



A SHORT COURSE IN BOARD 'TYPING'

In this article, we'll take a look at the various Configurations of nonprofit boards and how each has an important yet distinctive role to play in advancing the mission of the organization.

Board Nomenclature...

You have probably heard of the "3G" Board (Give, Get, or Get Off), the "3W" Board (Wealth, Wisdom & Work), the "3C" Board (Contacts, Clout & Commitment). But the one I think makes most sense is the "3T" Board -- Time, Treasures & Talent, i.e., people willing to give of their time, to share their own and / or obtain other financial resources and provide expertise and special abilities, in order to improve the state of being of your nonprofit organization.

Board Models...

There are, basically, three types of Boards most commonly seen in the nonprofit sector. Certainly your organization can have all three in place at the same time. Each is separate and distinct from the others and yet they all must work in tandem if they are to truly assist your organization in advancing its mission.

First there is the **Governing Board**. This is the most essential of the three boards; it is the entity that governs your organization. This Board typically deals with financial, policy and planning issues. It is sometimes referred to as the "working" board, one that is comprised of committees, which work on projects and issues. Remember this is the Board that funders want to know about. This is the Board that has fiduciary responsibility for your organization, i.e., they are responsible for its financial well-being.

The second board structure is that of **Advisory Board (or Council)**. This board is typically comprised of people who do not have the time to commit to a governing board but do have an interest in your nonprofit organization and have special connections and/or talents that they are willing to employ for the benefit of your nonprofit organization on an occasional basis. Often, these are people who you may really want to have on your Board but they cannot currently make the commitment. Others may be former Board members who still want to stay

connected. Occasionally, this Board can also serve as a retirement spot for difficult and / or disruptive board members who you want to “fire” in a more personable, gracious manner.

Last, but not least, is the **Honorary Board**. Typically this type of board is comprised of people who have name recognition in your community, are willing to lend their name to your cause but are unable or unwilling to do much else. These people may include corporate executives, business and education leaders, politicians, sports and entertainment celebrities and other community leaders.

Summing Up ...

So what type is your Board? And, if you had only one choice, which one would you prefer it to be? Would it be beneficial to your nonprofit organization if you were to create a non-governing Board? As you think about your answers to these questions, know that we have but scratched the surface of this rather complex topic of Board Development Issues.

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