

Michael Zahra - B.A.Sc. Electrical Engineering, M.B.A., P. Logistics, ICD (Member)

Richmond Hill, ON

Email: mzahra1@yahoo.ca

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mzahra1/>

Profile Summary

Digitally fluent, seasoned executive, experienced board director, with high emotional intelligence able to effectively collaborate within a multidisciplinary group to drive results. Deep and varied industry and board experiences that bring valuable perspectives to a company or board. Sound financial acumen and experience with governance, compensation, risk management, strategy formulation and execution, change management, capital projects, acquisitions and integrations, driving efficiencies, operational improvements & revenue growth. Technology savvy with a solid corporate & board-relevant understanding of cybersecurity, engineering, AI and emerging trends. Experienced in strategic planning and successfully transforming businesses into market leaders across product lines, industries & geographies. Advocate for ESG, corporate social responsibility and employee engagement. Experienced in interfacing with complex government regulatory bodies.

Board Experience Summary

- Sought-after specialized expertise –
 - Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity (board oversight and technical) certifications
 - ESG / CSR experience & certification
 - GBA+ Diversity, Equity & Inclusion certification
 - Indigenous business experience, including OCAP training
 - Publicly traded company / capital markets experience
- Invaluable, deep and varied board and business experience that I bring to this position –
 - Board committees for Governance, Nominations, Capital Planning, Audit & Finance, Risk, and Quality
 - Experience with private, public, government and not-for-profit organizations
 - Experience with mergers and acquisitions (buy & sell) and their related integrations
 - Extensive experience in strategic planning and execution, risk management, compliance and disclosure, and crisis management
 - Ability to collaborate cross-functionally, yet tactfully challenge the status quo to move the agenda forward
 - Provide counsel well-rooted in experience on complex matters related to the Board and/or corporation
 - Digitally fluent, disruptive technologies & trends
 - Government, investor, public & media relations experience

Fiduciary Board Experience

Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA)

2022 – present

- Board Director
- Products & Strategy Committee; Finance, Audit, Investment & Risk Committee; Ad hoc - Acquisitions/Partnerships
- The Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) is best known for managing the .CA internet domain on behalf of all Canadians. CIRA is building programs, products and services that leverage all the internet has to offer to help build a trusted internet for Canadians.

GrandBridge Group / GrandBridge Solutions Inc

2022 – present

- Board Director
- GrandBridge Group & GrandBridge Solutions Inc (part of GrandBridge Energy electric utility) are focused on providing a wide range of services to residential, business and government customers, including: high-speed voice and data services over fibre (NetOptiks division), in-home solutions (Enersure division), business development and co-generation services (ownership of Grand River Energy) and other energy-related solutions & services.

Drone Delivery Canada Corp (aerospace, publicly traded on TSX.V & OTC QX)

- Advisory Board Member **2022 – 2024**
- President & Chief Executive Officer, Board Director, Chief Privacy Officer **2018 – 2022**

North York General Hospital (leading Toronto hospital)

2017 – present

- Member, Board of Directors
- Vice-Chair, Audit & Finance Committee
- Quality Committee
- Ad hoc Capital Planning & Nomination Committees

Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust (regulated environmental not-for-profit)

2016 – 2020

- Board Director
- Governance Committee

Junior Achievement (educational not-for-profit) **2006 – 2016**

- Board Director, various committees

Renewed Computer Technology (technology not-for-profit) **2002 – 2007**

- Board Director, various committees

Advisory Board Experience

Drone Delivery Canada Corp (aerospace, publicly traded TSX.V & OTC QX)

- Advisory Board Member **2022 – 2024**
- President & Chief Executive Officer, Board Director, Chief Privacy Officer **2018 – 2022**

University of Toronto ‘Hatchery’ (start-up incubator) **2022 – present**

- Advisory Board Member

Kelsen Legal Technologies (AI technologies) **2023 – present**

- Advisory & Equity Partner

Westmount Ventures (Private Equity) **2023 – 2024**

- Advisory

Other (Ex Officio) Offices Held

Staples Business Advantage Canada – Officer **2008 – 2018**

Staples Promotional Products Canada – Director & Officer **2007 – 2018**

Staples PNI Digital Media – Director **2014 – 2018**

Corporate Express Canada Inc – Officer **2002 – 2008**

Yahoo Canada Co – Officer **2000 – 2002**

Schlumberger Canada Ltd – Director & Officer **1998 – 2000**

ICD (Institute of Corporate Directors) – Member **2016 – present**

Career Experience Summary

- Proven experience in building a strong leadership team and delivering award-winning results
- Driving revenue growth from \$600 million sales teams with 600 people, to small early-stage-revenue start-ups
- Extensive experience in hiring, retaining and developing diverse talent, driving employee engagement, providing senior executive mentoring, and implementing leadership development and succession planning programs
- Strong leadership skills and a deep understanding of the actions necessary to successfully execute strategic change management within an organization
- Experience scaling start-ups through funding, full commercialization, revenue generation, and operations
- Demonstrated ability to reinvent & transform a business from lagging to a market leader in terms of business model, go-to-market strategy, market position and financial performance
- A proven ability to develop a vision and strategic plan and execute that plan within a complex organization, across industries, geographies and product lines
- Experienced in infrastructure, equipment and long-term capital projects
- Industries as diverse as engineering, technology, aerospace, healthcare, ecommerce, manufacturing, distribution, logistics, public utilities, media & advertising, business products & services in B2B, B2C & B2G domestic, USA & international markets
- Numerous awards for Innovation, Environmental, Corporate Social Responsibility, Diversity, Safety, Marketing and Top Employer programs
- University of Toronto “Hall of Distinction” career award recipient

Professional Career Summary

Drone Delivery Canada Corp - President & Chief Executive Officer (12/2018 – 02/2022)

- Full P&L responsibility, aerospace, publicly traded on Canada TSX.V, USA OTC QX & Frankfurt Borse
- Took an underfunded, struggling start-up and raised capital, reduced cash burn, fully commercialized the business, generated first ever revenues with blue-chip customers and numerous additional partnerships
- Hired executive staff, implemented all systems, processes & KPIs for a fully operational business
- Built entire sales & marketing structure, staffing, compensation and go to market business models
- Despite restrictive aviation regulations, was able to launch commercial use-cases with paying customers
- Won awards for Top Employer, OTC QX Top 50, Ontario Government Innovation, Finalist Safest Employer
- Secured government grants to help fund R&D and operations
- Advanced the technology and received multiple successful patents
- Implemented ISO9001, Emergency Response & Cybersecurity programs to manage risk profile
- Successfully navigated company through the pandemic while growing annual revenues

Staples Business Advantage Canada - President (07/2002 – 11/2018)

- Full P&L responsibility for revenue close to \$600million for the B2B company (separate from Retail Staples)
- Hired and developed key leaders to build a high-performance team of over 1300 people
- Led the close and integration of numerous transformational acquisitions
- Transformed business from traditional office products to 7 lines of business (incl MRO, industrial, MDEL medical, facility supplies & equipment, technology, etc), with 400,000 products, plus services
- Implemented a culture of continuous improvement with fully entrenched problem solving and innovation methodologies
- Created a culture of Corporate Social Responsibility, and Environmental Stewardship with ISO14001
- Consistently grew revenue and share in a declining market, moving from #2 to a clear #1 leadership position in the Business-to-Business & Business-to-Government verticals
- Successfully managed the business through waves of difficult macro-economic circumstances
- Numerous internal and industry awards for best-in-class performance, including Top 50 Employer

Yahoo! Canada - President (03/2000 – 06/2002)

- Full P&L responsibility for a dynamic, innovative Internet powerhouse
- Signed the largest commercial deals in the company's history, driving revenue growth
- Built a blue-chip client base of leading agencies, and direct customers of Canada's Fortune 100
- Turned the Canadian business profitable for the first time in history at a time when the dot-com bubble had "burst" and other global Yahoo properties lost money
- Positioned company as the recognized industry educator, innovator and thought leader
- Launched numerous first-time consumer and business services and content licensing agreements

Schlumberger RMS - President (01/1990 – 03/2000)

- Full P&L responsibility for a leading engineering products and field services business
- Merged five business units into one to streamline business and drive an integrated go-to-market model
- Transformed business from a product supplier to an integrated solutions provider leading the Canadian industry
- Improved all financial metrics driving market share, revenue and profitability
- Commercial successes in domestic and complex international markets

Alcatel – Hardware Design Engineer (05/1988 – 01/1990)

- Designed critical-class, military-spec electronic hardware systems for automated/driverless transportation systems

Motorola – Software Design Engineer (1987)

- Designed mission critical software for communications systems for the RCMP

Education

- Master of Business Administration (MBA), City University, Washington - 1995
- Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.Sc.), Electrical Engineering, University of Toronto – 1988
- Professional Logistics (P.Log) designation, Logistics Institute (Canada) - 2004
- OSSHGD, De La Salle College High School – 1984

- Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD) –
 - Board Oversight of Strategy
 - Leading Effective CEO Succession
 - Board IT Governance
 - The Digital Director (Cybersecurity, Social Media for Boards)
 - Leadership Character in Corporate Governance
 - Collaboration for Greater Impact
 - Directors' Liability & Risk Management
 - Advisory Board Program
 - Not For Profit Governance

- GBA+ (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) – Government of Canada
- Indigenous Community OCAP – First Nations Information Governance Centre
- ESG – Corporate Finance Institute

- Board Cybersecurity Oversight – National Association of Corporate Directors / Carnegie Mellon University / US Secretary of Homeland Security
- Cybersecurity: Technology, Application & Policy – Massachusetts Institute of Technology

- Lean Six Sigma – OHA / KPMG
- Numerous leadership, technology, cybersecurity programs – Harvard, MIT, York University, University of Virginia, Queen's University

Other Interests

Business & technology advisor, travelled to 59 countries, charity volunteer work