



## A Conversation with Lee Haldeman FCIS, Acc. Dir.

### 1. How did you get involved in a career surrounding Governance?

Quite by accident really. During my school years in South Africa nobody ever mentioned that there are careers in Governance. My first job was in the construction industry. I studied after hours and completed a variety of business courses followed by a three-year marketing designation. Then I set up a campus for a national education organization and served as Principal. It was the largest institution in the country supporting ICSA students. We provided day, evening and distance classes for thousands of students. I also became very involved in a variety of Boards, including serving as Chair of the South African Institute of Management. Accounting and governance became more important aspects as I progressed in my career. So ICSA was the best choice to learn these skills. At that time, the program was of four years duration on a full-time basis with most graduates taking 8 years, part-time to complete it.

### 2. Tell us about how you first became involved with ICSA Canada and how your contributions have evolved.

When I brought my family to Calgary, Canada in 1999, the wonderful people in the ICSA Alberta Branch were very welcoming. One of the great things about ICSA is the international nature of the Institute, which promotes and supports careers and fellowship across the world.

At first I was involved in Branch affairs, later serving as Branch Chair, Director on the National Board, Director of the Foundation and Examiner. Due to work pressures and studying for my accounting designation (CMA), I had to step back for a few years, so my contribution was reduced to serving as branch auditor.

In 2015, I had the opportunity to move to Windsor, Ontario to enjoy being part of my grandchildren's lives. I am presently a consultant that supports good governance and growth of organizations, affording me flexibility to be involved once again in the things I enjoy and believe have value. I have renewed my service as; an examiner, a member of the Ontario Branch Council, a Director of the Institute, a DEAP presenter, and a member of the CPD committee.

### 3. How has ICSA membership contributed to your career growth?

Although I have never served as a full-time Corporate Secretary, my roles as a Dean and Vice President Academic, in particular, demanded good governance principles and practices. I have seen failures in organizations directly related to poor governance which highlights its importance. ICSA continues to be one of the strongest global organizations in this field. The weekly updates, this magazine and branch events keep me at the forefront of this profession. Oh – I also recently completed the Directors Education and Accreditation Program. Anyone want a fire hose of good info over three days?

#### 4. What, in your opinion, are the most important trends arising in Governance?

There are three things that I see now; Complexity, Compliance and Change. Hey – I have just come up with three “C”s. I will have to write a book on this and become famous!

The environment that all organizations face is increasingly complex. This places a greater demand on good governance and the challenges of governing organizations well.

Compliance, compliance and compliance. All organizations, even the smallest non-profits are subject to increasing compliance requirements and greater risk if the complex web of legislation and best practices are not implemented. Accountability for directors and organization leaders follows from this. It is simply no longer sufficient or ethical to try to hide behind Directors and Officers Liability Insurance.

Change and specifically the speed of change means that all organizations must adapt to environmental fluctuations far faster than in the past. Sudden changes have huge implications for governance as existing practices and systems may become detrimental to future success and even survival. Technology advancements also drive change and we need to quickly make necessary adaptations. As a former Dean of Information and Communications Technology, I have seen how this is one area that can be regarded as an opportunity, or rightly feared as a serious threat.

#### 5. What is your proudest moment in Governance?

I don't think I can identify a single moment but it's always gratifying to implement good governance principles and see objectives achieved effectively within the required risk parameters. Unfortunately, many organizations are not consistent in applying good governance principles. It is something that continuously needs to be assessed, revised and improved. It's a journey, not a destination.

#### 6. What advice do you have for new members or individuals considering ICSA Canada Programs?

Attend the Branch events whenever possible. We all face time pressures, but I find that I have benefitted from attending these events as I always learn something, renew acquaintances and meet new people. Attendance and support of events allows Branches to plan more local opportunities, bringing current and future members together.

If you need an update or you have colleagues who want a quick, intensive course on the foundational requirements of being a director or a corporate secretary, the three-day DEAP program is perfect. It is both cost and time effective.

Lastly, if you are a student or a prospective student of the Qualifying Scheme, then “dig in” and complete the required examinations to graduate and take your career to the next level. I have never regretted it, and I know that you won't either.

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**DIRECTORS' EDUCATION AND  
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM (DEAP)**

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