

10 BEST PRACTICES FOR GREAT BOARD PERFORMANCE

From Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards, Richard T. Ingram, 3rd edition, BoardSource, 2015.

1 SET THE MISSION AND PURPOSE AND ADVOCATE FOR THEM

The board is responsible for ensuring the mission is clearly stated and enthusiastically supported. A commitment to the mission should drive the board and management's priorities.

2 SELECT THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The board's ability to consistently recruit, support, and retain an effective leader is a key mark of its own effectiveness and a critical factor in its own success.

3 SUPPORT AND EVALUATE THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The chief executive's success is linked to the board's determination to do its part to sustain an effective relationship. Also, boards that know their responsibility contributes to job satisfaction by the Executive.

4 ENSURE EFFECTIVE PLANNING

Through the planning process, board and staff translate the mission into goals. These goals become the benchmarks for assessing the organization's progress over time.

5 MONITOR AND STRENGTHEN PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The board's fundamental purpose begins with ensuring that current and proposed programs and services align with the organization's mission and purpose.

6 ENSURE ADEQUATE RESOURCES

Goals and programs often require board involvement in finding new sources of funding, which may be contributed or earned. Drive decision-making first by what meets the mission, then seek resources to support.

7 PROTECT ASSETS AND PROVIDE FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT

Fiduciary responsibility includes a constellation of concepts. Working with the chief executive, it should review and approve how the organization budgets, spends money, establishes long and short-term cash needs, and establishes reserves.

8 BUILD A COMPETENT BOARD

The board is only as effective as its individual members. Members of boards will respond only to the level of expectation set out for them. A well-balanced board depends on the sustained diligence of the governance committee.

9 ENSURE LEGAL AND ETHICAL INTEGRITY

Monitoring the regulatory compliance of federal, state, local, and bylaws, is part of the board's fiduciary responsibility. Appropriately handling conflicts of interest and registers with the states in which it fundraises are part of the list.

10 ENHANCE THE ORGANIZATION'S PUBLIC STANDING

Board members are a link between the agency and its stakeholders, constituents, and clients. They should think of themselves as ambassadors and advocates. And, strategically work with management to tell the story and aspirations of the agency.