

ARE YOU READY TO TAKE THE CHALLENGE?

How to Become a High Performing Nonprofit Board

Millions of men and women like yourself volunteer to serve on a nonprofit organization's board of trustees. Whatever the mission of your organization, you and your fellow board members are committed to making a positive difference in the communities you serve, whether locally, nationally or globally. Serving on a nonprofit board today has many rewards, but it also comes with many challenges and frustrations too.

But what if you could learn some nonprofit board governance best practices that could make it easier for you and your board to help your nonprofit organization succeed, would you be willing to ***take the challenge?***

How many of the following 20 statements can you **honestly** answer YES about your board?

- Our Board, in collaboration with our CEO, has developed an inspirational strategic vision that has set standards of excellence, encouraged commitment and provides measures of success that, in many important ways is better, more successful than our present.
- Our executive team, in collaboration with our Board, has developed a very comprehensive strategic plan with agreed upon timetables and responsibilities to achieve our agreed upon vision.
- Our Board functions in a true partnership with our CEO in providing leadership to the organization and has matured beyond the traditional roles of fiduciary and strategic advisors.
- Our Board members are encouraged to put forth new ideas and challenges, ask the right questions to continually refresh and renew the organization.
- Our Board has developed measures of organizational success and discusses our progress towards our vision at each Board meeting.
- Our Board meetings, on average, spend 50% or more of each meeting dedicated to discussing strategic issues that we are currently confronting or about to be challenged by, e.g. "what impact are we having in our community?" or "what is our image in our community?"
- Our Board Chair ensures that all Board members are engaged and participate in thinking strategically about our mission and vision and builds a consensus among members of our Board on all key issues.
- Our Board Chair leads the Board's annual evaluation of the CEO and ensures that the entire Board participates in the process and identifies any new leadership competencies that our CEO needs to develop.

- Our Board has developed a very successful Board leadership succession plan to ensure that we have identified our future Board leaders for going forward and considers offering the Chair-Elect a board coach/mentor to support his/her transition during their first term in office.
- Our Board recruits' new members based upon the personal characteristics and attributes like leadership potential, strategic thinker, etc. that we identified as our priority through our ideal board matrix, rather than just skills like CPA, lawyer, etc.
- Our Board had instituted an ongoing board governance educational program to ensure that all Board members are knowledgeable and proficient in nonprofit board governance best practices.
- Our Board and CEO have developed a strong relationship build on a partnership of trust, open and honest communication, shared sense of accountability and responsibility that is focused on results and achievements.
- Our Board fully agrees with the statement that “nonprofit is our tax status, not our business plan” and we are committed to generating a positive bottom line ever year.
- Our Board encourages our CEO to explore collaborative strategic relationships if they improve the value to those we serve and helps strengthen our programs effectiveness and development.
- Our Board has successfully developed a culture of philanthropy where our CEO, Board and chief development officer all understand their respective roles and effectively work together in cultivating and soliciting new donors.
- Our Board and executive leadership team constantly communicate our achievements and the positive social impact we are generating in our community.
- Our Board has been ensured that our executive leadership team have implemented an organizational wide leadership succession plan to identify and develop new leaders in our organization to be prepared for tomorrow’s leadership challenges.
- Our organizational culture consistently recognizes, rewards and praises all our staff, board and volunteers whose performances are worthy of attention.
- Our Board agrees with the motto “good boards evaluate the CEO while great boards evaluate themselves” and performs an annual self-assessment of our own performance in identifying our strengths as well as any areas of needed improvement based on board governance best practices.

If you answered YES to 15 or more questions, congratulations, your nonprofit Board is considered high performing Board based on nonprofit leadership best practices.

If you answered less than 15 questions YES, are you willing to ***take the challenge*** to learn how to become a high performing nonprofit Board?

Remember, the ultimate beneficiary will be those you serve!

