

Building and Maintaining Effective Boards

Sample Training Workbook



Overview

Purpose

This workshop addresses board – staff- organizational relationships to create an effective partnership for the long term health and sustainability of the organization.

Objectives

At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Articulate the role and relationship of executive director, board president, or board member in board development and effectiveness
- Address board issues at different stages of organizational lifecycle
- Apply a simple, practical approach for board engagement and development
- Create a plan for developing and maintaining the board.

Outcomes

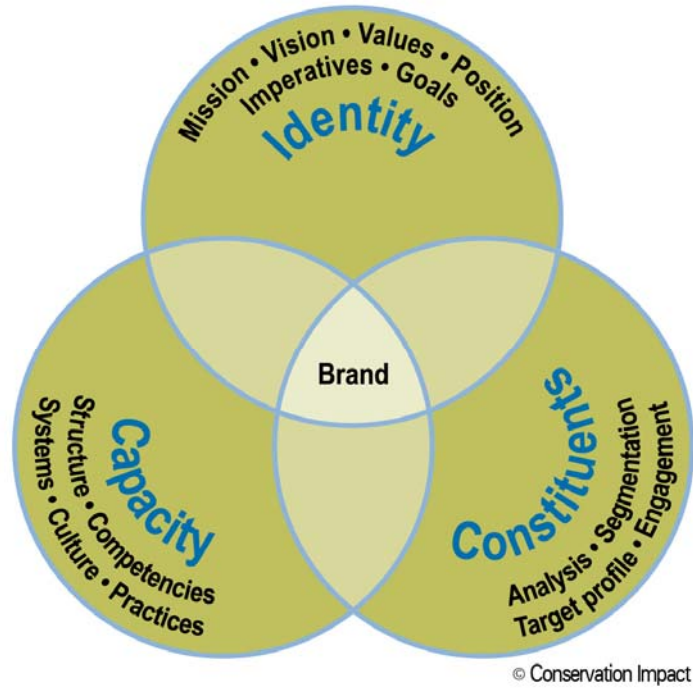
- A useful, realistic, and easily applied approach for board effectiveness, satisfaction, and value.
- Best practices for board development and management.

Agenda

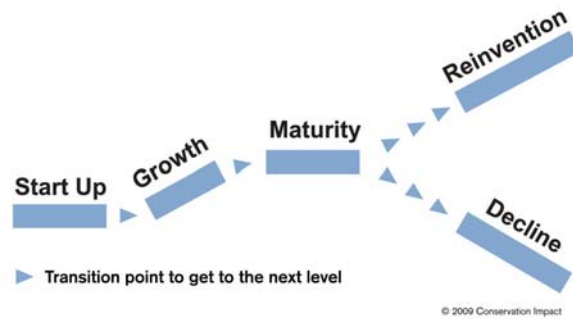
- Welcome
- Overview
- Organizational frameworks
- Concepts: Board development in theory and in practice
- Recruitment frameworks
- Roles and responsibilities
- Worksheets
- Creating a board development plan
- Resources

Organizational Frameworks

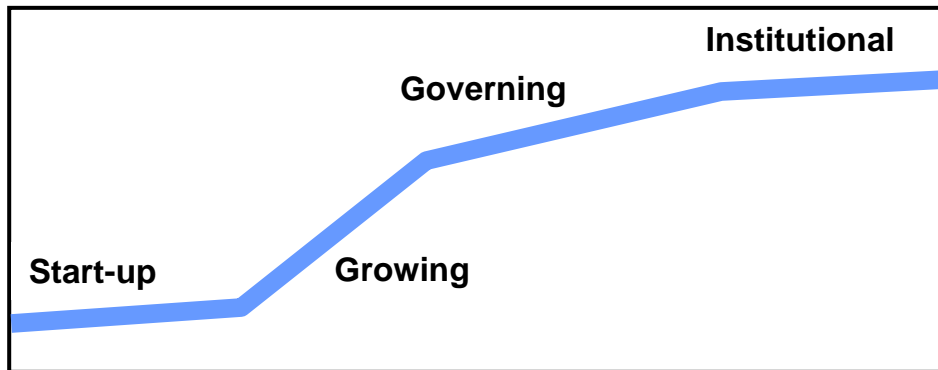
Integrated Organization



Organizational Life Cycle



Board Stages



- Start up – working
 - Informal
 - Creative
 - Passionate to cause
 - Follow the leader or control the organization
 - Serve as staff and volunteers

- Growing
 - Struggling to define role
 - Becoming more “board like”
 - New board members are essential
 - Executive director hired
 - Tension between founders and new members
 - Tension between board and executive director

- Governing – established
 - Shift from volunteer to governance
 - Responsible for fundraising
 - Board accepts responsibility for
 - ◆ Setting direction for the organization
 - ◆ Planning, finances, accountability, integrity, sustainability
 - Board chair and executive director are principle leaders
 - Executive director manages programs and staff
 - Committees emerge
 - Executive director invests a great deal of time engaging board members

- Role of board chair changes to one of developing the board and providing governance leadership
 - Founding board members leave
- Institutional
 - Larger, well established
 - Primarily responsible for fundraising
 - Strategic recruitment of movers and shakers
 - Policy and governance falls to executive committee
 - Primary contact is with CEO or senior management

Organizational Leadership



Governance Typologies (Chait et. al)

EXHIBIT 6.9 THREE TYPES OF GOVERNANCE: DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS

	Type I Fiduciary	Type II Strategic	Type III Generative
Nature of organizations	Bureaucratic	Open System	Nonrational
Nature of leadership	Hierarchical	Analytical/visionary	Reflective learners
Board's central purpose	Stewardship of tangible assets	Strategic partnership with management	Source of leadership for organization
Board's core work	Technical: oversee operations, ensure accountability	Analytical: shape strategy, review performance	Creative: discern problems, engage in sense-making
Board's principal role	Sentinel	Strategist	Sense maker
Key question	What's wrong?	What's the plan?	What's the question?
Problems are to be	Spotted	Solved	Framed
Deliberative process	Parliamentary and orderly	Empirical and logical	Robust and sometimes playful
Way of deciding	Reaching resolution	Reaching consensus	Grappling and grasping
Way of knowing	It stands to reason	The pieces all fit	It makes sense
Communication with constituents	Limited, ritualized to legitimate	Bilateral, episodic to advocate	Multilateral, ongoing to learn
Performance metrics	Facts, figures, finances, reports	Strategic indicators, competitive analysis	Signs of learning and discerning

Concepts

Checklist

- ✓ Regularly scheduled meetings with substantive, critical agendas, and dynamic, meaningful discussions?
- ✓ Strategic and policy (board) / operational and goal related decisions based on knowledge and facts?
- ✓ A match between individual skills and interests and specific tasks for engagement?
- ✓ A clear understanding of expectations?
- ✓ Regular contact about specific projects, resource development, planning, and public relations?

Board Development

Theoretical

- Skill and profile matrix
- Job description
- Active committees
- Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Fully engaged and committed

Real

- Personal relationships
- Motivation, interests, and styles
- Involvement on individual level
- Understanding of nonprofit governance and the organization's work
- Personal commitment to cause and people

The Secret = Relationships

- Board members are individuals
- Each individual has unique motivations, quirks and perspectives
- Treat each person with respect and purpose as if they were the most significant organizational *asset*

Rules of Engagement

- Know your audience and develop personal relationships
 - Understand what role they play with you or the organization
- Regularly talk with board members
 - What is happening in your industry that will affect this organization?
 - Who do you know...?
 - What suggestions / advice do you have...?
- Understand individual interests and skills, agree how they can be, or want to be of value
 - Create the unique agreement with each board member on how they will contribute to make a difference
- Incorporate board member terms into your bylaws – and use them
 - 2-3 years per term for members
 - 2-4 terms before term-limited
 - 1-2 years off board between cycles (inter-term)
 - Elected officer terms – consistent timeline with member terms
- Inter-term activities for past board members
 - Participate on a committee or a special project
 - Assist with a capital campaign
 - Activities that assist the organization, are rewarding to the participant, and are less demanding than being an active board member

The Concept: Board as Significant and Necessary Organizational Asset

- Board members have specific, unique, moral, and legal responsibilities as members of the governing body of a corporation
- Volunteers have very specific program responsibilities
- Working board members (volunteers) are also an important component of an organization's human resources necessary to accomplish strategic goals
- Board members are an organization's voluntary leadership
- How you treat your board members is how they will treat your donors, members, partners, and publics
- Board members are a major component of the organization's public relations

Roles and Responsibilities

	Function	
	Governance	Leadership
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy ▪ Accountability ▪ Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resource development ▪ Public relations ▪ Program support ▪ Planning
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Board development ▪ Financial oversight ▪ Program review and evaluation ▪ Legal and ethical integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fundraising-donor development ▪ Environmental scanning ▪ Strategic planning ▪ Hire, fire, evaluate ED ▪ Represent org to public

Governance Responsibilities

- Make strategic, organization-wide policy decisions
 - Remove obstacles to completing the strategic plan
- Govern – financial, legal, manage executive director
 - Approve budget and raise funds to support it
- Inappropriate to be involved in:
 - Day-to-day operations
 - Developing or deciding upon detailed work plans, except in how it relates to the budget
 - The work of the staff
 - Creating projects or issues that are outside the scope of the strategic plan

As Volunteers

- Participate in work projects
- Volunteer to support organizational efforts, special events, hikes, etc.
- Serve as resources to staff as volunteers

Board Meetings

- Agenda guided by strategic goals at “highest” level of discussion
 - Each item understood to be information only, discussion, or decision
- Organizational and program policy decisions
 - Human resources, public relations, financial
- Governance
 - Review budget and monthly / quarterly financials, review accomplishments relative to plan, review fundraising progress

Board Committees

- Governance
 - Executive
 - Finance
 - Resource Development / Marketing
 - Nominating and Development
- Program
 - By strategic goal
- Engage non-board members
 - Bring in additional talent and expertise
 - Invite departing board members to stay engaged
 - Invite potential board members to participate in the organization

Worksheets

Board Composition and Roles

Representation			Roles		
	Present	Needed		Present	Needed
Access to key resources			A breakthrough thinker		
Credibility			A critical thinker		
Geographic representation			A detail-oriented follow-through person		
Ethnic diversity			A facilitator		
A rising star			A recorder		
Gender diversity			A synthesizer		
Technical expertise			A strategic thinker		
▪ Fund raising					
▪ Governance					
▪ Finance					
▪ Volunteerism					
Management skills					
▪ Planning					
▪ Legal					
▪ Marketing & public relations					
▪ Project management					

Planning

- Define the tasks to be accomplished based on strategic goals
- Use annual work plan for responsibility, coordination and accountability
- Assign to board, staff or volunteer

Goal	Objectives	Staff Tasks / lead	Board Task/ lead	Deliverable/ date

Recruitment and Selection

- Use a marketing approach
- Define the target market
- Profile that market
 - What do we know about their likes, attitudes, behaviors, lifestyles
- Design a board “package” to fit the needs of your target market

Marketing Template for Board or Volunteer Recruitment

Market Segment	Profile	Interests	Message	Outreach Strategies

Training and Development

- Create an orientation
- Identify match between skills/abilities/temperaments needed and available
- Recognize and build on each board member’s strengths, skills, and abilities
- Clarify individual roles and expectations
- Create individual “agreements”
- Psychological contracts – mutual beliefs, perceptions, informal obligations

Board Development Activities												
Expectation: At Least 20 Points per Year												
			Give gift of \$ XX or more to the organization	Donate more than XX hrs of professional services	Bring in a new major donor	Host house party with your guests/ potential donors	Be the catalyst for new conservation easement donor	Bring in event sponsor	Personalize end-of-year ask letters or make calls in	Board gift in before Sept.	Send out 5 solicit letters/e-mails & follow up by phone	Attend board meetings
Board Member	Points earned	10	10	10	10	5	5	5	2	5	2	

Compensation

- Understand what motivates the individual
 - Achievement, affiliation, power
 - Community leader vs. retired professional
- Tangible benefits
 - Memberships, coffee mugs, free or discounted trips, free admission to events...
- Intangible benefits.... from the individual’s perspective
 - Meetings with people, participation in staff meetings, specific goals, presentations

Compensation Template

How many ways can you say THANK YOU!!!

Safety and Environment

- Create an attractive, comfortable, neutral environment
- Create a safe, pleasant work space
- Establish a place for board / volunteer “connection” (mail boxes, office, bulletin board)

Synopsis

Summary

- If your board is a working board, it is the task of the board chair the executive director to organize and manage the work of the board.
- Recruit, develop, and lead board, as you would staff/ volunteers
- Recognize board members as individuals with strengths and assets

Conclusion

- As individuals, board members will make a commitment, if asked, to a person or a cause.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that the individual has an environment (strategies, systems, structure) in which they can succeed.
- Treat board members as a critical target market – always be listening.
- People won't be engaged unless you engage them!

Resources

- BoardSource, www.boardsource.org
- BoardStar, www.boardstar.org
- Richard P Chait, William P. Ryan, Barbara E. Taylor *Governance as Leadership* (from Board Source)
- James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*
- Karl Mathiasen, *Board Passages: Three Key Stages in a Nonprofit Board's Life Cycle*

Conservation Impact is dedicated to helping organizations achieve results towards environmental conservation, resource sustainability, and public and community health. We provide comprehensive organizational development consulting to nonprofit organizations and public agencies.

Founded in 1996, Conservation Impact has worked on more than 765 projects with nearly 500 organizations nationwide and internationally. The company specializes in strategic planning and positioning, marketing, and organization analysis and development. We use an Integrated Strategy approach that looks at organizational identity, capacity, and constituents. We help our clients go to their next level of development.

The Conservation Impact staff bring significant expertise in nonprofit management, marketing, and conservation planning with degrees in biology, ecology, environmental conservation, nonprofit management, and public administration.

Conservation Impact's sister company, Nonprofit Impact, focuses on organizations and agencies dedicated to improving the health and well being of individuals and communities and those working to create a more civil, just, and equitable society.

For more information about the companies, our team, or our work, please call us at 303.223.4886 or visit us online at www.conservationimpact.com or www.nonprofitimpact.com.

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