.

Helga Svendsen 32:07

Well, that allows you to say yes, absolutely. Oh, Gina as so much in here. What are the key things you want people to take away from the conversation that we've had today?

Gina Balarin 32:17

I think I want marketers to take away the fact that they own and earn and deserve a spot on the board. I want women to take away the fact that they have the right and the responsibility to ask more questions. And I want anyone who's listening to this and has a spark of hope that maybe one day they'll become a board member to realize that there are surprising and unexpected ways to step into board leadership role. I've illustrated two of them. You don't have to do the formal CV and the formal application process. Sometimes it's not what you know, it's who you know,

Helga Svendsen 32:54

Although it helps to have the formal CV for the record go on. Yes, of course.

Gina Balarin 32:58

Oh, don't. Don't get me wrong, it's got to be there. My point is simply that don't let the fact you're not 100% happy with your CV prevent you from applying for the roles. There. I don't think there's such a thing as a perfect board CV. There are great CVs, but they're also crap ones and someone

might get the role just because they've put their CV in. So please, please, please try. Make the effort. But don't do it on your own. Ask people get to know people reach out to people like Kellyanne who are organisation. The acronym team Together Everyone Achieves More is trite, but it's true. Boards are about being together with people who help you see the world in a different way. And if you want to be part of that, build your own board, create your own organisation of people who challenge you to do more differently.

Helga Svendsen 33:46

Is there a resource you would like to share with the Take on Board community?

Gina Balarin 33:50

There are so many that it's difficult to choose. I think the one resource would probably be LinkedIn, ironically, you never know who you're going to know. Ask that question. Give that cheeky ask and reach out to people who you think you're not in the same league as because you will find more often than not that there's something in you that resonates with them. Just the fact that you're asking just the fact that you are attracted to something about them that resonates with you. If you ask nicely enough, if you phrase your ask in a good way, they'll see that and they'll recognize you. I have been amazed by the people who will connect with me and have wonderful conversations, just because I asked but if you don't ask you'll never know.

Helga Svendsen 34:32

Absolutely. Woman after my own heart there. Oh, Gina, thank you. Thank you so much for sharing your wisdom about your journey to the boardroom and as you say, some different ways to get in the boardroom and also that little call to action, not little call to action, that big call to action for boards to take on marketers and to marketers to step up to that space as well. Thank you so much for taking the time to share your wisdom with the Take on Board community today.

Gina Balarin 34:57

Thank you. Helga. It's been my pleasure.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>