



2007 Annual Training Conference

**Policy Officials Learning Lab
Effective Board Leadership**

by

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Seven Essential Questions

- 1. Are you getting the results you want as a board?***
- 2. Is the board working efficiently?***
- 3. Is the board having difficulty resolving issues or developing policy?***
- 4. Does the board have difficulty reaching consensus on key issues?***

Seven Essential Questions

- 5. Do the same issues keep coming up meeting after meeting, year after year, without the board being able to come to closure?***
- 6. Does the membership believe (perceptions are equal to reality) that the board/organization is not meeting its needs?***
- 7. Do members feel they are contributing to the final decisions?***

Roles & Responsibilities of Volunteer Board Leaders

1. *Establish Policy*

- **Meet the needs of constituents you represent**
- **Address the needs of the public as well**
- **Set policies that guide your organization to run effectively, legally, and ethically**
- **Recognize policy decisions as those that effect the organization as a whole**
- **Establish the framework within which the staff executive can lead and manage.**

2. Establish a partnership with the chief staff executive.

- Set guidelines for authority, responsibility, and accountability of the chief staff executive and the board**
- Provide support**

3. *Nurture a vision*

- ***Have a shared vision, sense of mission, and plan***
- ***Take the long view; help put difficult decisions into perspective***

4. Provide direction through strategic planning

- Stay in touch with your membership and your professional environment.***
- Assess strategic implications of critical issues.***
- Identify opportunities and threats***

5. Assure the financial integrity of the organization.

- Tie financial policies to programmatic goals.***
- Maintain sound fiscal policy, practices, and controls***
- Assist in developing and approving the budget***
- Delegate implementation and administration.***
- Monitor financial outcomes and performance***
- Think long-term, big-picture; not only annual income/expenses***

6. Participate responsibly

- Commit the necessary time or step aside**
- Regularly remind yourself of your role as a leader/director**
- Keep politics in perspective.**
- Review agenda materials sufficiently prior to meetings**
- Do your homework**
- Keep the board working on board-level matters**

Participate responsibly

- **Employ committees and staff effectively**
- **Suggest potential board members and volunteer leaders**
- **Follow trends in the profession and other trends in business, public affairs, technology, society, and economics**
- **Take special assignments willingly and enthusiastically when asked**

Participate responsibly

- **Bring a sense of humor to the board's deliberations**
- **Be a goodwill ambassador for the organization**
- **Actively participate in membership recruitment and retention**
- **Support the organization's public advocacy**
- **Attend events and activities, including the annual conference and educational seminars**

Participate responsibly

- Express opinions consistent with your conscience and convictions, but support the majority decisions made by the board**
- Speak for the board or the organization only when authorized to do so**
- Maintain confidentiality of issues discussed in executive decision making sessions**

Participate responsibly

- **Serve the whole organization, rather than any special interest group or constituency**
- **Avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest**
- **Disclose any possible conflicts in a timely fashion**
- **Commit to continuous improvement**

7. Commit to board leadership as team leadership

- Know the goal**
- Know your role as a board member**
- Provide feedback**
- Respect and value diversity**
- Develop trust and fight fair**
- Pitch in to help**
- Know how to solve problems**
- Get results**

8. Evaluate performance at all levels

- Policy**
- Finance**
- Staff**
- Board**
- Organization**

A Good Board Practices Checklist

1. The Board of Directors meets at a regular time and date? Yes No
2. The board operates according to the constitution or by-laws under which the organization is incorporated? Yes No
3. All Board members have a copy of the by-laws or constitution under which the organization is incorporated? Yes No
4. The Board or its Executive Committee normally plans the Board's meeting agenda? Yes No
5. We normally make it through Board meeting agenda in the allotted time Yes No

A Good Board Practices Checklist

6. Minutes, committee and staff reports are distributed to directors at least a few days in advance of board meetings? Yes No
7. There is a written job description or statement of responsibilities for members of the Board? Yes No
(vi) Safety of staff, volunteers, and clients Yes No
8. There a policy manual containing all existing organizational policies Yes No
9. The Board receives regular financial reports and monitors the performance of the organization in relation to its budget? Yes No

A Good Board Practices Checklist

10. The Board has approved policies outlining its expectations in the following areas:
- Financial management practices Yes No
 - Personnel management practices Yes No
 - Conflict of interest Yes No
 - Fundraising practices Yes No
 - Quality of services to users, clients, consumers, or the public Yes No
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The Courage to Lead



- Robert A. Floyd, CAE, President of [Strategic Leadership Consultants](#), has 34 years of achievement in association and nonprofit management, public affairs, building strategic alliances and communications, strategic planning, effective governance, board leadership training, and organizational performance.

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