

## New year, new you?

By Caroline Evans

“It will all be over by this time next week/month/year” is a favourite phrase of mine when things are looking tricky. How wrong I was when I said this last January. I know I wasn’t the only one, but how many of us really considered the reality of starting another year still in the grip of Covid-19? Who else thought that by 2022 ‘things would be back to normal’?

It’s good to have a positive outlook of course, and to embrace change, but the situation we find ourselves in now doesn’t feel like change, it feels like treading water or another circle on the hamster wheel. Or does it? When I recently issued my LinkedIn Poll at the end of last year (see poll results below), I thought that most people would be keen to ‘sit tight’ in their career but I was pleased to see that this was not the case.

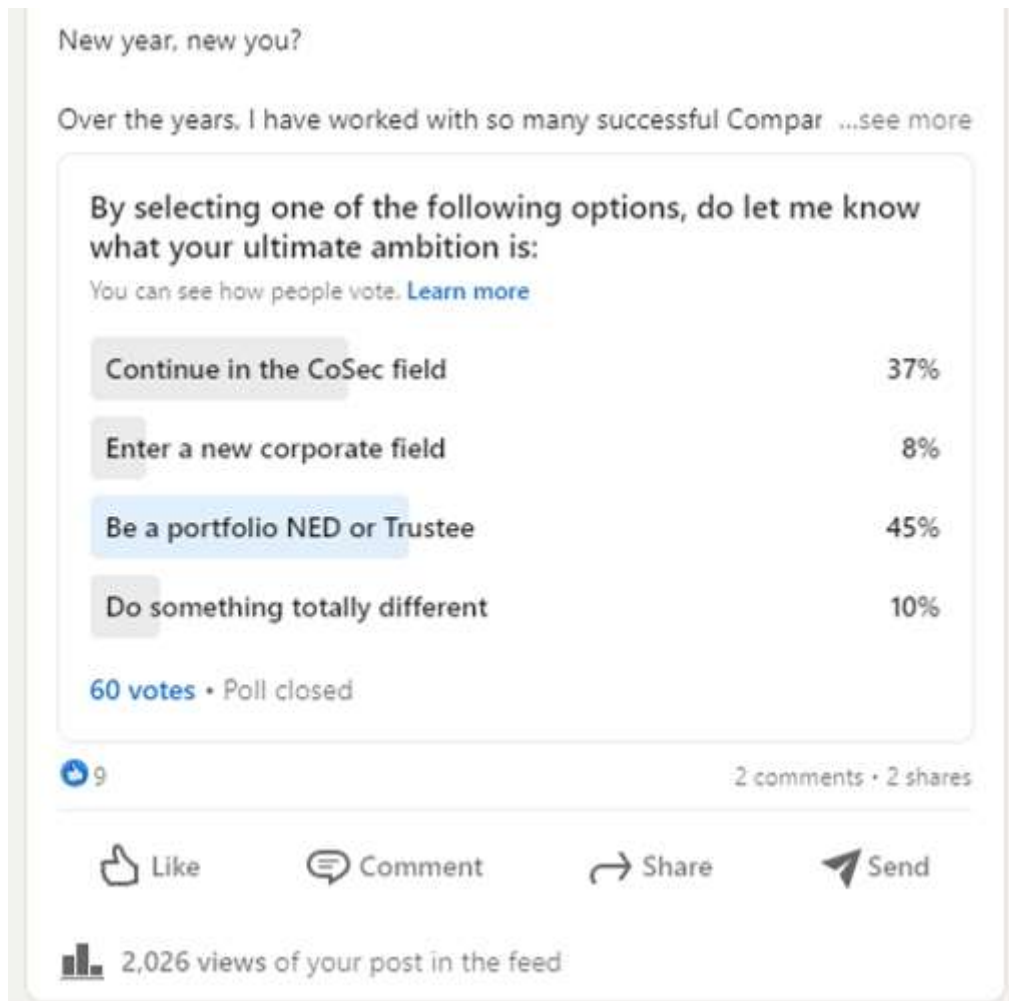
It was encouraging that over a third of respondents showed a keenness to continue developing their CoSec careers. This is great news as the world needs more CoSecs and the profession needs more presence at the most senior levels. This is a hugely important remit, not only because of the governance expert’s part in keeping an organisation on the right track, but also because it provides role models for future generations of CoSecs.

Nearly a half of those who responded harboured an ambition to be a portfolio NED or Trustee. This is good to see as, not only is the market woefully short of ‘new blood’, a governance background is undoubtedly hugely valuable. Anyone who has had early board exposure from a CoSec perspective ‘knows how it works’ and is very well-placed to make a speedy and effective transition.

The remaining respondents were split equally between wanting to shift their career into a new corporate arena or do something completely different. As far as the former goes, I can recommend this as I have done it more than once in my own working life and have absolutely no regrets. I learnt that my skills were generic and my multi-dimensional network was one of my most powerful assets. I’m pleased to think that a varied working life is increasingly ‘the norm’. As far as ‘do something completely different’ is concerned, I’m still trying to find a talent or vocation that will allow me to dive into a new pool. I’m thrilled for those who are already making waves!

Wherever your career is now and wherever you think it might be going, it’s important to look ahead and keep your options open. Who knows what might happen this year!

**POLL RESULTS:**



Caroline Evans FCIS is founder of MindLeap, a corporate governance boutique. Caroline partners with several organisations providing expert advice and practical support, connects and collaborates across the corporate governance community and gives guidance as a company secretary and corporate governance speaker at conferences. She also offers coaching on career decision-making for company secretaries, governance professionals and aspiring NEDs.