

# Director's Checklist:

## 1. Determine Mission and Purpose:

- Establish, review or modify, and reconnect with mission and purpose
  - Board members and staff should have a clear understanding of what this means
  - Are the mission and purpose aligned with the organization's programs and services?
- Establish a clear vision of what the organization wants to be
  - Is it compelling?
  - Is it clear and concise?
  - Easily defined metrics to track progress
- Does the organization tell stories that celebrate the benefits that their organization brings to the community?
  - Do directors tell stories during board meetings regarding the successes of the organization?
  - Does the organization publish these stories through press releases, blogs, or newsletters on a consistent basis?
  - Is the general public aware of the benefits that your organization brings to the community?

## 2. Select, support, and Assess Performance of CEO:

- Does the board currently have a policy in place that outlines the process for the selection of a new CEO due to a vacancy?
  - Does the board have a clear understanding of what distinctive leadership talents and capabilities are required from their CEO?
- Does the board have a clear and concise job description in place for the CEO?
  - Are there clear policies in place that give direction to the CEO?
  - Are there clear policies in place that outline how to monitor the CEO?
- Are there clear and understandable policies in place that outline how feedback is delivered to management?
- Is there a process in place to consistently assess the performance of the CEO?
  - Is the performance evaluation given at least once per year?
  - Is this process taken seriously by every director?
- Is there a clear process for regular communication between the board and the CEO regarding performance?

## 3. Engage in Strategic Planning:

- Does the board engage in the process of strategic planning?
  - Does the board undertake strategic planning, or at least review and update the organization's strategic plan yearly?
  - Do directors understand and back the organization's vision, competitive strategy, and execution plan?
- Does the organization have clear metrics that gauge the progress of the organizations strategy?
  - Does the board have a satisfactory process in place for the reporting of the organization's progress?
  - Is the reporting calendared for each board meeting?

## 4. Approve and Monitor the Organization's Programs and Services:

- Is there a strategic fit between the programs and services that the organization offers and the firm's mission and purpose?
  - Does the board clearly understand the relationship between our mission and purpose and the goals and objectives of our organization?
  - Can each director articulate the organization's core programs and services?
- Does our board have committees that monitor the organization's programs and services?
  - Are directors active on those committees?
  - Are there clear goals and objectives for committees with attainable time-lines?
  - Do committee chairs report back to the board on a consistent basis?

## 5. Ensure Effective fiscal Management:

- Do all directors have the knowledge and/or the experience to understand your organizations financial reports?
- Does the board ensure that the finance committee members are well versed regarding financial reporting and the finances of the organization?
- Does the board ensure that members understand the organization's risk appetite and its effect on operations?
- Is the board informed and accepting of risk management policies?
- Does the board ensure that the organization has clear financial goals and a strategy for attainment?
- Does the board ensure that management delivers accurate financial reports to the board on a monthly basis?

## 6. Ensure Adequate Financial Resources:

- Ensure that every director understands their role in securing funding for the organization.
  - Properly orient directors on the importance of their participation in securing resources.
  - Work with the governance committee to recruit directors with the ability to secure resources.

## **7. Enhance the Organization's Public Image:**

- Are directors actively engaged in promoting the organization in the community?
- Does the board discuss the positive effects that the organization has within the community on a regular basis?
- Does the board ensure that there are open lines of communication between the board and stakeholders?
- Is there a sense of team among board members
- Does being a board member of this organization instill a sense of pride?

## **8. Carefully Select and Orient New Board Members and Assess board Performance:**

- Does your organization have a governance committee?
  - Does the governance committee have a mandate from the board to recruit potential directors
    - Do potential directors fit strategically with other board members?
    - Are potential board members familiar with the organization and its vision?
    - Does the potential director have a proven track-record of working collaboratively in similar settings?
    - Will the candidate offer intellectual or experiential abilities to the organization?
  - Does the governance committee have a process for communicating with the appointing authority regarding performance of the board and the organization?
    - Are the goals of the board aligned with the goals of the appointing authority?
    - Does the appointing authority have a clear understanding of the needs and desires of your organization?
    - Does the appointing authority have the needed information from the board to properly orient candidates?
  - Does the committee work to increase the activities of the board regarding "best practices."
  - Does the committee work to develop the relationship between the board and the CEO?
- Ensure that there is a clear and consistent process for board assessment?
  - Institutionalize the process of board assessment?
- Develop a process that outlines the proper orientation of new board members.
  - Ensure that new board members are supplied with a mentor to help orient them to the organization and its environment?

## **9. Understand the Relationship Between Board and Staff:**

- Ensure that the CEO has a clear and well-defined duty statement
- Ensure that there are adequate policies in place that define the board's roles and responsibilities regarding operations.
- Work to ensure that board members are familiar with their roles and the roles of management.
- Ensure that the governance committee has a mandate to work with the CEO on the relationship between the board and the CEO.
- Work to improve the working relationship between staff and the board.

## **10. Legal Compliance and Ethics:**

- Ensure that there are clear policies in place that mandate any required testing, classes, and reporting requirements for the organization, the board, directors, and staff.
  - List any and all legal requirements along with any qualifications
  - Outline the ramifications or sanctions for non-compliance.
    - Include relevant dates.
- Ensure that there is a written policy in place for reporting and dealing with legal and ethical violations by board members.
  - Empower the governance committee to take action regarding possible violations.