

# Creating & Maintaining an Effective Board

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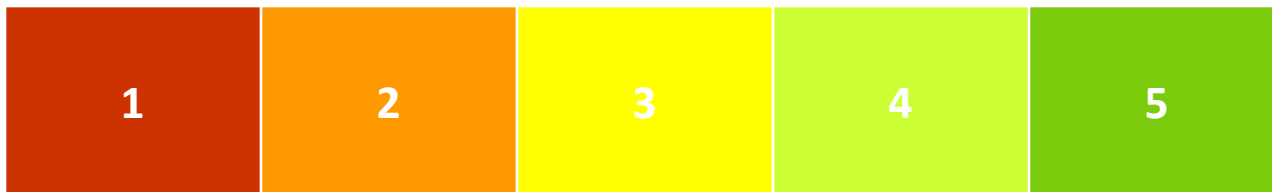


# How Close to Purrfect is Your Board?



# Role? People? Energy?

## Your Board's Fit for Your Nonprofit



on a scale of 1 to 5

# Workshop Topics

- **Board strength & effectiveness**
- **Assessment approaches & tools**
- **Perspectives, skills, & relationships**
- **Recruitment & engagement strategies**
- **Next Steps**

# Reality of Board Effectiveness

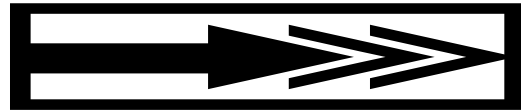
- **Core principles**
- **Context dependent**

# Core Board Roles

- **Mission & priorities**
- **Oversight**
- **Liaison with community**
- **Ensure availability of resources**

# Organizational Context

**Emerging**



**Established**

**Informal**



**Institutional**

**Volunteer**



**Staffed**

**Member**



**Non-member**

# Funding Context

**Donations**



**Earned Income**

**Government**



**Evaluating Board  
effectiveness requires clarity  
about Board goals**

# Board Goals

- **Distinct** from organizational goals
- Set within organizational **context**
- Focus on greatest **opportunities** for the Board to **add value**
- Ensure **accountability** & **sustainability**
- **Measureable**

# Board Assessment Goals

- **Increase Board effectiveness**
- **Build Board engagement**
- **Raise difficult issues**
- **Clarify support/training needs**
- **Optimize the use of Board member time & energy**

# Board Assessment Approaches

- **Board conversations**
- **Confidential survey**
- **External expert**

# Conversation Assessments

- **One-on-one**
- **Committee by committee**
- **Full Board discussion with skilled facilitator**
- **Staff role in conversation approach?**

# Board Member Surveys

- **On-line or on paper**
- **Board Source – varied service & pricing packages**
- **Compass Point – free download**
- **Create your own**

# Using Survey Info

- **Skillful summary of strengths, challenges, & issues**
- **Starting point for discussion**
- **Avoid “report card” approach**

# External Expert Role?

- **Facilitator**
- **Consultant**
- **Trainer**
- **Monitor/ Evaluator**



# Productive Assessments

- **Raise issues & lead to resolution of barriers to effectiveness:**
  - Clarify Board roles
  - Generate process improvements
  - Facilitate redesigning structures to better fit current needs
- **Increase Board commitment**

# Assessments Clarify Board Composition Needs

- **Strengths of current Board**
- **Missing pieces – missing skills, relationships, leadership styles, etc.**
- **Impact of departure of current leaders**
- **Future Board needs**

# Finding the Right Mix

- **Expertise/skills**
- **Networks/ relationships**
- **Interests/desires**
- **Time**
- **Leadership**
- **Process skills**

# Key Recruitment Challenge

- **Growth/change in organization involves changes in Board roles ... which may require Board members who are different from current members**
- **Current members tend to know people similar to themselves**

# Moving Beyond the Known



[www.kaysohlconsulting.net](http://www.kaysohlconsulting.net)

# Finding the Right New Members

- Clarify your **needs**
- Explore potential **motivations**
- Treat donors, colleagues, former Board members, funders, & other stakeholders as **key informants**
- Ask for introductions to individuals who can provide **leads**

# Focus on People not Slots

- **Shared values**
- **Diverse experiences & perspectives**
- **Relationships & credibility**
- **Leadership & follow-through**
- **Time & interest**
- **Communication comfort zone**

# Prepare for New Members

- Identify a **point person** for Board engagement
- **Engage continuing Board members** in supporting new members
- Create **cohort** for new members
- Populate the cohort with individuals who can **support one another**



# 90 Day Reality

- Each new Board member must **“make a difference”** within the first 90 days of their service
- If it doesn't matter whether I was there or not, it will be easier to not be there.

# Structures for Engagement

- **One-on-one check-ins** with Board leaders and/or Executive Director
- Annual **Board retreat** with reflection on Board accomplishments & challenges
- Individual **commitment forms**
- **Board development leader**

# Next Steps?

- **Discuss Board roles & goals**
- **Consider assessment**
- **Identify missing persons & perspectives**
- **Redesign structure for Board engagement**
- **Other steps ???**

# Resources

- **Board Source Board Self Assessment online tool**
- <http://www.boardsource.org/Assessments/home.asp>
- **Compass Point free Board self assessment**
- <http://www.compasspoint.org/board-cafe/self-assessment-board>

# Resources

- **Leadership Walla Walla**  
<https://www.wwcc.edu/about-wwcc/partnerships/leadership-walla-walla/>
- **Washington Society of CPAs posting of board service opportunities**  
<http://www.wscpa.org/Content/Careers/Volunteer.aspx>
- **Volunteer Match**
- <http://www.volunteermatch.org/search/index.jsp?l=Seattle%2C+WA%2C+United+States&k=board+service>