



Board Training and Development



Effective Board Member Characteristics

I. Commitment

- Prepares thoroughly, attends and **participates** at meetings
- Has a “fire in their belly” for the purpose of the Society

Effective Board Member Characteristics

II. Character and Integrity

- Discloses conflicts of interest
- Subordinates personal, business, local, regional biases to good of board

Effective Board Member Characteristics

III. Interpersonal skills

- Communicates well with other board members, staff and the public
- Tolerates limelight well and inevitable criticism that comes with leadership
- Works effectively with Executive Director/CEO
- Personal conduct reflects favorably on the board and Society

Primary Roles of the Board of Directors

- Strategic and Business Planning
- Policy making -- BOD *sets* policy, staff *implements* policy
- Public relations
- Board recruitment and retention
- Representing the Society
- Fund raising
- Financial management

High Impact Boards

- Support strong governance
- Receive outstanding CEO support and pay close attention to the Board/CEO relationship
- Are accountable for their performance
- Pick important projects and concentrate their time, talent, and energy where it matters
- Work hard at communicating clearly and frequently

High Impact Boards

- Don't "major in the minors"
 - Focusing on tasks or administrative minutiae hurts everyone and takes valuable time away from governance and dealing with long-term issues
- Don't try to resolve staff issues and problems
 - that is the job of Executive Director / CEO
- Don't come to the table with a hidden agenda
 - Board goals and objectives are your only concern



Characteristics of an Effective Executive Director/CEO



Disclosure & Meeting Board Goals and Objectives

- Keep the President and Board well informed
- will never let the Chairman, President or Board members be surprised by developments
- Meet or exceed the mission, goals and objectives defined by the Board
- Believe in the validity of the group process – the essence of voluntary organizations



Has Strong Management skills

- Planning
- Organizing
- Delegating
- Controlling
- Decision-Making

Is a Great Communicator

- Keep the President/Chairman and the Board well informed
 - Don't let the Chairman/President/BOD be surprised by developments
 - Convey good news as well as bad news in professional manner
- Offer new ideas, provide guidance and recommend action plans/proposals to the BOD
 - Aim is to improve agency and its services
 - Be adept at seeking BOD support



Is a Great Communicator

Continued

- Effective liaison with and between Board and committees and effectively represents the Society to public
- Prepares effective written correspondence and articles, and drafts correspondence for President/ Chairman appropriate in tone and style for the office or position
- Understands need for effective volunteer leadership
 - Diplomatically assists Board in considering potential members, chair
- Displays initiative in advising Board on new policies or in recommending new programs
 - Willing to discuss difficult subjects with Board

Financial Oversight

- Acts within authority delegated by Board
- Applies principles of accounting and economics to the society's operation
- Identifies, considers and recommends cost saving alternatives to Board

Recap

A Board Member:

- Is Committed
- Has integrity
- Exhibits good interpersonal skills
- Fulfills a variety of roles
- Serves as a member of an integrated team

Recap

continued

- An Executive Director / CEO:
 - Works toward Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives
 - Communicates with all reports
 - Brings solid data, research and experience to the Board discussions
 - Facilitates discussion toward the organizational goal
 - Manages the affairs and staff of the organization
 - Oversees the financial aspects
 - Acts with integrity and professionalism

Exercise

Situation:

You are chairman of a Board subcommittee and have been asked to make a report at the Board meeting.

You have prepared a computer-based presentation to deliver your report (with supporting information) for the other Board members to view on a large screen.

The meeting room also has an Internet connection that will provide you access to the Society databases in case there are questions about your report.

As you begin your report, the bulb on the projector fails and the screen goes dark. You ask that the Executive Office staff contact the hotel meeting manager to find another bulb, while you attempt to connect to the Society database using the hotel's Internet access. After some 10 seconds you see an ominous message on your laptop that reads, "cannot find server". At about the same time, the hotel staff member returns and announces that it will be at least 90 minutes before the local office supply company can deliver another projector bulb.

What action should you take?

Exercise

Solution #1: Ask that the meeting be adjourned until a projector bulb arrives and the hotel's Internet connection is repaired.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10
Very bad bad neutral good very good excellent

Solution #2: Suggest that the board members stand up close behind your laptop so that they can view the meeting documents and the meeting can proceed.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10
Very bad bad neutral good very good excellent

Solution #3: Ask for a brief recess and request that the Executive Office staff member print out the supporting documents and have them photocopied for distribution to all the Board members.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10
Very bad bad neutral good very good excellent

Solution #4: Take a 10-minute recess while you hand out paper copies of the supporting documents that you brought to the meeting in case of a technology failure, and ask the Executive Office staff to follow up with the hotel meeting manager to enable the internet connection.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10
Very bad bad neutral good very good excellent

Conclusion

Quality organizations don't just happen, they take dedicated people, doing extraordinary tasks, serving an unsuspecting membership, with carefully designed and implemented programs and services.

Let's make it happen!

