Community Foundation of Jackson Hole

Building Sustainability for Nonprofit Organizations

Board and Staff Development

NEWLEVEL GROUP

Take The Next Step

Table of Contents

Welcome **1**

Learning Objectives **2**

Purpose & Agenda: **3**

The 5 Elements of Sustainability **4**

Organizational Sustainability Assessment **6**

Sustainability Element: Clear & Compelling Vision **9**

Defining Your Organization's Culture 10

Practical Thinking for Aligning Your Organization 11

Vision & Mission Examples 12

Focus 14

Sustainability Element: Passionate & Engaged Board **15**

Governance in Your Organization 16

Characteristics of Effective Board-Staff Partnerships 18

Guiding Governance 20

How Your Board Can Govern More and Manage Less 23

Sample Board Effectiveness Assessment 24

Evaluating the ED 27

Resource Materials 29

Board Development: Tool and Resources **30**

Tool: Guidelines for Recruiting Board Members 31

Tool: Sample Board Member Application 33

Tool: Sample Board Member Agreement 34

Tool: Sample Board Member Job Description 36

Tool: Board Profile Assessment 37

Tool: Checklist for Successful Board Orientation 45

Tool: Board/Staff Responsibility Worksheet 46

Tool: Board Meeting Effectiveness 48

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Sustainability Element: Motivated, Professional Staff 49
Motivation: What Does it Take? 50
Tool: Recruit Right 51
12 Questions to Ask Staff 52
It's All about You/Es Todo de Ti 53
Next Steps 55
Recommended Reading List 56
About NewLevel Group 60
Footnotes 61

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Building Sustainability for Nonprofit Organizations

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Welcome

Building Nonprofit Organizations That Will Last

Increasingly, funders and supporters are requiring nonprofits to demonstrate the sustainability of their efforts. But what does that mean and how is it accomplished? Identifying the elements and processes that make an organization strong and charting a clear course for implementation are the first steps.

Following up on the overview workshop presented in January, 2007, this current series of workshops provides more in-depth training on the principles of sustainability, along with practical, easy-to-implement advice and tools for developing sustainable fundraising, marketing, and leadership development programs.

Building Sustainable Nonprofit Organizations

Community Foundation of Jackson Hole

October 15, 2007

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Learning Objectives

- Learn the critical elements of sustainability
- Determine where your organization is on the road to sustainability by completing an organizational effectiveness assessment
- Identify strategic planning priorities by exploring areas your organization can strengthen
- Discover how other organizations are planning for their futures through interactive peer discussion
- Find answers to your questions about what sustainability means for your organization and gain practical information and tools you can put into immediate action

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Purpose & Agenda: Board-Staff Development

Meeting Purpose

For Board members and staff of nonprofit organizations to understand and clarify their respective roles and responsibilities, create a foundation for focused leadership development, and learn how to create systems and cultures that increase the effectiveness of their staff and build the sustainability of their organizations.

Agenda

Welcome and Getting Started:

- Objectives, Agenda, Ground Rules
- Introductions
- What makes an organization effective and sustainable?

Passionate, Engaged Board

- Effective Governance
  - Roles and Responsibilities
  - Characteristics of Effective Board-Staff Partnerships
  - Govern More and Manage Less
  - Board and ED Effectiveness Assessments

Motivated, Professional Staff

- Creating a culture
- How to recruit, grow, and retain staff

Wrap up

- Next Steps
- Evaluation

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The 5 Elements of Sustainability

"To make the greatest impact on society requires first and foremost a great organization, not just a great program."
– Jim Collins, *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*

While there is no one formula for building a high-performance social sector organization, there are elements and processes that effective nonprofit organizations have in common. The following is a checklist of some of those fundamental components.

Clear and Compelling Vision
Brief, well-defined vision and/or mission statement
Statement of core values
Community assessment and feedback processes
Focused approach that is not redundant with other organizations' programs
Defined measures of success

Passionate and Engaged Board of Directors
Strategic approach to board recruitment and succession
Board members are articulate advocates for the organization
Clearly defined and consistently practiced roles and responsibilities
Clear expectations and accountability for board members
Written policies and procedures

Motivated, Professional Staff
Clearly defined roles and expectations
Skills and experience commensurate with needs
Appropriate compensation
Respectful, supportive work environment
Regular, constructive feedback
Adequate resources available

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Effective Communications and Marketing

Strategic marketing plan
Clear, jargon-free messaging with great stories to demonstrate mission success
Proactive communications to constituents and the community
Network of key influencers
Strong, content-rich website

Strategic Approach to Fund Development

Strategic funding plan
Demonstrated support and participation by the board
Balanced portfolio of funding sources
Constituent relationship management program in place
Endowments and reserve funds

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Organizational Sustainability Assessment

Use the scale below to indicate how each statement applies to your organization.

3 = yes, we have this **2** = we're working on it **1** = no, we don't have this

I - Clear and Compelling Vision		**SCORE**
1	Brief, well-defined vision and/or mission statement	
2	Statement of core values	
3	Community assessment and feedback processes	
4	Focused approach that is not redundant with other organizations' programs	
5	Defined measures of success	

SUBTOTAL _____

II - Passionate and Engaged Board of Directors

6	Passionate, engaged board members	
7	Strategic approach to board recruitment and succession	
8	Board and staff are articulate advocates for the organization	
9	Clearly defined and consistently practiced roles and responsibilities	
10	Clear expectations and accountability for board and staff	
11	Written policies and procedures	
12	Professional approach to staff and staff development	

SUBTOTAL _____

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III - Strategic Approach to Fund Development

13	Strategic fundraising plan	
14	Demonstrated support and participation by the board	
15	Balanced portfolio of funding sources	
16	Constituent relationship management program in place	
17	Endowments and reserve funds	

SUBTOTAL _____

IV - Effective Communications and Marketing

18	Strategic marketing plan	
19	Clear, jargon-free messaging	
20	Proactive communications to constituents and the community	
21	Network of key influencers	
22	Strong, content-rich website	
23	Great stories to demonstrate mission success	

SUBTOTAL _____

V - Motivated, Professional Staff

24	Clearly defined roles and expectations	
25	Skills and experience commensurate with needs	
26	Appropriate compensation	
27	Respectful, supportive work environment	
28	Regular, constructive feedback	
29	Adequate resources available	

SUBTOTAL

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Record your Sub-Totals here:

I: Clear and Compelling Vision _____

II: Passionate, Engaged Board of Directors _____

III: Strategic Approach to Fund Development _____

IV: Effective Communications and Marketing _____

V: Motivated, Professional Staff _____

For any Section Score that is between 5 – 7, roll-up your sleeves and keep listening.
For any Section Score that is between 8 – 11, there is still room for improvement.
For any Section Score that is between 12 – 15, congratulations! You are well on your way to sustainability.

Notes/Observations from completed Assessment:

- What "ah-ha!" did you have, from completing this assessment?

- Which of the five elements are 'best practices' in your organization?

- Which elements do you need to explore further?

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Sustainability Element: **Clear & Compelling Vision**

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Defining Your Organization's Culture

A clear and compelling vision includes the following elements:

- **Vision** – is an image of some desired future outcome to which the organization aspires. It determines behavior and guides decisions. It may describe a long term goal and could include vivid descriptions of what it will be like to achieve such a goal. A vision is aspirational and has an external focus.

- **Mission** – provides the core reason for the organization's existence. Usually stated in broad terms, it should be a unifying point for all organizational activities and should reflect people's idealistic motivations for doing the organization's work. In other words, why are we here?

- **Core Values** – provide a guide to decisions and embellishes our basic organizational beliefs. Looked at another way, value statements show what we hold near and dear. It is an integrity check, a way of life; it sets the tone for the organization and compels management decisions.

  Core values require no external justification; they have intrinsic value and importance to those inside the organization. We should not change core values in response to external changes; rather, we should change strategies, if necessary, to remain true to our core values.

- **Goals** – are complementary to, and follow from your value statements. The goals of the organization provide general direction and guidance for developing specific objectives and actions.

Point to Remember:

These statements are not simply an exercise to create some stream of buzzwords that ring true but that no one really cares about. They are meant to promote and preserve the core of your organization's culture and stimulate the change and progress that are essential to its continued success and viability.

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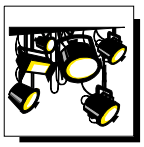

Practical Thinking for Aligning Your Organization

People are motivated to action when there is a strong connection between their needs and your organization's ability to fill those needs. Establishing that connection requires clear communications from and between all parts of the organization on what you stand for and what you are trying to accomplish.

First – Get the leaders of your organization to agree on the essence of its unique culture and purpose. Focus on the key elements that clearly define your mission, vision, values, principles, and goals. Avoid simply incorporating everything you may have done in the past – you can't be all things to all people.

Second – Once you have agreed to the fundamentals, craft the results into a simple message that everyone in a leadership position can communicate in a clear and consistent manner.

Third – Communicate the message to your staff. Listen to any concerns, but be sure to convey that this is what the organization stands for. Anyone who is not comfortable with any fundamental part of the approach should be encouraged to move on. You cannot have a high-performing organization with people on the inside who are not completely in agreement with its goals and principles.

Fourth – Communicate. Communicate. Communicate: with members, donors, key influencers, vendors, associates, the media, and each other – always conveying the same consistent message about who you are and what you're trying to accomplish. The clarity of your message will soon generate its own momentum, drawing like-minded people to your cause, and giving those already participating a much clearer sense of how they really fit in.

Fifth – Align your actions with your words. Leaders in the organization must act as they preach. Standards and principles must be modeled and enforced, otherwise they aren't your principles – they're just vague aspirations to someday have principles.

Sixth – Don't try to boil the ocean. Stay focused by limiting your activities and projects. Allocate (or reallocate) your resources to support the most important programs, and discontinue any programs that either don't completely fit your core message, or that you can no longer fully support.

Seventh – Build trust with your constituents by taking the time to listen to their concerns and aspirations. Time invested in one-on-one relationship building will pay huge future dividends in engaged, enthusiastic volunteer and financial support for your organization's goals and growth.

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Vision & Mission Examples

Vision

A vision is a guiding image of success formed in terms of a contribution to society. If a strategic plan is the "blueprint" for an organization's work, then the vision is the "artist's rendering".

There is one universal rule of planning: You will never be greater than the vision that guides you. The vision statement should require the organization's members to stretch their expectations, aspirations, and performance.

A vision statement should be realistic and credible, well-articulated and easily understood, appropriate, ambitious, and responsive to change.

A compelling vision lays down the challenge for what the organization aspires to accomplish.

Compelling examples:

Children's Hunger Relief Fund is saving the world one child at a time.

The mission of America's Second Harvest is to create a hunger-free America.

United Way's vision is to build a stronger America by mobilizing our communities to improve people's lives.

The American Red Cross provides relief to victims of disasters and helps people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.

Family Resource Centers help Colorado families succeed.

Family-to-Family is dedicated to connecting families with more to families with less.

Less compelling examples:

The California Children and Families Foundation has a mission of promoting, supporting, and improving the health and early development of children from the prenatal stage to five years of age.

Feed the Children delivers food, medicine, clothing and other necessities to individuals, children and families who lack these essentials due to famine, war, poverty or natural disaster.

Head Start serves the child development needs of preschool children (birth through age five) and their low-income families.

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Mission Statements

A mission statement is the expression of the why. It describes the need and what the organization is doing to meet it. It is internally focused, and is *inspirational.* It describes what inspires action, determines behavior, and fuels motivation.

A compelling mission statement has nine characteristics:

1. The language is bold, clear, and memorable.
2. It conveys the organization's values explicitly and implicitly.
3. There is both an emotional and rational impact.
4. It combines a "why" statement with a "what" statement.
5. The need that is being met is described in positive, not negative, terms.
6. It uses verbs that are active, not passive.
7. It inspires people to act, give, join, serve, and learn more.
8. It is adaptable for both marketing and development.
9. It summarizes succinctly the mission.

Mission Statement examples:

The Wallace Foundation

"Our mission is to enable institutions to expand learning and enrichment opportunities for all people. We do this by supporting and sharing effective ideas and practices."

To achieve our mission, we have three objectives:

- Strengthen education leadership to improve student achievement
- Improve after-school learning opportunities
- Build appreciation and demand for the arts

The Hearing Society

"We exist in a world of sound: children's voices, laughter and music, a baby's cry, the echo of fog horns, crunching leaves, a crackling fire, words of love and reassurance, whispered thoughts, soft breathing in the night, the ringing of a phone, signals of danger, and the fun of casual conversation.

Hearing loss separates us from these sounds. The Hearing Society helps people connect."

(Tagline developed from mission statement: "Reconnecting people with their world".)

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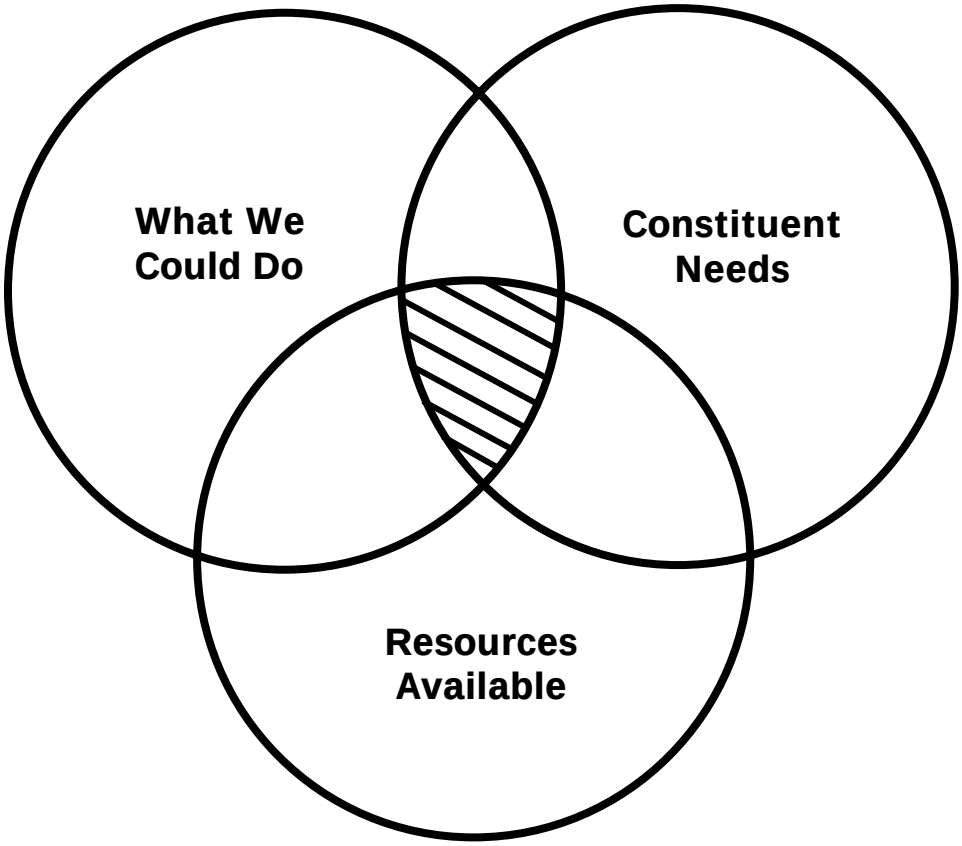
Focus



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Sustainability Element: Passionate & Engaged Board

Effective Governance

HIGH

BOARD ENGAGEMENT

Governance by Fiat	**Shared Governance**
Governance by Default	Leadership as Governance

LOW

STAFF ENGAGEMENT

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Governance in Your Organization[1]

Take a few moments to think about generative thinking in your organization.

- Who decides what the organization will pay attention to?
- Who tends to frame the problems?
- Who decides what a given problem or opportunity means for the organization?
- Who has the most influence over what gets on to the organization's agenda or list of priorities?

With this in mind, select the quadrant that best decides the generative thinking scenario in your organization:

Quadrant: _____

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If you placed your organization in the "shared governance" quadrant:

- What three things (structures, processes, elements of your organization's culture, etc.) most enabled your organization to get there?

- What are your biggest challenges, worries, or frustrations about shared governance?

If you placed your organization in one of the other (suboptimal) quadrants:

- What are the biggest costs of being in this quadrant?

- What challenges do you face in moving to shared governance?

- What could you build on to move to shared governance?

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Characteristics of Effective Board-Staff Partnerships[2]

Common expectations		Where We Are Going
Cooperative planning		Why
Open and honest communication		How We Will Get There
Respect		
Mutual Evaluation	...will result in a clear and common understanding of...	How We Will Know We Have Arrived

Factors Conducive to an Effective Board-Staff Partnership

Organizational health depends on an effective and flexible partnership between the board and the Executive Director (ED). It...

- Requires clarity and agreement about roles and responsibilities
- Requires regular and open communication between the board chair and the ED, as well as an agreement about how to work together
- Requires a willingness on everyone's part to clarify their own and each other's assumptions
- Benefits from regular and systematic feedback and assessment
- May need to be redefined as the organization develops in size and complexity

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The Board

Authorized by the government and the organization's supporters, the board governs the life of the organization.

- Establish mission and direction, ensures the necessary resources, and develops guiding principles
- Retains ultimate responsibility and power
- Is accountable to the public trust and to the organizations constituencies

The Executive Director

Authorized by the board, the ED manages the daily affairs of the organization.

- Supports the board with strategic information, ideas, and connections
- Manages the affairs of the organization by ensuring appropriate planning, coordination, and implementation of the program established by the board to support the mission
- Retains immediate operational responsibility and power

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Guiding Governance[3]

Purpose: For board members to consider the following questions, in order to discover what it means to be a governing board, and a board member.

Mission

- 1. How long has it been since our board reviewed and refreshed the mission of the organization and balanced it against day-to-day realities?
- 2. Who else should we include in discussions of mission and vision?
- 3. How do individual board members prepare themselves for their work on mission and vision?
- 4. How do we are board members maintain our connection and commitment to the mission?
- 5. Can everyone on our board clearly state our organization's mission?
- 6. What are the core values of the organization?
- 7. How are these values expressed in how we function?
- 8. Do the outcomes of each of our programs contribute to the achievement of our mission? If not, what needs to be done?

Oversight

- 1. Is our organization committed to planning as an essential part of effective leadership and management?
- 2. Do we use our plans to evaluate progress and outcomes?
- 3. Does our organization have an up-to-date code of ethics and conflict of interest policy?

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- 4. How do we distinguish between board responsibilities and those of the Executive Director or staff? What are the areas in which our responsibilities overlap?
- 5. What indicators and processes do we use to find out whether our board is doing its job?
- 6. Do we regularly evaluate the Executive Director's performance? Our own performance as a board and as individual board members? What evaluation processes do we use?
- 7. Do board members have a clear written statement of their duties and responsibilities? Does the Executive Director have a clear job description?
- 8. Is the board aware of the Executive Director's salary and how it's determined? If not, why not?
- 9. Does the board regularly review the organization's Form 990, the public document?

Resources

- 1. How do we educate board members about the organization's fundraising strategy?
- 2. Does every board member make an annual contribution to the organization?
- 3. To what extent do board members actively ask others to provide financial support?
- 4. Are there obvious areas of strength and weakness in our board's fundraising performance?
- 5. Do we have adequate financial expertise among board members?
- 6. Does the board receive regular, complete financial reports? Are the reports clear and easy to understand?
- 7. What questions do we bring to our review of financial documents?

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- 8. What internal controls are in place to guard against potential fraud and abuse?
- 9. Are our investment policies consistent with our values, financial situation, and long-term goals?

Outreach

- 1. Do your community stakeholders know and understand our mission?
- 2. How does the board support our outreach activities? How can this be expanded?
- 3. To what extent is our organization well known to business, government, education, and media leaders? Do we actively pursue and develop those relationships?
- 4. How could more effective outreach enhance our fundraising capabilities?
- 5. How do the board, its members, and the staff work together in the area of community outreach? How can we strengthen this partnership?

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How Your Board Can Govern More and Manage Less

- Develop a strategic plan and adhere to it.
- Link the current agenda to the strategic agenda.
- Monitor the success of the organization's initiatives.
- Develop clear expectations and a plan of action for the board of Directors.
- Encourage the chief executive to think strategically.
- Prepare materials and structure meetings to direct the board's attention to matters of policy and strategy.
- Develop and use a consent agenda.
- Determine priorities and organize the agenda accordingly.
- Assess the performance of the board on a regular basis.
- Focus on policy objectives, organizational strategy, and the relationship between budgets and priorities.
- Assess the chief executive.

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Sample Board Effectiveness Assessment

How Does Your Board Measure Up

Rate your board using the following scale:

0 – No, this doesn't exist on our board

1 – We're working on it

2 – Yes, we're in great shape on this item

Selection & Composition	Rating
• The board is composed of persons vitally interested in the work of the organization.	
• The board is representative of its constituency with regard to race, class, gender, and sexual orientation.	
• There is a balance of new and experienced board members to guarantee both continuity and new thinking.	
• Board members have the combination of skills (e.g., fundraising, management, legal, fiscal, etc.) necessary to do their work.	
• The number of consecutive terms a board member can serve is limited. (No life terms!)	
• The organization has a pool of potential board members identified for the future.	
• The organization develops future board members through the use of volunteers on committees.	
• New board members are recruited and selected using a thorough review process.	
Subtotal (out of a subtotal maximum of 16 points)	
Orientation & Training	**Rating**
• There is a statement of agreement outlining the responsibilities of board members that all board members sign.	
• The board understands it legal liability.	

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• The organization provides an orientation for new board members.	
• The organization supplies a board manual to all board members that includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of current programs, a list of board members, budget and funding information, bylaws, and personnel policies.	
• The organization makes training opportunities available for board members to increase skills related to their board responsibilities.	
Subtotal (out of a subtotal maximum of 10 points)	
Board Structure & Organization	**Rating**
• The board has a simple, concise set of bylaws that describes the duties of board members and officers, and the procedures by which the board conducts its business.	
• The board has a mechanism (such as an executive committee) for handling matters that must be addressed between meetings.	
• The board elects a chair (or co-chairs) to provide leadership and coordinate the on-going work of the board and its committees.	
• Committee assignments are reviewed and evaluated periodically.	
• Board and staff members are clear about their respective responsibilities.	
• The board has active committees (e.g., fund-raising personnel, nominating, long-range planning) with specific responsibilities.	
• Working relations between the board chair and the executive director are strong and productive.	
• Relations between the staff and board are characterized by mutual respect and good rapport.	
Subtotal (out of a Subtotal maximum of 16 points)	
The Board at Work	**Rating**
• There are regularly scheduled board meetings at least 4 times a year.	
• Meetings begin and end on time per an agreed-upon schedule.	
• There is adequate preparation and distribution of material, including agendas, study documents, etc., in advance of board meetings.	
• Board meetings are characterized by open discussion, general participation, and active thinking.	

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• Board members deal primarily with policy formulation; program, financial, and long-range planning; financial review; and evaluating the work of the organization.	
• Minutes of the board and committee meetings are written and circulated to the members.	
• Committees are active and complete assigned tasks in a timely manner.	
• The board is aware of matters of community, state, and nationwide concern within the organization's field of interest.	
• The individual board members accept and carry out assignments within the area of their talents and expertise.	
• Board members follow through on their commitments in a timely manner.	
• Board members make a generous financial contribution (self-defined) to the organization on an annual basis.	
• All board members are involved in some aspect of fundraising for the organization.	
• The board conducts an annual review of its own organization and work.	
• New leadership is emerging consistently from the board and its committees.	
Subtotal (out of a subtotal maximum of 28 points)	
TOTAL SCORE (out of a maximum of 70 points)	

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Evaluating the ED

Guidelines

- Do it....and do it annually.
- Do it in a constructive way.
- Make it a regular exercise for the ED, for the board, and for the organization.
- Include the ED in all aspects of the process and content of the performance evaluation.

Content

- Examine your organization's goals and how the ED's performance supports and ensures their implementation
- Establish measurable objectives with the ED related to your organization's goals and to leadership and management qualities.
- Assess the quality of the ED's relationship with the board, staff, funders, government agencies, the community, stakeholders, and consumers.

Issues that Shape the Evaluation Process

- Who has the primary responsibility: the Executive Committee? Board Chair? Full board?
- How will agreement be reached with the full board on the criteria for the evaluation?
- What is the timeframe for the evaluation?
- Will staff, community, and/or clients be involved?
- What opportunity will the ED have to respond to the evaluation?
- How will the final evaluation be shared with the full board?

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Key Questions for Assessing the ED's Performance

1. What are the major objectives of your organization:
   - short term (1-2 years)
   - long term (5-10 years)

2. How well are these objectives being realized?

3. Does the ED have the necessary knowledge and skills?

4. Does the ED have the necessary personal qualities and characteristics?

5. Does the ED recruit, supervise, and retain staff?

6. What are the ED's major strengths?

7. What are the ED's major weaknesses?

8. What external factors, if any, have interfered with the ED's ability to achieve organizational; goals?

9. What specific decisions and actions will be desirable or necessary to:
   - Strengthen the ED's performance?
   - Clarify the respective roles of the ED and the board?
   - Enhance the effectiveness of the organization?

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Resource Materials

Tools to Help Build
Passionate and Engaged Boards

- ✓ What Does it Take?
- ✓ Guidelines for Recruiting Board Members
- ✓ Sample Board Member Application
- ✓ Sample Board Member Agreement
- ✓ Sample Board Member Job Description
- ✓ Board Profile Assessment
- ✓ Checklist for Successful Board Orientation
- ✓ Board/Staff Responsibility Worksheet
- ✓ Board Meeting Effectiveness

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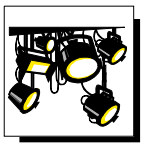

Sustainability Element: **Passionate, Engaged Boards**

What does it take?

Tending to Process

- Advance warning
- Orient judiciously
- Board buddies
- Matchmaking
- Meetings of the minds
- Front lines

4 Ways to Focus on Purpose

1. Choose the right board members
2. Do value-added work
3. Make it stimulating
4. Expect change

5 Tips for Engaging the Board

1. Break out of the boardroom
2. Play games
3. Be a “learning board”
4. Clarify expectations
5. Do reality checks

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Tool: Guidelines for Recruiting Board Members

By Carter McNamara

The following guidelines should be modified as necessary to conform to the particular culture and purpose of the organization.

It's very important to keep the perspective that your board deserves highly skilled and participative board members. Don't erode your goals and believe that you are lucky to get anyone at all.

When you set out to recruit new members, the most important consideration is to know what kinds of skills are currently needed by the board. Consider the nature of issues and goals currently faced by the organization. For example, if you're struggling with finances, then seek a member with strong financial skills. It's highly useful to use a Sample Board Recruitment Grid.

1. Maintain an up-to-date list of potential board candidates, including the particular skills they can bring to the organization. This is often done by the Nominating Committee or the Board Development Committee.

2. Develop a Sample Board Application Form for prospective new board members. The form should solicit information about the potential new member, including biographical information, why they want to join this board, what they hope to bring to the board, what they would like to get from their board membership and any questions they might have.

3. According to any scheduling in the By-laws and/or after strategic planning, reference major strategic goals for the organization and the chief executive to identify what skills would be highly useful to the board, e.g., if new people will be hired the board may desire people with human resource skills, etc.

4. Reference the list of potential candidates to recruit for board membership and ask to meet with them.

5. Prospective board members should meet with the board chair and the chief executive, hear an overview of the organization and receive relevant organizational materials describing the organization's products or services, receive a board member job description and a board member application form. The prospective new member should hear about how the organization orients new members. Provide names of several board members whom the prospective new member might contact with any questions.

7. Identify if there are any potential conflicts of interest with the candidate, e.g., is he or she on the board of a competing organization, a vendor of the organization, etc.

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8. Invite the prospective new member to a board meeting. Notify current board members that a potential new member will be attending. Consider name tags to help the potential new member be acquainted with board members. Introduce the member right away in the meeting and, at the end of the meeting, ask the potential new member if they have any questions. Thank them for coming.

9. Shortly after the meeting, call the prospective new member to hear if they want to apply for joining the board or not. If so, solicit their completed board member application and provide all applications to the board for their review and election.

10. Notify new members (those who have been elected) and invite them to subsequent board meetings and the board orientation.

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Tool: Sample Board Member Application

Name:

Address:

Daytime Phone: Evening Phone

Current Employer:

Email Address:

Describe the personal and/or professional skills you will bring to the Board of Directors:

Why do you want to serve on the board of this organization?

Are you now or have you been on any other boards? Yes No. If yes, please explain:

Areas of Interest:

☐ Programs

☐ Education

☐ Public Relations

☐ Finance

☐ Fund Raising/Events

☐ Board Recruitment

☐ Marketing

Signature: Date:

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Tool: Sample Board Member Agreement

{organization's name}

BOARD MEMBER AGREEMENT

I, , understand that as a member of the Board of Directors of {organization's name}, I have a legal and moral responsibility to ensure than the organization does the best work possible in pursuit of its goals. I believe in the purpose and the mission of the organization, and I will act responsibly and prudently as its steward.

As part of my responsibilities as a board member:

1. I will interpret the organization's work and values to the community, represent the organization, and act as a spokesperson.

2. I will attend all board meetings, committee meetings as appropriate and special events. If special circumstances prevent me from participating, I will notify the Board President in advance.

3. I will make a personal financial contribution at a level that is meaningful to me.

4. I will actively participate in one or more fundraising activities.

5. I will act in the best interests of the organization, and excuse myself from discussions and votes where I have a conflict of interest.

6. I will stay informed about what's going on in the organization. I will ask questions and request information. I will participate in and take responsibility for making decisions on issues, policies and other board matters.

7. I will work in good faith with staff and other board members as partners towards achievement of our goals.

8. If I don't fulfill these commitments to the organization, I will expect the board president to call me and discuss my responsibilities with me.

9. In turn, the organization will be responsible to me in several ways:

10. I will be sent, without request, quarterly financial reports and an update of organizational activities that allow me to meet the "prudent person" section of the law.

11. Opportunities will be offered to me to discuss with the executive director and the board president the organization's programs, goals, activities, and status; additionally, I can request such opportunities.

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12. The organization will help me perform my duties by keeping me informed about issues in the industry and field in which we are working, and by offering me opportunities for professional development as a board member.

13. Board members and staff will respond in a straightforward fashion to questions I have that I feel are necessary to carry out my fiscal, legal and moral responsibilities to this organization. Board members and staff will work in good faith with me towards achievement of our goals.

14. The organization will provide the Board of Directors with Directors & Officers liability insurance.

15. If the organization does not fulfill its commitments to me, I can call on the board president and executive director to discuss these responsibilities.

Signed:

Date:

Member, Board of Directors

Date:

President, Board of Directors

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Tool: Sample Board Member Job Description

Fundamental Responsibilities

- Be informed about organization's mission, services, policies, programs and fiduciary responsibilities
- Inform others about the organization's mission, programs, activities, and events
- Actively provide creative perspective and solutions for the organization's most pressing issues
- Attend all monthly board meetings, annual board retreat, assigned committee meetings, and functions
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to all meetings; review and comment on minutes and reports
- Participate actively in board and committee work
- Volunteer for and willingly accept assignments and complete them thoroughly and on time
- Make a personal financial contribution to the organization (current policy call for a minimum $500)
- Suggest possible candidates for nomination to the board
- Follow conflict of interest and confidentiality policies
- Participate actively in fund raising for the organization

Personal Characteristics

- Ability to: listen, analyze, think clearly and creatively, and work well with people individually and in a group.
- Willing to: prepare for and attend board and committee meetings, ask questions, take responsibility and follow through on a given assignment, contribute personal and financial resources in a generous way according to circumstances, open doors in the community, evaluate oneself.
- Develop certain skills if you do not already possess them, such as to: cultivate and solicit funds, cultivate and recruit board members and other volunteers, read and understand financial statements, learn more about the substantive program area of the organization.
- Possess: honesty, sensitivity to and tolerance of differing views, a friendly, responsive, and patient approach, community-building skills, personal integrity, a developed sense of values, concern for your nonprofit's development, a sense of humor.

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Tool: Board Profile Assessment[iv]

How Can We Recruit the Right Board Members?

1. Think about how *you* would like to be recruited. The seriousness with which a board member is recruited and selected is directly proportional to the seriousness with which the board member fulfills her/his role.
2. Define the board member's job:
   - In writing
   - Define the role of individual members as well as the role of the Board as a governing group
   - Discuss expectations (governance, implementation, volunteer). Include amount of time expected, donation expectations, committee involvement, how board member performance is evaluated
3. Use the organization's mission and values as a primary criterion for selecting new Board members.
4. Agree on profile of the future board.
   - Minimum, maximums, percentages of whatever characteristics are important to your organization.
   - People want to serve in meaningful ways; ensure potential Board members are not identified based solely due to membership to any particular demographic
5. Develop qualifications for serving. Complete profiles below as a starting point.
   - Identify gaps in desired experience and qualifications
6. Adopt a plan to identify and nurture prospects
   - Develop an action plan to start a list of people who might fit the board.
   - The identification process should be ongoing and involve all current board members
7. Be rigorous about the nomination process.
   - Consider demographic balance.
   - Look into the future: will prospective members fill changes in skills as current members leave? Who can be groomed for future leadership roles, for example?
   - Explain qualifications you feel the prospective member has.
   - Offer copies of bylaws and board policy manuals.
   - Conduct reference checks.
   - Take the time now to thoroughly explain board service in order to minimize surprises, frustration, and to signal you have high expectations.
8. Take board election and new member orientation seriously.
   - First impressions will influence a new board member's decision to stay or go.
   - Well-planned and executed orientation shortens the learning curve, ensures active involvement, and can reduce turnover.

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Table 1: Board Member Profile

	Current Board Members										Prospective Board Members			
Desired Characteristics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A	B	C	D
ALL MEMBERS SHOULD HAVE THESE CHARACTERISTICS:														
Demonstrated shared values; interests are aligned with organization														
Demonstrated interest before nomination														
Donor of record in last year														
Some experience in our area of service														
Board service supported by family														
Able to attend meetings; give 8-10 days per year														
Known as a good group decision maker														
Other:														

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Table 2: Board Member Skills

	Current Board Members										Prospective Board Members			
Desired Characteristics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A	B	C	D
EACH MEMBER SHOULD HAVE ONE OR MORE OF THESE CHARACTERISTICS:														
Recognized community leader														
Prior experience on nonprofit boards														
Knowledge of nonprofit law														
Knowledge of nonprofit fundraising														
Specialized knowledge of one mission/program area														
Helps balance board in terms of gender														
Helps balance board in terms of age														
Helps balance board in terms of ethnicity														

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	Current Board Members										Prospective Board Members			
Desired Characteristics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A	B	C	D
Good mediator of group disagreements														
Knowledge of land use and facilities management														
Experience in interacting with local government														
Has network of donor prospects														
Leadership in another organization important to us														
Other:														

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	Current Board Members							Prospective Board Members						
Area of Expertise/Professional Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A	B	C	D
Administrator														
Architect														
Business/Corporate														
Community Leader														
Educator														
Executive Director														
Finance:														
Accounting														
Banking & Trust														
Investments														
Foundation Representative														
Fundraising														
Government Representative														
Human Resources														
Insurance														
Legal														
Marketing														
Media														
Medical														
Public Relations														

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	Current Board Members										Prospective Board Members			
Area of Expertise/Professional Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A	B	C	D
Real Estate														
Recruiting														
Religious														
Strategic Planning														
Special Program Focus														
Board Experience														
President														
Vice Chair														
Treasurer														
Secretary														
Board Development														
Executive														
Finance														
Fund Development														
Marketing														
Planning														
Other:														

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Table 3: Demographics

	Current Board Members										Prospective Board Members			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A	B	C	D
Age														
Under 35														
From 36-50														
From 51-65														
Over 65														
Gender														
Women														
Men														
Ethnicity														
Asian														
African-American														
Latino														
Caucasian														
Other														
Geographic Location														
City														
State														
Country														

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	Current Board Members										Prospective Board Members			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A	B	C	D
Contributions: In-kind (I), Donation (D), Solicited (S)														
>10K														
5-10K														
2-5K														
1-2K														
< 1K														
Length of Board Service														
Over 10 years														
5-10 years														
2-4 years														
Less than 2 years														
None														
Attendance														
75-100%														
50-74%														
25-49%														
<24%														
Term of Expiration														

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Tool: Checklist for Successful Board Orientation[v]

- ☐ **Plan the orientation!**
- ☐ **Schedule** the orientation for the most convenient time and location for all board members. Set the date well in advance to accommodate busy schedules.
- ☐ **Keep it simple.** Don't use orientation time to teach board members how to read a financial statement. Provide and overview of important information.
- ☐ **Pace the presentation** to fit time allotted. Create a timed agenda and stick to it.
- ☐ **Allow time for Board members to get to know each other.** Facilitate a structured introduction. Example: Board members form pairs, conduct brief interviews of each other. Each pair then takes a turn introducing his/her partner to the whole group.
- ☐ **Pay attention to the room's seating arrangement.** Informal circles encourage interaction and allow everyone to see each other.
- ☐ **Ask seasoned or emeritus board members to share stories** from the organization's past.
- ☐ **Include an official "swearing in" ceremony** at which time new board members pledge their service and formally acknowledge their responsibilities as board members.
- ☐ **Explain** board meeting procedures, including the informal norms such as dress, timing, etc.
- ☐ **Pair new members with a seasoned board member** to serve as a mentor, to help integrate the new member, answer questions, etc.
- ☐ **Maintain a sense of humor.** Humor can build camaraderie.
- ☐ **Learn from experience.** Ask seasoned board members, "what do you wish you had known when you first became a board member that would have made a difference in the way you did your job?"

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Tool: Board/Staff Responsibility Worksheet

Check the appropriate box, assigning PRIMARY responsibility for each item.

Task	Board Responsibility	Executive Director / Staff Responsibility
1. Determine the organization's goals		
2. Fund raise for the organization		
3. Hire the executive director		
4. Establish the organization's policies		
5. Execute policy		
6. Recommend organization policy		
7. Administer all aspects of organization operations		
8. Hire and supervise support staff		
9. Approve annual budget		
10. Plan and implement programs		
11. Responsibility for compliance with all legal requirements		
12. Recruit new board members		
13. Orient, train, and develop board members		
14. Draft the annual budget		
15. Establish staff benefit policies		
16. Manage staff benefit policies		
17. Prepare background materials for board consideration		
18. Select board members for various committees		
19. Serve as professional resource to the board		

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Task	Board Responsibility	Executive Director / Staff Responsibility
20. Provide community relations contacts with community		
21. Prepare reports for the board		
22. Evaluate organization's results		
23. Keep board members informed regarding organization's operations		
24. Assess operational problems		

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Tool: Board Meeting Effectiveness

At the conclusion of each Board or committee meeting, each participant rates the following items on an index card or ready-to-use form.

1. The issues covered today were 1 2 3 4 5 TRIVIAL ESSENTIAL
2. The materials provided today were 1 2 3 4 5 TRIVIAL ESSENTIAL
3. Today's discussion concerned primarily 1 2 3 4 5 TRIVIAL ESSENTIAL

4. What was the most valuable contribution we made to our organization today?

5. What might we do differently to improve our meeting today?

6. In light of today's meeting, what are the most important topics we should address at our next meeting?

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Sustainability Element: Motivated, Professional Staff

Culture

What is culture?

How do you create a culture in which staff contributes to their fullest and wants to stay?

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Motivation: What Does it Take?

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

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Tool: Recruit Right

3 Keys to Recruitment

1.

2.

3.

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12 Questions to Ask Staff

In the book, *First Break All the Rules,* authors Coffman and Buckingham identified the elements of an organization directly linked to employee retention, productivity, financial success, and client satisfaction.

If staff can answer “strongly agree” to each of the 12 questions, you are well on your way to realizing a Motivated and Professional Staff.

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?
3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
4. In the last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
7. At work, do my opinions see to count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of my organization make me feel my job is important?
9. Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?
10. Do I have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
12. This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

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It's All about You/Es Todo de Ti

It's All About / Es Todo de:

_____date/fecha_____

Employee/nombre

- What is your favorite soda flavor? ¿Qué es su refresco favorito?
- What is your favorite candy? ¿Qué es su dulce favorito?
- What is your favorite color? ¿Qué color prefiere?
- What is your favorite restaurant? ¿Cuál es su restaurante favorito?
- What is your favorite flavor of ice cream/sorbet? ¿Qué es su sabor favorito de helado/sorbete?
- What type of flower do you like? ¿Qué tipo de flor le gusta?
- What is your favorite kind of cookie? ¿Qué tipo de panecillo dulce prefiere?
- What type of food do you like? ¿Qué tipo de comida prefiere?
- What is your hobby? ¿Qué es su chifladura?
- What is your favorite snack? ¿Qué clasé de antojito prefiere?
- Do you collect anything special? ¿Collecciona algo de especial?
- What is your favorite subject to read about? ¿Qué es su asunto favorito sobre que leer?
- What is your favorite type of music? ¿Cuál es su tipo de música favorita?
- What is your favorite store? ¿Qué tienda o almacen prefiere?
- What is your favorite coffee or special beverage? ¿Cuál café o bebida especial prefiere?
- If you could treat yourself to a gift under $25.00, what would it be?
- ¿Si pudiera regalarse un presente que cuesta menos de 25$, que seria?
- Would you prefer: 1) private recognition, 2) semi-private recognition, 3) public recognition, or 4) no preference?
- ¿Qué prefiere – reconocimiento 1) privado, 2) semi-privado, 3) publico, o 4) sin preferéncia?

✓ Please complete this form and turn in to your manager
✓ Favor de llenar este papel y deselo al manejo

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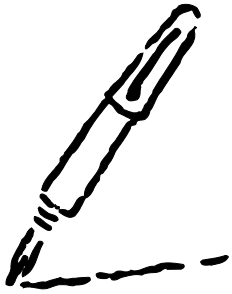
Capture your notes here



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Next Steps

What is the very first action step you will take, based on your participation in this workshop series:

- As a Board member?

- As the Executive Director?

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Recommended Reading List

- Begging for Change, by Robert Egger, HarperCollins (www.harpercollins.com)
- Boards That Make a Difference, by John Carver, Josey-Bass 2nd Ed.
- Self-Assessment Tool for Non-Profit Organizations, by Peter Drucker, The Peter Drucker Foundation for Non-Profit Management
- Welcome to the Board, by Fisher Howe, Josey-Bass
- The Nonprofit Answer Book: Practical Guide for Board Members and Chief Executives, by Andringa and Engstrom (available through Boardsource.org)
- The Nonprofit Answer Book II: Beyond the Basics, by R. Andringa, (available through Boardsource.org)
- Called to Serve: Creating and Nurturing the Effective Volunteer Board, by Max De Pree
- Governing Boards by Cyril O. Houle
- Beyond Profit by Fred Setterberg and Kary Schulman
- The Nonprofit Organization: An Operating Manual by Thomas Wolf
- The Knowing-Doing Gap by Jeffery Pfeffer and Robert Sutton
- Governance as Leadership by Richard Chiat, William Ryan, Barbara Taylor
- Fundraising for Non-Profits by P. Burke Keegan, Harper-Collins (www.harpercollins.com)

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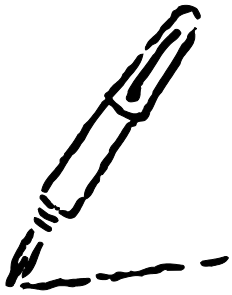
Capture your notes here



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NEWLEVEL
GROUP
Take the Next Step

About NewLevel Group…

Who we are

NewLevel Group was formed almost three years ago with a vision to strengthen our community by helping nonprofits and businesses take the next step in their development -- whether the next step means launching a business, developing a board, or updating an existing brand. Our team is made up of seasoned professionals who look at challenges from various perspectives honed from decades of experience in the business and nonprofit sectors. We plan as well as implement, never losing sight of our goal to deliver your desired results.

What we do

First and foremost, we listen. We listen to you, your board, your clients, and your colleagues to fully understand the challenges you face. Then, we form a team that will partner with you to identify your goals, outline strategies to achieve them, and, if needed, work with you to implement the tactics.

How we do it

Our approach to helping organizations improve their results reflects our shared values of collaboration, commitment, and community. We are different from other consulting and management firms in several significant ways:

- We work collaboratively; not just treating symptoms, but finding solutions for the underlying causes.
- We implement; we don't just create pretty plans, but roll up our sleeves to get the job done.
- We're focused on results; a good process is important, but the outcome is what really matters.

Management & Marketing Consulting for Nonprofits and Businesses

Strategic Planning ● Marketing Planning & Implementation ● Communications Programs ● Meeting Facilitation ● Management & Board Skills Training ● Organizational Effectiveness ● Nonprofit and Foundation Management

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Footnotes

[1] William Ryan, Richard Chiat, Barbara Taylor, *Governance as Leadership*

[2] Adapted from Boardsource 2006

[3] Adapted from Boardsource 2006

[iv] Adapted from National Center for Nonprofit Boards Publication; Boardsource.org

[v] Adapted from *Presenting: Board Orientation*

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