

Kansas Health Foundation Learning Conference

Developing a Dynamic Board

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Agenda

- What is governance?
- What are the responsibilities of a nonprofit board?
- What are the basic steps to building an effective board?

What is governance?

“Good governance is a transparent decision-making process in which the leadership of a nonprofit organization, in an effective and accountable way, directs resources and exercises power on the basis of shared values.”

BoardSource

Why Do We Have a Board?

- To fulfill legal requirements
- Legal duties of nonprofit boards
 - Duty of Care
 - Duty of Loyalty
 - Duty of Obedience

What Are Key Responsibilities of a Nonprofit Board?

- Ensure clarity, validity and achievement of organizational mission
- Maintain organizational effectiveness through planning and evaluation
- Provide financial oversight and ensure adequate financial resources

**Key Board Responsibilities:
(continued)**

- Hire, support, and evaluate staff leadership
- Engage as an advocate and ambassador for your organization
- Sustain an effective board

**What are characteristics of
effective nonprofit board
members?**

Effective Board Members

- Are passionately committed to your mission
- Understand your organization's needs and issues
- Make decisions in the best interest of the organization

Effective Board Members

- Understand and participate in the fundraising process
- Focus on strategic issues
- Consistently fulfill board member expectations

How do you build an effective board?

Board Building Steps

- Clearly define board member responsibilities
 - Outline board member expectations in writing
 - Clarify board terms and term limits
 - Ensure your organization's bylaws are current

Board Building Steps

- Establish specific actions for recruiting, orienting and empowering board members
 - Develop a proactive board recruitment process
 - Conduct comprehensive board member orientation.
 - Provide ongoing board education and training

Board Building Steps

- Build board leadership
 - Create opportunities to develop board leadership
 - Plan leadership succession

Board Building Steps

- Create an effective board structure
 - Determine the “right” committees for your organization
 - Use non-board members on board committees or task forces

Board Building Steps

- Ensure effective board meetings
 - Engage in strategic discussions
 - Set annual board meeting calendar
 - Develop a standard agenda
 - Circulate board meeting materials in advance
 - Expect board members to prepare for meetings

- Ensure effective board meetings (continued)
 - Circulate brief, clear meeting minutes after meetings
 - Determine your right answers to the following questions:
 - How long should a board meeting be?
 - How often should a board meet?

Board Building Steps

- Have the board evaluate its work:
 - Conduct a brief self-assessment before adjourning your board meetings
 - Conduct periodic board self-assessments
 - Discuss self-assessment results and incorporate into board work plan

Board Building Steps

- Ensure that serving on your board is enjoyable and rewarding
 - Feed the passion for your mission
 - Engage board members in meaningful work
 - Schedule social time
 - Show appreciation to your board members

Questions and Session Wrap-Up
