Responsibilities of the Board Chair

- To serve the board as a guide and facilitator of its work
- To represent the board and organization in the community
- To appoint committee chairs
- To ensure that committee roles and responsibilities are understood
- To plan the work of the board with the Chief Executive
- To develop effective board meeting agendas with the Chief Executive
- To identify emerging board leaders (officers)
- To work/communicate closely with the Chief Executive
Boardroom Dynamics

- Board Meeting Calendar
- Board “Packets”
- Agenda
- Consent Agenda
- Board Meeting Evaluation
- Executive Sessions
- Board Minutes
Effective Board Meetings

- Board meeting annual calendar (time, day, week, site)

- Board Packets

- EXPECTATIONS:
  - Attendance at all meetings unless excused
  - Material in board packet read/reviewed prior to meeting
  - Be on time for meeting
Effective Board Meetings

- Pre-meeting agenda
- Consent Agenda
- Clearly stated objectives for the meeting
- Prioritize items for discussion/decision
- Board Minutes
- Board Meeting Evaluation
Executive Sessions

- For discussions that require privacy and confidentiality
- Function and purpose of session established early
- **Use carefully and sparingly**
- For board members only unless others invited
- Held for the determined purpose only
- Minutes if needed are confidential
Boards and Conflict

- Not all conflict is bad

- Potential board “fatal” diseases
  - Complacencyitis
  - Rubber-stampitis
  - Dysfunctional Politeness
  - Diversity Deficiency
Three Types of Board Conflict

1. Conflict Over Substance
2. Conflict Over Process
3. Personality Conflicts
Dealing with Board Conflict

- Board Self Assessment
- Evaluate Board Meetings
- No Automatic Re-nomination
- Term Limits
- Address serious Problems Privately
- Mediation
Board Member Recruitment
Building a Better Board

- Life Cycles of Organizations and Boards
- The Board Building Cycle
Life Cycles of Organizations and Boards

- Conception
- Infancy
- Puberty
- Young Adulthood
- Adulthood
- Late Adulthood
- Old Age
- Revitalization
The Board Building Cycle

Rotate ➔ Identify ➔ Cultivate ➔ Recruit ➔ Educate ➔ Activate ➔ Orient ➔ Evaluate ➔ Celebrate and Involve Former Board Members
Step 1: Identify Board Needs

- Skills, knowledge, perspective, connections, etc. needed to implement strategic plan
- What do we have?
- What is missing?
Step 2: Cultivate

- Identify sources of board members with the needed characteristics
- Develop relationships
- Identify potential members
- Cultivate then/get them interested, keep them informed
Step 3: Recruit

- Describe why a prospective member is wanted and needed
- Describe expectations and responsibilities
- Invite questions
- Elicit interest and preparedness to serve
- Don’t minimize requirements
Board Recruitment Exercise

- In 3 minutes, what would you say to a person you want to encourage to stand for election to your board?
Step 4: Orient

- **To the Organization**
  - Programs, history, bylaws, pressing issues, finances, facilities, organizational chart

- **To the Board**
  - Recent minutes, committees, board member responsibilities, list of board members and key staff members
Orientation Tips and Tools

Tips
• Be honest, but don’t overwhelm
• Include full board
• Make room for team building
• Follow up with individuals

Tools
• Orientation meeting
• Board handbook
• Site visit/facilities tour
Step 5: Involve

- Discover interests and availability
- Involve in committee or task force
- Assign “buddy”/mentor
- Solicit and act on feedback
- Hold everyone accountable
- Express appreciation for work well done
- Conduct effective board meetings
Step 6: Educate

- Provide information about the issues facing the organization and the community
- Promote exploration of these issues
- Do not hide difficulties
- Assign responsibilities that promote learning about the issues
Step 7: Evaluate

- Engage the board in assessing its own performance
- Encourage individual self assessment
- Identify ways in which to improve
Step 8: Rotate Board Members

- Establish and use term limits
- Do not automatically re-elect for an additional term – consider board’s needs and director’s performance
- Explore advisability of resigning with members who are not productive/active
- Continually develop new leadership
Step 9: Celebrate

- Recognize progress and victories – even the small ones
- Appreciate individual contributions to the board, to the organization, and to the community
- Make room for humor and a good laugh
Special Team Building Events

• Board Retreats
  • In-depth discussions that allow for improved understanding of where each person “is coming from”
  • Social interaction that helps members connect on a more personal level
• Social Gatherings
  • Include spouses and partners
• ROPES Course
• Equine Team Building
Strategic Thinking/Planning

“If you don’t know where you are going, you will probably end up somewhere else.” Yogi Berra
“Cheshire Puss” Alice began, “would you please tell me which way I ought to go from here?” “That depends where you want to get to,” said the cat. “I don’t much care where,” said Alice. “then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the cat.

Alice in Wonderland
Strategic Thinking

Exceptional boards allocate time to what matters most and continuously engage in strategic thinking to move the organization’s direction.
Strategic Thinking...

- Is a way of life – not a one time event
- Requires openness and dialogue
- Involves posing and pondering important questions
- Requires acceptance from the group that discussion might not have an immediate solution, but is still critical to success.
- Is worthy of the boards time.
Strategic Planning Flowchart

Mission Vision Values

Strategic Issues

Goals

Objectives Strategies Action Steps

Performance Outcomes Evaluation

Internal Assessment
- Board
- Management/Staff
- Financial

External Assessment
- Social Needs/Markets
- Political
- Economic

Resources
- Capital
- Staffing
- Equipment
- Facilities
The Strategic Thinking/Planning Process

- Define/Reaffirm your Mission, Vision and Values Statement
- Assess internal and external environments
- Identify strategic issues facing your organization
- Complete SWOT analysis
- Identify accomplishments
- Complete Governing Board Self Assessment
- Develop goals, measurable outcomes, action steps, persons responsible, start date and completion date
Strategic Thinking/Planning for Non-Profit Organizations

**Strategic issues** focus on how the mission will be achieved, including the most effective and cost-efficient means of accomplishing what the organization has set out to do.
Community assessment of needs should ask: How well are we serving the community? How can we further enhance our services in the community?
Strategic Thinking/Planning for Non-Profit Organizations

• Strategic planning should be woven into every aspect of the organization’s work.

• The board and board meeting should always focus on the organization’s key strategic issues and the outcomes of organizational goals.
Typical Categories of Strategic Issues

- Programs, Products, Services
- Funding and Fiscal Development
- Staffing and Staff Development
- Equipment, Facilities, Facility Maintenance
- Public Relations and Marketing
- Board Development