

Understanding Boards

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Understand trends affecting boards and their management✓ Be able to assess organizational goals, vision and plans✓ Learn ways to structure board activity✓ Learn ways to assess board effectiveness
Advance preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Review the materials provided (about 1 hour)
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Computer and projector✓ CD with PowerPoint presentation
Time needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 45 minutes – 1 hour
Background	<p>Organizational boards of various types are an essential element of community life. They are a common means of developing and exerting leadership within the community. Like any socio-economic entity, boards are subject to change with changes in the environment within which they exist (Carver and Carver, 1997). Leaders and potential leaders, whether as board members or interested citizens, need to understand trends affecting board governance and activity.</p> <p>While societal trends may be interesting and essential to establishing context, an understanding of various aspects of board operations is critical to becoming an effective leader in a society and community where so many areas of endeavor are governed or influenced by boards of one type or another.</p> <p>Interest approach – There is no interest approach for this activity.</p>
Lesson	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Read the Sievredes and Hardwick quote (slide 2) .2. Review objectives (slide 3).3. Discuss the drivers of change (slide 4).4. Discuss generational trends and how they affect boards (slide 5).5. Discuss governance, operation and liability and how they affect boards (slide 6).6. Discuss finances and ethics and how they affect boards (slide 7).7. Discuss specialization and technology and how they affect boards (slide 8).8. Discuss board planning, emphasizing the importance of simplicity (slide 9).9. The Guidelines for Planning represent a straightforward, typical strategic planning sequence (slides 10-11).

10. Discuss board activity, size and tenure recommendations (slide 12). Compare /contrast these with participants' knowledge of specific boards. Does it work? Why/why not?
11. Discuss the importance of "governing more and managing less" (slides 13-14). The first items relate to planning, which has just been covered. Discuss the influence of the trends covered at the beginning of the lesson. Note that assessment will be covered next.
12. Discuss the importance of assessing a board's effectiveness (slides 15-18).

References

- BoardSource. 2002. *http://www.BoardSource.org*. Formerly National Center for Nonprofit Boards.
- Carver, John and Miriam Mayhew Carver. 1997. *Reinventing the Board*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Sieverdes, Christopher M. and Erin P. Hardwick. 2002. *Improving Board and Organizational Effectiveness*. Southern Rural Development Center. *http://srdc.msstate.edu/nonprofit/*