

Spot the difference?

It all started with 'Listening to your toes' and itchy feet in July 2007. Since then, as regularly as a bi-monthly board meeting, *Under the Boardtalk* has popped up in the closing pages of *Governance*.

I have written, as it seems to me, about the talk under the board table – about those things which may not be said but which are felt or experienced, about those things we know but do not articulate. Like panning for gold, there is treasure to be found in those muddy waters.

Like 'Leading when you're not there' (November 2009) which was based on my observation of the power of a leader who has such presence that people follow when he is not physically present. How many of us who are leaders, in our own small ways, might claim that special quality?

How many of us have gone to see the work of our organisation first-hand – 'Breathe in the dust' (January 2010)?

How many regularly 'Read the river' (September 2009) and have taken action having heard what could be, just could be, the roar of a waterfall ahead (not me, call and I'll tell you the story) or having spotted the opportunities which may lie to the right or left just out of sight?

My focus in penning these pieces has been my experience of UK governance, which is no more, and probably less, than many other trustees. There has certainly been little perfection in my governance, but the discipline of regular writing has afforded me the blessing of structured reflection on my experience and the opportunity to learn. Thank you *Governance*.

Well, the blessing for me, at least, is set to continue and now on a global scale. My reflections will continue in these pages and from now on will draw on my experience of international governance. I now have a place on the global board as pro bono (how could it be otherwise) Europe director of the International Association of Facilitators. I expect it will offer a rich bounty of insights...

So let's play spot the difference. Will there be any?

Will the fact that we have just one face-to-face meeting a year and monthly virtual board meetings make any difference?

Will the fact that board members are from all regions around the world bringing with them diverse cultures and expectations, make a difference?

And how about being 'glocal'? Will being relevant to all those who draw on the power of facilitation in their own town, city, community group, business, or hospital while also trying to speak with all those in a region (as diverse as Europe or Latin America), within a global context make any difference?

I have the eyes of the newcomer, so yes that will be different. It's all new and exciting. At least the title of my offerings will be different. It could be the straightforward *Under the Board Talk International*, an unchallenging *Reflections of an International Board Member* or the somewhat oblique *SmorgasBoard*?

Watch this space...

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