

## **Reward Governance for Senior Executives**

In areas such as dispute resolution, visibility and investor interest, the relationship between a senior executive employee and his or her employer differs materially from the relationship that most employees have with their employer. Executives are tools which help create shareholder value. A company's decision to employ one executive over another should be based on the ability of the potential employees to create shareholder value for the organisation. It is therefore essential to get both the appointment and contract right.

Negotiating and agreeing the right contract requires an understanding of areas as diverse as valuation, employment law, tax and accounting. Covering the appointment of UK executives under contracts governed by UK law, this volume of essays is intended to help anyone involved in the appointment and termination process and other aspects of executive reward and its governance.

CAROL ARROWSMITH is Head of Remuneration and a Partner at Deloitte & Touche LLP.

RUPERT MCNEIL is HR Director, Global Retail and Commercial Banking, at Barclays Bank plc.



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Reward Governance for Senior Executives Edited by Carol Arrowsmith and Rupert McNeil



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Edited by

CAROL ARROWSMITH

and

RUPERT MCNEIL





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# **Contributors**

Carol Arrowsmith Kathrin Kahrass Angus Maitland Angus MacGregor Rupert McNeil Emma Nicholson Isobel Sharp Alison Smith



## **Preface**

This book addresses reward governance for senior executives and is aimed at two audiences.

Firstly it is intended to be a primer for people who want to learn the way many practitioners in the area of reward approach the construction and oversight of executive reward packages. Like most areas of professional practice, this activity involves a combination of art and science, and experience and judgment play an important part in reaching sensible decisions. This book also expresses a point of view about how this activity should be conducted. In other words, it is a normative as much as a positive guide; readers should be aware that some practitioners may approach executive reward in a different way but the editors make no apologies for suggesting that this is the way in which it *should* be approached.

Secondly, the reality of executive reward is that many of the decisions in any situation are taken by executive management and therefore this book is also intended to serve as a primer for executives required to take reward decisions, and shows how decisions can be taken that are fair to both executives and shareholders. There is of course an essential role to be played by those who oversee remuneration decisions, non-executive directors on remuneration committees in particular, or representatives of shareholders, and keeping the interests of shareholders front of mind at every stage in the decision making process is critical to effective decisions. In our view this works best in an environment where very clear authority has been granted to executive management to take decisions, with appropriate checks, and where every executive who takes a reward decision does so knowing that this authority could be withdrawn at any time.

We believe this book also fills a gap in the literature. While there are economic and legal texts that address some of the issues involved in taking effective executive reward decisions, the editors have not found a book which gives practical guidance on how effective decisions are actually taken. We hope that this book goes some way to achieving this.

We have approached this subject through the lens of the 'deal' – i.e. the process by which employer and executive strike a contract regarding what the individual will do and how the hiring company will reward them. This is because the deal represents the moment of truth in reward governance. It is the point when the forces of the market, the policies and pressures

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## **Reward Governance for Senior Executives**

constraining the company, and the individual's wants and needs converge in their starkest form. Although we recognise that it is only one perspective, it is one that is applicable to the ongoing relationship between executive and employer, and to reward governance generally.