

Board Assessment Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to help non profit Boards assess their strengths and challenges, and identify their own unique Board development issues and opportunities.

Part I - Perceptions Of The Board's Work

1. How would you describe the contributions or accomplishments of the Board over the past year?

Focus on what the Board has accomplished, not what the organization overall has accomplished. Think about the decisions that the Board has made over the past year. Think about the specific tasks that the Board has undertaken.

2. What has the Board not been able to accomplish? Why?

Part II - Perceptions Of The Board's Style

In each of the following, select two numbers. The first should reflect how you perceive the Board to be operating now. The second should reflect how you believe the Board should be operating. DK stands for I do not know. Use the space in between to add comments if needed.

There are no right answers!

Example

We utilize our Board talents primarily for policy issues and strategic planning

Our Board members address primarily operational issues

<i>Now</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<u><i>3</i></u>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>DK</i>
<i>Should Be</i>	<u><i>1</i></u>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>DK</i>

This person sees the Board currently as balancing policy and strategic issues, with more operational issues. They believe that the Board should move to more attention to policy and strategic issues.

We utilize our Board talents primarily for policy issues and strategic planning

Our Board members address primarily operational issues

<i>Now</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>DK</i>
<i>Should Be</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>DK</i>

Our Board focuses its time more on the future than the present

Our Board focuses its time more on the present than the future

<i>Now</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>DK</i>
<i>Should Be</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>DK</i>

Our Board is not involved in operations

Our Board is quite involved in operations

<i>Now</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>DK</i>
<i>Should Be</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>DK</i>

Our Board always makes use of staff input for key decisions

Our Board seldom makes use of staff input for key decisions

Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK

Our Board makes decisions in a timely way

Our Board is slow to make decisions

Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK

Our Board tends to make a decision once

Our Board tends to revisit decisions

Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK

Our Board hires only the Director Executive Director

Our Board hires the Executive and other staff members

Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK

Our Board delegates key operational responsibilities to the Executive Director, and holds she/he accountable for the performance of the organization

Our Board shares in the responsibilities for day-to-day operations, and has a shared accountability with the Executive Director

Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK

Our Board assesses the Executive Director formally

Our Board assesses the Executive Director informally

Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK

Our Board supports staff professionalism, and does not direct staff

Our Board directs staff - staff are seen as "servants" of the Board

	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board allows and promotes management flexibility in decision-making							Managers must often wait for the Board to act before making decisions
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
The Board allows the Executive Director to be a risk taker							The Board tends to act to limit risk taking, or reserve risk decisions to itself
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board has clear and simple lines of communication among individual Board members, committees, and the Board							Our Board has complex communications structures and processes
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board relies more on ad hoc task forces than standing committees							Our Board relies more on standing committees than ad hoc task forces
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board trusts our staff							Our Board lacks trust in our staff
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board trusts Board members							Our Board lacks trust within itself
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK

	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
The Executive Director is the key public spokesperson for our organization							Our Board chairperson carries out most of the public duties
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board limits its fiscal role to approving the budget, and reviewing regular financial statements							Our Board is involved in many financial processes such as cheque signing and reviewing purchases
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board has a policy framework to guide staff and Board members							Our Board has few policies, and tends to make decisions on each separate issue
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board meetings focus on priority issues							Our Board meetings are often caught up in mundane operational issues
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board members are formally oriented							Board members are informally oriented
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board has a formal recruitment policy							Our Board members tend to be recruited informally
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK

	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board members are clear about what is needed from them							Our Board members are unclear about their roles and responsibilities
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Our Board members are clear about what is the work of the Board, and what is the work of staff							Our Board members are unclear about what is the work of the Board, and what is the work of staff
	Now	1	2	3	4	5	DK
	Should Be	1	2	3	4	5	DK

Part III - Perceptions Of Your Own Role As A Board Member

1. How would you describe your contributions to the Board over the past year?

2. Have you had opportunities to learn, meet new people, and make a difference?

3. Are your unique talents, skills, and knowledge made full use of by the Board?

Part IV - Perceptions Of The Future Work Of The Board

1. What are five most pressing challenges facing your organization?

Are these primarily the responsibility of the Board, of staff, or both?

(i) Board [] Staff [] Both []

(ii) Board [] Staff [] Both []

(iii) Board [] Staff [] Both []

(iv) Board [] Staff [] Both []

(v) Board [] Staff [] Both []

PART V - What Needs To Be Changed

What needs to be changed to ensure that the Board operates well, with passion, effectively and efficiently?

