Course Manual

Online Workshop on Board and Staff Relationships and Responsibilities

Ontario
Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

Community Literacy of Ontario

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our sincere thanks to you all!

Developed for print, March 1999

Summary of the Online Workshop on "Board – Staff Relations"

March 5, 1999

The staff of community literacy agencies in Ontario had expressed the need for more training in volunteer management. However, time, cost, and the availability of local training opportunities were major barriers to their accessing such training.

Community Literacy of Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs developed an innovative partnership designed to address this training need. CLO and OMAFRA created an online workshop on board / staff relations. The workshop was developed for the staff, directors, and volunteers of Community Literacy Agencies in Ontario.

Eight course modules were developed for this workshop. Workshop facilitators responded to questions and encouraged a lively online discussion. It was delivered over a two-month period from October 15 – December 15, 1998. A total of 75 people participated. The workshop was funded through the financial support of the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training and the National Literacy Secretariat.

Literacy practitioners found the online workshop material to be very useful to their agencies. Accordingly, we have prepared the course manual in written format. We hope that you find this course manual useful!

The course modules for the Online Workshop on Board – Staff Relations are:

- ❑ Module One   Introduction to Board / Staff Relationships and Roles
- ❑ Module Two   Legal Issues for Organizations
- ❑ Module Three   Who Does What in Your Organization?
- ❑ Module Four   Policy and Management in Non-Profit Organizations
- ❑ Module Five   Models of Board Governance
- ❑ Module Six   Deciding Where You Want to Be - Building a Shared Vision
- ❑ Module Seven   Pulling It Together and Pulling Together - Effective Communications
- ❑ Module Eight   Staff Reporting and Board Monitoring

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

Background Information

Module 3 - Who Does What in your Organization?

Workshop on Board and Staff Relationships and Responsibilities

Workshop on Board and Staff Relationships and Responsibilities

Module 7 - Pulling it Together and Pulling Together - Effective Communications

Module 8 - Staff Reporting, Board Monitoring

Introduction to the Online Workshop on Board and Staff Relationships and Responsibilities
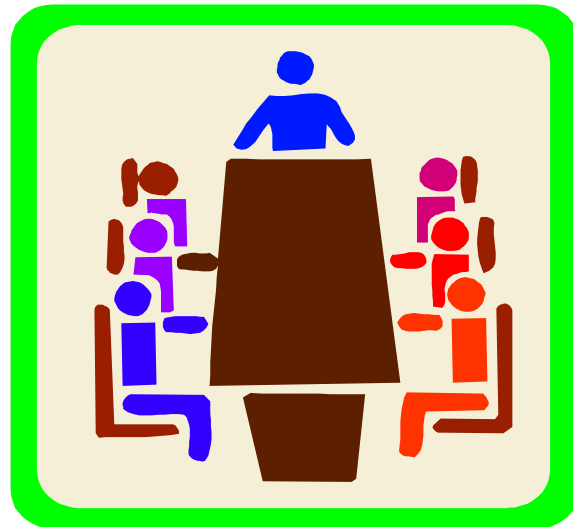
Workshop Introduction

Wondering what to do about a staff/board of directors problem? Not exactly sure who is responsible for what? Wanting tips on how to improve staff/board relationships? Please join us for an interactive electronic workshop on Board and Staff Responsibilities and Relationships. This program has been designed by ***Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs*** and ***Community Literacy of Ontario*** for staff, directors and volunteers of community based literacy agencies in Ontario.

You will learn about:

- Roles and Responsibilities of Directors of Non-Profit Organizations
- Policy versus Management
- Models of Board Governance and Board-Staff Relations

You will also have tools to:

- use with your Board to problem solve in the areas of Board and Staff Roles and Responsibilities

The workshop will be offered on AlphaCom as short, concise workshop postings two times per week over a four-week period from October 15 to November 27, 1998.

- We encourage your active participation through electronic discussion.

- Course facilitators from OMAFRA will respond to questions and invite discussions.

Watch for the Introductory posting on October 15 with tips on how to get the most out of the workshop. See you then!!

October 1998

Community Literacy of Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food are pleased to introduce this workshop on Staff and Board Relationships and Responsibilities. Thank you for joining one of the first online workshops in the voluntary sector community!

This workshop has been designed for the staff, directors and volunteers of community-based literacy agencies in Ontario. However, the workshop will be held on an open AlphaCom conference and we welcome ALL participants.

The workshop will run from Thursday, October 15 to Friday, November 27, 1998. Each week, one or two course modules will be posted. Course facilitators will respond to questions and invite discussion.

There are eight modules in total. We estimate that it should take about eight hours in total to complete ALL eight modules. Please feel free to post questions and comments related to the course modules. Your input will be very useful.

The workshop was made possible through the financial support of the National Literacy Secretariat, the Ministry of Education and Training, and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs. Thank you all.

Your OMAFRA workshop facilitators are:

❑ Stuart Budd, Organizational Leadership Specialist
519-826-3203

❑ Anne Joselin, Community Technology Specialist
519-826-4087 or 1-888-466-2372

❑ Susan Leuty, Rural Community Advisor
705-725-7288 or 1-800-461-9626

❑ Marilyn Bidgood, Rural Community Advisor
705-725-7288 or 1-800-461-9626

Your Community Literacy of Ontario workshop facilitator is:

❑ Joanne Kaattari, Executive Director
705-733-2312

The success of this course will depend to a large extent on active participation from you. Now that we have all introduced ourselves, please let us know who you are and what program and community you are from!

The course modules for the Online Workshop on Board – Staff Relations

Introductory Posting - Tips on how to get the most out of the workshop
❑   Thursday October 15, 1998

Module One - Introduction to Board / Staff Relationships and Roles
❑   Monday October 19, 1998

Module Two - Legal Issues for Organizations
❑   Thursday October 22, 1998

Module Three - Who Does What in Your Organization?
❑   Monday October 26, 1998

Module Four - Policy and Management in Non-Profit Organizations
❑   Monday November 2, 1998

Module Five - Models of Board Governance
❑   Thursday November 5, 1998

Module Six - Deciding Where You Want to Be - Building a Shared Vision
❑   Tuesday November 10, 1998

Module Seven - Pulling It Together and Pulling Together - Effective Communications
❑   Tuesday November 17, 1998

Module Eight - Staff Reporting and Board Monitoring
❑   Tuesday November 24, 1998

Evaluation and closing remarks
❑   Friday November 27, 1998

Workshop on Board and Staff Relationships and Responsibilities

Tips on How to Get the Most out of the Workshop

WORKSHOP TIPS:

1. We all will get the most out of this workshop if YOU participate. A lot of the value of this workshop will come from the discussion following from each module. Your contributions are important. Remember: You get out of it what you put into it.

2. This will be a new experience for most of us. Online workshops are relatively new. Let's be patient with each other!

3. Remember - this is an open conference! Please don't post any confidential or personal information about your organization or people that others should not read.

❑ If you think something is confidential, please disguise the identity of the person or organization and if you can't do this well enough, please don't post it.

4. Think about how you will find the time during your busy day for this course. Will you set aside some time each day to read course material and comments, or will you check in a few times (or once!) per week?

❑ It may be easier if you set aside some specific time each week for this course.

5. When will you add your comments and questions? If you don't add them right away, most people forget to add them at all!

6. Whether you are a staff person, board member, learner or volunteer with a literacy program, your feedback is important!

TECHNICAL TIPS:

We are assuming that almost everyone who is taking this workshop will be at least a little bit familiar with AlphaCom.

1. You may read the course material "online" or you may want to read course modules by "downloading" them and reading them "off-line".

2. You can write out your questions or responses "off-line" on your word processor. You can then highlight, copy and paste this information directly into this conference the next time your are "on-line".

3. If your message is short, you can just type your message in directly while reading "online".

4. Add your message to this conference by clicking on "new main message" or "respond to this message". You should keep the same subject for any comments on a previous "thread" or topic by clicking on "respond to this message".

5. If your comment is on a new or related topic please start a new "thread" by clicking on "new main message" and then enter a new subject in the "subject box".

6. Don't forget to type in a clear topic in the "subject box" of your message

7. If you have technical difficulties with this conference, please send an e-mail to the AlphaCom web master by sending a message to: webmaster@alphaplus.ca

❑ Or you can click on the e-mail address for the webmaster at the very bottom of your screen. Or, you can call AlphaCom at: 1-800-363-0007.

ETIQUETTE TIPS:

1. Keep your messages short and include only one subject per message.

2. Capital letters are difficult to read in electronic correspondence. Only use capital letters to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading. ALL CAPITAL LETTERS is also known as "shouting".

3. Be careful when using sarcasm and humour. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism. A "smiley" can be used to denote humour, good or bad feelings. eg. ;-) (winking) :-) (smiling) or :-((frowning). You can use your own variations as long as they are easily recognizable. eg. :-} :] or :^) (Pinocchio?)

4.   Standard abbreviations can help you type less.

    For example: FYI   = for your information
                      BTW = by the way
                      IMHO = in my humble opinion.=

5. Sometimes you should include part of the previous message to clarify your point. Do not include all of the message, just enough for others to understand the connection to the previous message. Start each line of the previous message with ">" (without the quotes) to indicate that this is the previous message, not yours.

Good luck!

MODULE 1
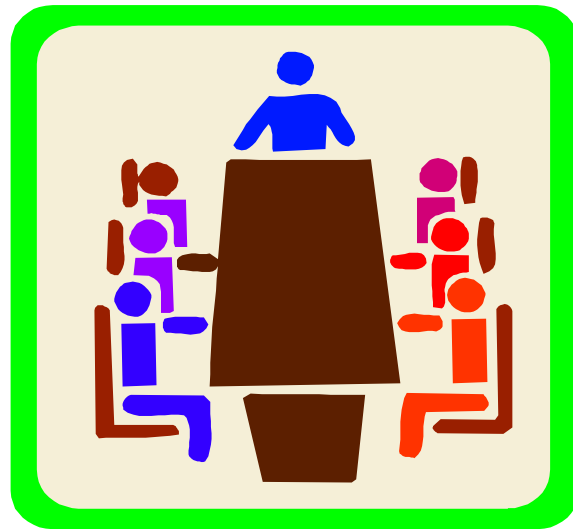
Board - Staff Relationships and Roles

Module 1 - 1

Board Staff Relationship and Roles

Why this Topic ?

" A few Board members are making all the decisions and acting without the whole Board's knowledge. The rest of the Board doesn't seem to mind but I can't help worrying that this isn't right!"

"Staff are always asking for our input but they never seem to carry out our ideas! Why do we bother? Things always stay the same around here!"

"Some Board members seem more concerned with how to set up the resource library or where we should place our display at the local fall fair than setting long term directions for our Board !"

"Staff keep wanting to involve Board members in fundraising ! I thought we joined this board in a governance role."

Any of these situations sound familiar? Unclear relationships and roles in non-profit organizations are one of the most common causes for internal conflict!

"Capacity building is a vital first step toward increased accountability and improved governance."

(Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Voluntary Sector, 1998)

Effective accountability and governance begins in local organizations with people like you - directors and staff of Community Literacy organizations! This course is intended to help you to build the capacity of your own organization by looking at relationships and roles.

Training in "Staff/board/volunteer relations" would support the volunteer management needs of your program according to **51 %** of community based literacy programs surveyed by CLO in the 1996 Volunteer Management Survey.

A quick look at discussions on the AlphaCom Community Literacy discussion group over the past 9 months shows a number of issues related to board staff relationships and roles. It seems that this topic is a timely one for community literacy agencies in Ontario!

Throughout the workshop you will be working on various aspects of problem solving within your organization. You can do this individually or with a small group. We all have internal processes we use to help us solve problems, resolve issues and make decisions. Problem solving builds a bridge between where you are and where you want to be. It is a process that can help you sort through simple to complex problems, issues and challenges for staff and board alike.

The steps are:

1. *Awareness*
2. *Identify the Problem*
3. *Identify contributing factors*
4. *Generate possible alternatives and select best solution*
5. *Implement Solution*
6. *Follow-up*

Modules in the workshop will take you through activities and exercises to help you gather information, clarify the situation and contributing factors and ensure you are considering all the pieces of the puzzle.

Continued in Module 1 - 2

Module 1 – 2

Why this Topic ?

Tools

Role Clarification Exercise

How do you know if your organization has problems with roles and relationships ?
Ask board directors and appropriate staff to complete the following grid and then
compare answers. Differences in the answers will indicate if Board and Staff have a
common understanding of roles in your organization.

I think the Board currently does the following activities:	I think the Board should do the following activities:	I think the Board shouldn't do the following activities:
I think Staff currently does the following activities:	I think Staff should do the following activities:	I think Staff shouldn't do the following activities:

*(Source: Effective Organizations : A Consultant's Resource, Skills Program for Management
Volunteers, 1992)*

A next step could include building consensus on what activities should be in each box
but remember to also spend time exploring areas of disagreement.

Resources

1. *"Helping Canadians Help Canadians: Improving Governance and Accountability in the Voluntary Sector"* the discussion paper of the Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Voluntary Sector, chaired by Ed Broadbent. Website : *http://www.pagvs.com/helping.html*

2. OMAFRA Factsheets

93-019   Managing Issues: A Guide For Leaders of Rural Organizations

94-071   Problem Solving

To access OMAFRA factsheets contact your nearest office listed in the **Blue pages** of your phone book or visit the OMAFRA website at:

www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/english/rural

Once you're on the website look in the Library section for OMAFRA Rural Development factsheets!

3. Simplex - A flight to creativity, Dr. Min Basadur, The Creative Education Foundation, Inc. 1994

Module 1 – 3

Discussion Questions

Please post your thoughts about the following questions on the Conference. It will be an opportunity for everyone to participate. Just like face to face workshops, we can all learn more by sharing our ideas and experiences within the group. The more that you contribute, the more you will get out of this workshop!

1. *Share one example of a problem that have you seen in a volunteer organization (or other organization) that stemmed from unclear roles and relationships.*

2. *How can you help staff and board members to recognize the effects of unclear roles and relationships within your organization?*

You are also welcome to post other questions related to this subject for the course facilitators. We will make every effort to answer them in a timely manner!

MODULE 2
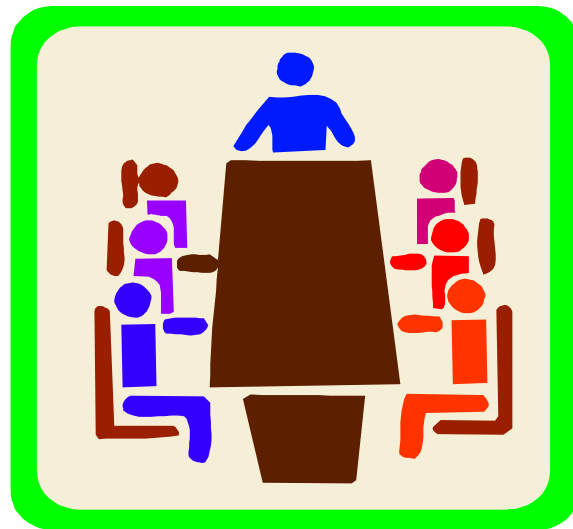
Legal Issues for Organizations

Module 2 – 1

Legal Issues for Organizations

What is the legal framework that your organization works within? Where can you turn for guidance about what your organization can and cannot do? What resources can help you understand the responsibilities of directors and staff?

There are three types of legal frameworks for volunteer organizations in Ontario.

1. Unincorporated Associations - have no legal status so they cannot enter into contracts or legal liabilities. Easy and inexpensive to set up. Directors and members are personally liable for actions and financial failures of the organization.

2. Non profit corporations - are incorporated organizations, directors have limited liability. The organization is recognized as a legal entity. Higher costs of formation and maintenance of the organization.

3. Charitable Organizations - similar to non-profit corporations but also have status as a charitable organization under Revenue Canada. Can issue income tax receipts to persons who make donations.

Governing Documents regarding responsibilities of directors and staff:

Directors and staff of organizations may look to several different documents when determining their responsibilities. These may include:

1. Government Legislation - Acts of Incorporation (Corporations Act for most organizations), Income Tax Act (for charities), other legislation which may be specific to certain organizations. Specific rules for the conduct of organizations are included in these Acts.

2. Articles of Incorporation or Letters Patent is a document created as part of the process of incorporation. It defines the legal name, the corporate address and the objects of the organization among other things.

3. Constitution and Bylaws of the Organization may list some of the same things found in the Letters Patent (name, objectives) but also outline a set of rules by which the members of the organization have agreed to conduct their business. The level of detail contained in the bylaws varies from organization to organization. Bylaws should be reviewed and updated regularly.

4. Policies and Procedures provide a more detailed guide for how the organization and the Board of Directors and staff will conduct day to day business. Policies and procedures should also be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Quote : "Democracy is a device that insures we shall be governed no better than we deserve." George Bernard Shaw

Module 2 – 2

Legal Issues for Organizations

Ethics Affecting Directors of Organizations

The guiding documents listed above spell out many responsibilities for directors. In addition to these responsibilities, directors of organizations and senior staff are bound to consider the following ethical principles. Failure to do so will increase the potential liability of directors in the eyes of the law.

- Fiduciary Duties - directors are expected to act in good faith, that is, to act in an impartial manner putting the interests of the organization before their personal interests. Directors are expected to reveal any conflicts of interest and to refrain from involvement in decision making when they are in a conflict of interest.

- Duties of Care and Skill - directors are expected to make prudent or reasonable decisions given the circumstances and the knowledge that they have. This duty takes into consideration the skills and knowledge that a director brings to the job. A lawyer or an accountant could be held to a higher standard of care than another director with less skill and/or experience.

- Law Abiding - directors are expected to be truthful and lawful in their actions on the board.

- Due Diligence - directors are expected to make themselves familiar with activities of the board by attending meetings; reading minutes, correspondence, other materials provided; and by making reasonable inquiries into the affairs of the corporation.

- Duty of Continuance - directors may be deemed to have responsibility even after resigning from a board if it is found that they had knowledge of potential liabilities and neglected to do anything about them.

Staff Responsibilities

While government legislation generally provides guidance to directors of organizations, there is less direction for staff. In general, staff look to the board for policies and procedures and job descriptions which outline their responsibilities. Board members may delegate some of their responsibilities to staff, however, ultimately the board member is accountable for ensuring the responsibility is fulfilled. It is not sufficient for directors to shirk their responsibilities by delegating to staff.

The ethical principles outlined above for directors will also apply to staff.

Continued in Module 2 - 3

Module 2 – 3

Legal Issues for Organizations

Tool : Do you know your legal obligations ?

To gather information and build your awareness, conduct the following quiz/scavenger hunt activity with board members and staff in your organization.

1. Is our organization a non-incorporated voluntary association, a charitable organization or a non-profit corporation?

2. What government legislation provides rules for our organization?

3. Where could you find copies of this legislation?

4. Where would you find a list of the objectives of our organization?

5. What is the name of the document that provides our organization with its legal status?

6. Where could you find a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws for our organization?

7. Who has the power to make changes to the Constitution and Bylaws?

8. Where could you find a copy of the Policies and Procedures for our organization?

9. Who is responsible for making sure that directors are aware of their responsibilities?

10. Who decides whether a director has a Conflict of Interest in our organization?

Resources

1. Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Voluntary Sector Website :
   http://www.pagvs.com/helping.html

2. OMAFRA Factsheet "Roles and Responsibilities of Organization Directors"

> To access OMAFRA factsheets contact your nearest office listed in the **Blue pages**
>
> of your phone book or visit the OMAFRA website at:
>
> *www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/english/rural*

   Once you're on the website look in the Library section for OMAFRA Rural
   Development factsheets !

3. The Law and Volunteers, A Guide, Satterfield and Gower, 1993, published by
   Johnstone Training and Consultation (This book is available from the Alpha
   Ontario lending library.)

Module 2 – 4

Legal Issues for Organizations

Discussion Questions

Please post any thoughts related to the following questions on the conference for other course participants to view.

1. Are there other legal responsibilities of Directors of non-profit corporations that you are aware of? What are they?

2. How does your organization ensure that your board is continually aware of the legal responsibilities of non-profit corporations?

You are also welcome to post other questions related to this subject for the course facilitators. We will make every effort to answer them in a timely manner!

MODULE 3
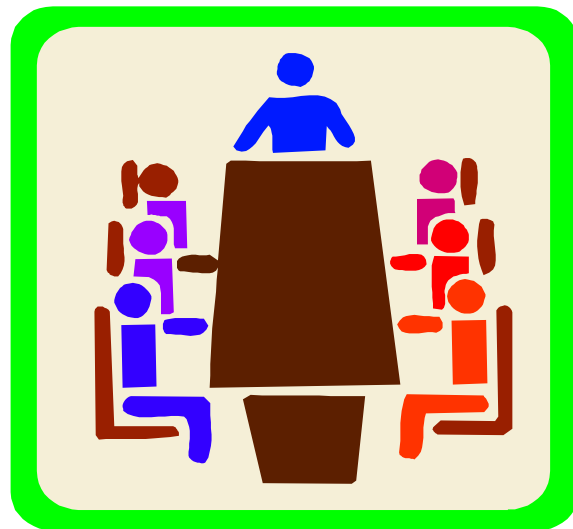
Who Does What in Your Organization?

Module 3 - 1

Board Staff Relationship and Roles

Who Does What in Your Organization?

A friend of mine was approached to sit on the Board of a local non-profit organization. She asked the recruiter for a copy of the job description for board members. The reply? *"That's simple! A board member's job description is to be responsible for everything."*

Many volunteer organizations start off on a small scale with a handful of committed individuals who very clearly see a community need and agree on some actions to address that need. It is easy to get everyone together and make decisions and everyone has involvement with all aspects of the organization. You "just do it!"

Over time, more people are attracted to the group, the number of activities increase and communication and decision making becomes more complex. Staff may be hired. The division between board directors and volunteers roles start to become more distinct. It becomes apparent that it is impossible for any one person to stay abreast of everything. The original, informal structure of the organization is no longer working very well. Questions about roles and responsibilities become more frequent.

This is a common scenario in organizations. Leaders in the early years may be involved because they enjoy the hands on activity and the ability to be involved in all the decisions. As the organization grows this becomes increasingly difficult and the time required for meetings can increase dramatically. Leaders need to take a different approach and spend more time on setting long-term directions rather than being involved in every program and administrative decision. The board needs to be more conscious of how they spend their time and focus on the discussions that provide the highest return for the organization.

Workshop on Board and Staff Relationships and Responsibilities

What are the activities that need to be carried out in your organization? For literacy organizations, the obvious answer is the education programs that help so many in your community. But, in order to sustain those activities, there is a large list of other functions that need to be carried out including:

- volunteer management
- long term planning and goal setting
- evaluation of programs
- financial management
- policy setting
- fundraising
- planning of meetings
- management of staff
- liaison with government and other organizations

…and the list goes on. Which of these activities are the priorities for the board and which ones should be delegated to staff and volunteers?

At the same time the organization needs to consider what resources it has. What human resources does the organization have? What are the specific talents and areas of expertise of those people? What knowledge do they have that best suits them to handle specific tasks? What are their interests and what activities motivate them? Are funds available to hire someone to do some of the work?

As a board and staff who are ultimately responsible for the overall operation of the organization, it is easy to feel the need to have a finger in every pie. Is this realistic in your organization?

Quote : "You got to be very careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there." Yogi Berra

Continued in Module 3 - 2

Module 3 – 2

Who Does What in Your Organization?

Tool: Organization Inventory

In any organization or business it is important to "take stock" on a regular basis. This inventory will focus on two areas: the assets of your organization; and the activities or functions of your organization. This information will be useful in later modules as you look at various Board models.

1. **Functions**: What are the things that your organization currently does and needs to do in the future in order to fulfill its mandate? Think beyond the "up front" programs that the public sees to include the "behind the scenes" activities that make those programs possible. Make the list as detailed as seems appropriate for your organization.   (Hint: In module 1 you completed a grid of board and staff activities. Revisit that list as a starting place for this activity.)

2. **Resources:** What are the resources that your organization has at its' disposal to carry out the functions that you have listed in Step 1. Include directors, staff and volunteers. What are the skills, knowledge, experience and networks that those people bring to the organization? What are the things that interest and motivate these people? Do you have the financial resources to allow you to hire other skills and knowledge that may be in short supply in your organization?

In most organizations, board members and senior staff should be able to complete the Functions part of the inventory. Step 2, Resources, may be more difficult to complete. It may be appropriate to ask your people directly about their expertise and interests. Be sure that you explain the reason for your questions so that staff or volunteers do not feel threatened by the request.

Resources

1. Volunteer Vancouver Resource Library - *"Working in Chaos - Ten Ideas for Organizational Development"* by Mark Holmgren. (from Fall '96 Voluntary Action News) Lots of other great articles as well!

   Website *http://www.vancouver.volunteer.ca/resources/download_articles.asp*

Continued in Module 3 - 3

Module 3 – 3

Who Does What in Your Organization ?

Discussion Questions

Please post any thoughts related to the following questions on the conference for other course participants to view. If you have other questions related to this subject, feel free to post these as well.

1. How has your board of directors and staff dealt with growth in the organization?

2. What methods does your organization use to discover the interests, skills, knowledge, experiences and networks of directors, staff and volunteers ?

Post any other questions that you have !

MODULE 4
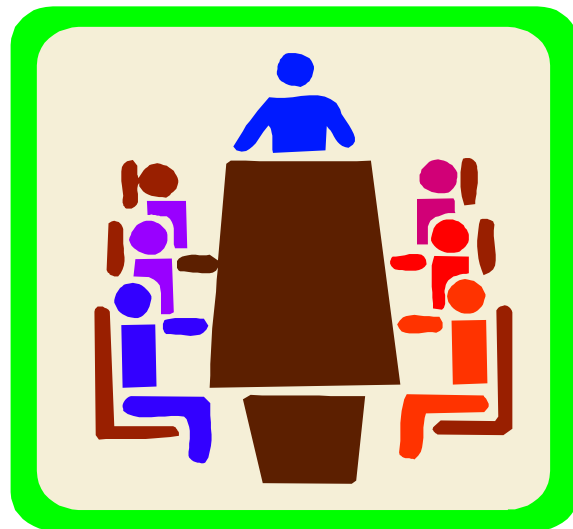
Policy and Management in Non-Profit Organizations

Module 4 - 1

Policy and Management in Non-Profit Organizations

There are three kinds of activity in organizations with governing boards:

1. The work to be done.

Operations - is doing it! The performance of a practical work or of something involving the practical application of principles or processes. It is the quality or state of being functional. It is carrying out the work to be done, the activities, services and programs of the organization.

2. The management of that work.

Management is ensuring adequate and appropriate human and financial resources for the organization to do the work. This is accomplished through ensuring the financial health of the organization and providing direction to the Executive Director. Successful management will be contingent on everyone understanding roles and responsibilities and what is required to get the job done.

3. The establishment of policy to guide 1. and 2.

Through the previous postings there has been discussion on who does what and the roles and responsibilities of board and staff. One thing is clear - boards have responsibility for making policy.

Policy is a definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions. A high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body. (Websters New Collegiate Dictionary)

Setting policy is establishing the rules of the game. Policies provide ways to achieve ends. This is a mandatory role for boards. Sometimes policy statements are followed by procedural instructions.

Some examples of policies and procedures:

Purchase Authority - The policy is: Expenses approved in the budget do not need to be re-approved by Finance or Executive committees at the time the purchase is made. (*Compliance with other Council policies is required)   (Jan 1997)

Meetings - The policies are:
All meetings shall be conducted in a smoke-free environment. (April, 1995)

"In-camera" or Closed Session meetings will be confined to matters concerning personnel issues including the assessment, rewarding, or disciplining of individuals, or to the discussion of relationships with other corporate bodies. (Dec. 1997)

A sample procedure for the "in-camera" meeting policy is:

Procedure - A procedural motion is required to move into a closed session. This motion can be debated before it is put to a vote. Note - this should be regarded as an unusual occurrence rather than a regular procedure.

If the matter concerns the disciplining of individuals or the removal of their rights in the organization, the persons concerned are entitled to attend and make a presentation but leave the meeting when the vote is taken. The result of the vote will be communicated to them immediately.

Clear policy statements, that are written down and dated, prevent wide interpretation and the potential for miscommunication. Module 7 will look more closely at communications.

All boards need clear inclusive policy, that is explicit, current, literal, centrally available, brief and encompassing.

Some of the areas where boards will find policies helpful include:

Staff Management:

a. ensure legal compliance with employment legislation, workplace safety regulations, and review its employment arrangements regularly to ensure they comply with good practice.

b. ensure staff are provided with job descriptions, orientation, management, training and performance appraisals

c. recruitment practices

d. structure and working relationship between the board and staff.

Volunteer Management:

a. give volunteers a clear statement of the tasks and activities, even developing job descriptions or volunteer agreements.

b. provide codes of ethical conduct

c. provide adequate orientation and training

d. publicly recognize the contributions of volunteers

e. screen volunteers

f. provide direction on how the paid or non-volunteers are to be integrated

g. establish explicit expectations about the claiming of expenses.

Clear, effective communication of policies and procedures is critical to success.

There are significant differences between the policy, management and operations functions. The division of labour, resources, etc. to these functions depends on the governance structure "chosen" roles of boards and their direction of staff. The next two modules will explore these topics.

Module 4 - 2

Activity/Tool

Draw a picture of a vehicle and place yourself, and other board members and other staff in the vehicle with you.

- ❑ What does it look like?
- ❑ Who is driving? Is there a navigator? Is there a map?
- ❑ Are you all going to the same place and in the same direction?
- ❑ Are you alone in the front seat or the back seat?

What does this picture tell you about your relationship with board and staff?

You could use this activity with your organization to initiate discussion around board/staff relations.

Resources and References:

1. Procedures for Meetings and Organizations, M.K. Kerr and H.W. King, Carswell Legal Publications, 1984
2. United Way of Canada - Board Basics Manual
3. Ontario 4-H Council Board Manual (April 1997)
4. OMAFRA Factsheets
   "Starting an Organization"
   "Roles and Responsibilities of Organization Directors"
   "Recruiting Volunteers"
   "Procedures for Meetings"

To access OMAFRA factsheets contact your nearest office listed in the **Blue pages**

of your phone book or visit the OMAFRA website at:

www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/english/rural

Once you're on the website look in the Library section for OMAFRA Rural Development factsheets !

Module 4-3

Discussion Questions

1. Give one example of a policy of your board.

2. How does policy develop and who develops it?
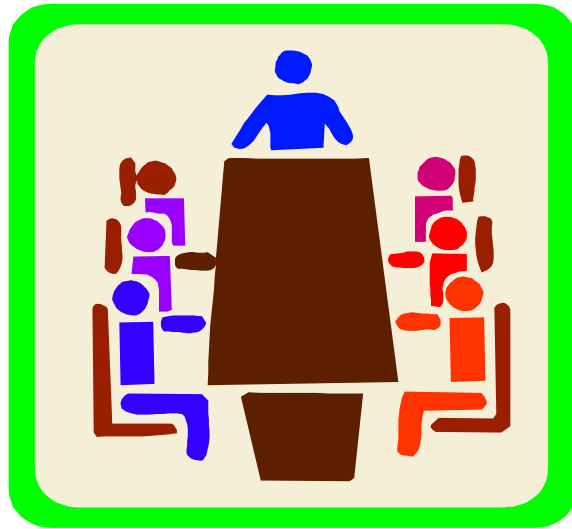
MODULE 5

Models of Board Governance

Module 5 - 1

Models of Board Governance

What is Governance?

Governance provides overall direction to an organization. It includes all of the activities (i.e. visioning, strategic planning, policy development, evaluation) that an organization uses to direct and manage its operations and programs.

Models of Board Governance

Here are five models that describe a variety of ways boards may choose to structure themselves. The models differ in:

❑   the actual work board members do themselves
❑   the way decisions are made
❑   the relationship between board members and staff.

They can be placed along a continuum, from the least amount of involvement of the board in day-to-day operations, to the most involvement. Many variations along the continuum are possible.

Policy Governance	Policy	Issues Oriented	Working	Collective
least board involvement				most board involvement

Workshop on Board and Staff Relationships and Responsibilities

Policy Governance Board

Emphasis in this model is on what John Carver sees as the main purpose of the board—policy development. The board sets and describes the limits of the Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) responsibilities. The CEO directs the staff. The staff does all the work. There is a very clear separation of roles between board, the CEO and the staff. The board acts as a whole and speaks with one voice. Board committees, if any, help the process of governance, not management. The board governs to achieve ends; the staff manage by working on means.

Examples: Haldimand-Norfolk R.E.A.C.H., Y.M.C.A.-Y.W.C.A. of London

Ideal conditions for implementing:
- experienced CEO has the trust of the board and is supported by competent staff
- the board is committed to the policy governance approach
- board members are conceptual thinkers who enjoy visioning and planning
- the organization is stable with no major crisis looming
- a large, complex organization with enough resources to hire an appropriate CEO

Policy Board

A traditional model, in which the board makes policy to direct staff. Staff are hired to implement the policy and do the work. The board has a chair or president, an executive committee and a limited number of working committees. The executive committee has the authority to do a lot of the board work between meetings. Committees report to the board and together with staff do the work. A partnership is developed between the board president and executive director to lead and manage the organization. There is a hierarchy in both board and staff.

Examples: hospital boards, Children's Aid Society, many for-profit corporations

Ideal conditions for implementing:
- the organization is large with a range of programs and services
- there is a skilled executive director
- board members have the skills and interest to set policy
- board members are willing and able to take a lead role in board committee functions

Module 5 - 2

Issues Oriented Board

Structure of the board reflects the organization's strategic priorities and may change yearly. Committees or task forces are formed to deal proactively with emerging issues. Therefore this type of governance means boards will shift on the continuum as situations change and evolve.

Board members and staff are partners in policy setting and implementation. Together they determine important issues and strategic directions, identify critical indicators of success, set and implement policy, carry out committee work. The best people for the job, regardless of protocol, are recruited for the task at hand.. There is open communication between stakeholders, board members, staff and industry experts. The board recruits team members, cultivates group norms and builds on the collective capabilities of its members.

Examples: Midwestern U.S. college, church seminary

Ideal conditions for implementing:
- board members and staff are team players who work collaboratively in a climate of trust
- the organization is change friendly
- board and staff have a combination of conceptual, management and operational skills
- the problem solving model is used to identify issues and take action
- flexibility and creativity are built in

Working or Administrative Board

In this model, board members assume all the functions of the organization—governance, management and operations. Board members often volunteer in the direct service delivery and administration of the organization. Work is done in committees. If there are resources to hire staff, the staff are often few in number, they may be part-time or they are paid an honorarium instead of a salary.

Examples: fair boards, service clubs, church groups

Ideal conditions for implementing:
- the organization is small in either membership or available resources
- board members have a combination of management and operational skills
- there is a strong board committee structure with clear lines of communication and terms of reference
- board members are able to volunteer a significant amount of time

Collective Board

A collective is a group of like-minded people working towards a specific goal. Individual members take responsibility for defining and supporting the philosophy of the organization. They are also committed to achieving the organization's goals and providing services. Consensus decision-making is a key characteristic. Board and staff members (if any) work together on governance, management and operations, often rotating various responsibilities.

Examples: women's shelters, artisan groups

Ideal conditions for implementing:
- the organization is small
- there is a high level of agreement about and commitment to the value of the organization
- team work is valued
- all individuals are willing to do their part to carry out the work of the organization
- there is a high commitment to one another as individuals

Module 5 - 3

Discussion Questions

1. Which model most closely describes your board? Where does your organization fit along the continuum? Be sure to refer back to your Organization's Inventory, completed in Module#3, as well as the information about the various models. Can't decide where you fit? Surveys like the Structural Assessment from United Way Board Basics Manual, may help you out.

2. What are the benefits of the model you chose? What works well?

Resources

1. Policy Governance Boards: Carver, John "Boards That Make a Difference" *http://carvergovernance.com* Available from the Alpha Ontario Lending Library

2. Policy Boards: Houle, Cyril O. "Governing Boards" Available from the Alpha Ontario Lending Library

3. Leading Edge Boards: Taylor, Barbara, Holland, Thomas and Chait, Richard "Improving the Performance of Governing Boards"

4. Working Administrative Boards: Paquet, Marion "A Handbook for Cultural Trustees"

5. Collectives: Bopp, Judy and Michael, Brown, Lee and Lure, Phillip "The Sacred Tree" Available from the Alpha Ontario Lending Library

6. United Way of Canada "Board Basics Manual"

7. The Canadian Centre for Philanthropy "Development and Direction for Board of Directors"

8. Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Voluntary Sector "Helping Canadians Help Canadians: Improving Governance and Accountability in the Voluntary Sector"   *http://www.pagvs.com/helping.html*
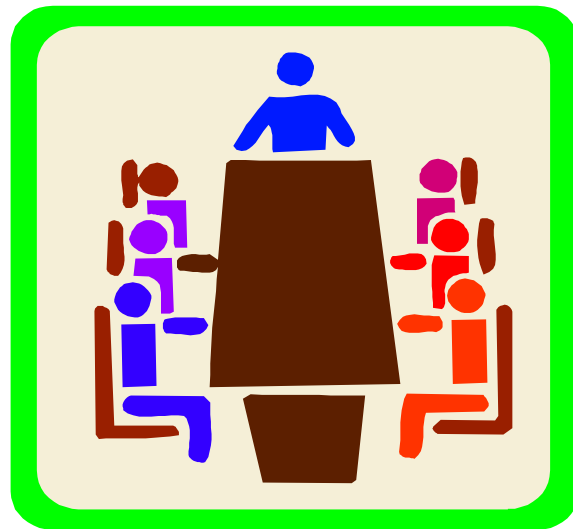
MODULE 6

Deciding Where You Want to Be - Building A Shared Vision

Module 6 - 1

Deciding Where You Want to Be-Building A Shared Vision

Any Way Will Fit

"Staff keep wanting to involve Board members in fundraising! I thought we joined this board in a governance role."

The board of any organization needs to make a deliberate decision concerning how they will govern. Most difficulties arise because of a lack of clarity about how a group is operating.

Considering the types of models, ask yourself:

- Which decisions does the board want to make and which ones do they want to delegate?

    "Staff work plans are already full, but Board members keep asking us to work on their 'important' projects!"

- How much involvement does the board want to have in the operations of the organization?

    "Some Board members seem more concerned with how to set up the resource library or where we should place our display at the local fall fair than setting long term directions for our Board!"

- Then, considering the people skills available, the dynamics and processes of your organization: How will the reporting relationship between the board and staff be defined?

    "Our organization has just been set up. We are having our first formal meeting and we are unclear about the role of the board and staff at our meetings. Whose responsibility is it to report on the organization's activities at our meetings?"

"….there is no one best way….any model chosen needs to fit with the characteristics of the organization's environment, history, culture and the background and personalities of key board and staff members." *(Vic Murray, former director Voluntary Sector Management Program York University, from United Way Board Basics Manual)*

Keep in mind the reason your organization exists. What structure will best serve your needs? What are the legal and ethical requirements for your board? There are some really gray areas between what is governance and what is administration. Sometimes it's better to develop a whole new model, rather than trying to fit a square peg into a round hole!

The bottom line is that all responsibilities need to be covered, all roles need to be played, and everyone involved needs to understand and be able to function within those roles and responsibilities.

Activity

Determine where you would like your organization to be on the continuum of board governance models. Draw a new vehicle to reflect this future. Refer to the information on board models in Module #5. Refer also to the discussion on policy and management from Module #4, as well as the information presented here.

Continued in Module 6 - 2

Module 6 - 2

The First Step in Getting to Where You Want to Be - Building a Shared Vision

<u>Case Study</u>

The ABC Literacy Group holds an annual fund raiser, making enough money to cover all their expenses for a year. John, a recent recruit to the Board, has been the chair for 2 years. Under his guidance everything runs like clockwork. Every Board member and every staff has a job to do. The organization completed a survey of their community and found they are only reaching 10% of their potential clients. Sally, the Executive Director, is excited about trying out some new promotional ideas. The President has already put her on the agenda for next year's strategy meeting.

Imagine yourself to be a Board or staff member of the ABC Literacy Group. Post your answers to questions #1 and #2, using the case study example.

1. Take stock

❑   What are we doing well? What are our strengths? How are we unique?

2. Ask why

❑   What is causing us to do well? What are people doing best?
    What's contributing to our successes?

You'll have to use your imagination for questions #3, #4 and #5.

3. *Dream the ultimate*

❑ Describe the ultimate objective of the organization. What do you want others to say about our organization?

❑ What would it be like around here? What would you be doing that you would be excited about? What's important for you?

4. *Describe the benefits of achieving the ultimate objective*

❑ How would the organization benefit? What would it do for the team? What would it do for you personally?

5. *List the achievements*

❑ What does our organization need to do differently/ do more of/do better to achieve the vision? What could the board president and coordinator/executive director do? What will you do?

Now that you have the idea for how "Building a Shared Vision" works, you may want to have board directors and appropriate staff do the exercise. It's one way to start the process of team building. It also gets people talking about what they have in common, and where they disagree—both important areas for discussion if you want to work together!

Other Important Considerations

- Be a change friendly organization. You have to spend time and energy to help make change happen. To get others into the change, tell stories about how people are making a difference. Start somewhere to do something, don't just talk about it. Work together as a team.
  Einstein "We can't solve a problem by using the same thinking that caused it."

- Share the desire to create your group's vision. Sometimes tension is created because of a difference between the vision and the current reality. "Tension too much in favour of the organization means the individual gives up personal life. Tension too much in favour of the individual means the individual might undermine the organization*." (Peter Senge, The 5*th *Discipline)* Try to achieve the right balance of tension between the individual and the organization so that the group's energy is focused on achieving the vision, not undermining it.

- Communicate effectively and constantly—with board members, staff members, recipients of the organization's services, stakeholders, partners, experts.

- Find out what matters, then act on it. It works best if board and staff together can identify the critical issues. Look both inside the organization and to other stakeholders and industry experts. No one person or group will have all the information the Board needs to make effective decisions.

- Organize around your group's priorities. Let substance dictate structure to enable you to work on the really important issues.

Module 6 - 3

Discussion Questions

Please post any thoughts related to the following questions on the conference for other course participants to view and respond to.

1. From the activity you completed in this module, tell us where you would like your board to be on the continuum of board governance models.

2. What are some benefits to your board for following this new model?

Resources and References

1. Senge, Peter "The 5th Discipline'

2. presentation by Peter O'Donnell for Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse

MODULE 7
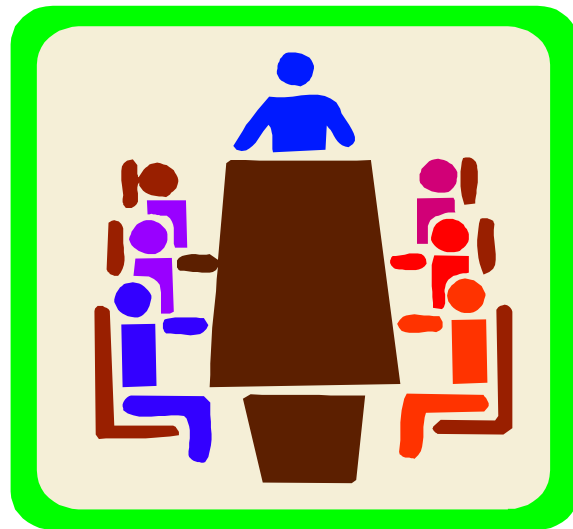
Pulling It Together and Pulling Together - Effective Communications

Module 7-1

Pulling It Together and Pulling Together - Effective Communications

The foundation blocks for positive, productive staff/board relations are

- Respect   **Earned**
- Trust

- Effective Communications   **Learned**
- Clear Understanding

- Same mission and shared goals   **Developed and Adopted**
- Evaluation based on clearly understood and
  agreed on expectations

These fundamental characteristics are earned, learned, and developed and adopted.
As a board and/or staff member you can impact and improve upon these cornerstones
to create a strong foundation and a dynamite organization.

Let's explore the "learned" building blocks, because you can immediately act on
these and see results.

Effective Communications and Clear Understanding

How many times have you heard/read/seen this one before: **Effective communications is key, critical, the most fundamental thing in happy, healthy, productive, human relations.** And board/staff relationships are human relationships. So if we all know this, what is the problem? The problem is "walking the talk" - "doing by doing" - acting on what we already know, and working at improving our skills.

"Any person, at any time in their life, can increase their skill in saying what they mean." (Royal Bank Newsletter on Communications) Communicating clearly is a "learned" skill. Some people seem to be naturally better at it than others, however we can all improve our skills and become effective communicators.

Staff and board relationships evolve around the communication of ideas and the ability to express clearly and concisely.

Have you ever travelled to a place where you did not speak the language of others around you? This does not necessarily mean a foreign country - it could be as close as your doctor's office, or your insurance policy! We think of words and speaking as the main vehicle for communication, however, much of the message and intent of the message can be sent and received through non-verbal communication. Being aware of both the verbal and non-verbal messages we are sending and receiving will help improve our communication skills.

And for effective communication, listening is our primary communication activity.

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen" - Sir Winston Churchill

Activity /Tool

❑ Think of, reflect about the patterns of communication with your board and between board and staff.

❑ List and identify examples of communication patterns that are positive and productive.

❑ List examples of board and board/staff communication patterns that could be improved.

❑ For each of the problems, identify whether it is not enough communication, unclear communication, poor listening skills, conflicts with others, or any other barriers (for example - lack of respect for other opinions, the way the meeting room is set up, inappropriate jokes, use of offensive language).

❑ Pick 2 of the barriers you have listed and identify what you intend to change to improve the communications.

❑ What actions can you take to help remove these barriers?

Module 7 - 2

Discussion Questions:

Saying what we mean…Answer these questions (and I will feedback the range in responses with some comment).

1. How old (in number of years) would a middle-aged person be?

2. What height would a woman have to be to be considered tall?

3. What do you consider a decent salary?

4. If your spouse/partner said he/she would be ready "in just a few minutes", how many minutes would you feel you would have to wait?

5. What is a good education?

6. What is one method that your organization uses to promote clear understanding and communication?

It is essential to use clear, explicit language (especially when developing policy and procedure) and to check for understanding with your clients, staff and board members.

Module 7-3

For the fun of it….

The following explanations for various automobile accidents were selected from insurance claim forms.   They illustrate the use of words and phrases that can cause misunderstanding - and humour!

1. Coming home, I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I don't have.

2. The guy was all over the road. I had to swerve a number of times before I hit him.

3. The gentleman behind me struck me on the backside. He then went to rest in the bush with just his rear end showing.

4. I was sure the old fellow would never make it to the other side of the road when I struck him.

5. I had been driving my car for 40 years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident.

6. I pulled away from the side of the road, glanced at my mother-in-law in the other seat and headed over the embankment.

Resources and References:
1. Resource Binder - Applied Problem Solving and Counselling Skills Workshop, OMAFRA.
2. The Royal Bank of Canada Monthly Letter, Vol 58, No.5 "On Saying What You Mean"
3. OMAFRA Factsheets
   "Clear Writing: What is it? How do you do it?"
   "Communications Planning for Organizations"
   "Coping With Problem Behaviour"
   "So You've Been Asked to Speak"

   Visit the OMAFRA website at *www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/english/rural.*

MODULE 8
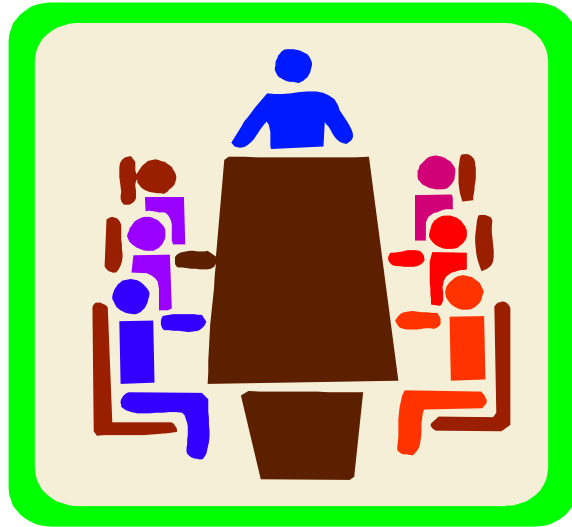
Staff Reporting,
Board Monitoring

Module 8-1

Staff Reporting, Board Monitoring

Implementation, monitoring and reporting are operational responsibilities of the board. These functions deal with accountability - the board and staff being accountable for the work that is to be done.

Implementation - the role of the board is to oversee the follow through of plans and work assignments, according to an agreed upon plan of action

Reporting - the method of communication that the board and staff decide on being the most effective way of informing board/staff on work progress.

Monitoring - keeping track of what is happening, when it is happening, and by who. Reporting is one way of monitoring but should not be the only method that the board uses.   Think of ways your board monitors its' activities. The board also has a role in providing problem solving support as appropriate.

For reporting and monitoring:

- Discuss expectations

- Check for understanding

- Handle concerns

- Gain commitment

The effectiveness of implementation, monitoring and reporting, hinges on giving and getting feedback. Effective feedback is contingent on strong two-way communication skills. The following tips will help make feedback positive and useful:

- Establish planned checkpoints (when and where, and who will be involved in providing feedback)

- Focus on key, agreed upon indicators

- Make adjustments as required

- Renew commitment to the workplan

Feedback through implementation, reporting and monitoring results in boards and staff making choices on processes, activities and allocation of resources.

Continued in Module 8 - 2

Module 8-2

MAKING CHOICES

Individuals and boards are faced with making daily choices. Some are **BIG "C"** choices (the big ticket decisions) and some are *little "c"* choices (some of those day to day decisions). And in making choices, we basically answer 4 questions to our own satisfaction….

- What do I (or my organization) have to gain? (the rewards)
- What do I (or my organization) have to lose? (the penalties)
- Is it the right thing to do? (positive values)
- Is it the wrong thing to do? (negative values)

In making choices, we must look into the future and estimate the rewards and penalties (the consequences) that will result from that choice. We also look into the past and weigh the choices against the values we learned from parents, family, school, church, community, organizational history, and other sources of moral influence.

However, all this takes place in the present and it is a matter of how we *perceive* the rewards, penalties and values at the time we make the choice. Therefore choices are made in a context comprised of consequence and moral judgment. For organizations, this context is shaped by the individuals who currently guide and work with an organization as well as those who have collectively influenced the organizations history.

Action flows from perception. Knowing the values of your organization, and considering the consequences of choice will help board and staff alike make positive and productive decisions with respect to staff/board relationships.

References and Resources:
1. United Way Board Basics Manual
2. Role of Boards, notes, 1997, Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse
3. The Power of Persuasion by G.R. Funkhouser, 1986

Module 8-3

Conclusion/Wrap up Comments

Well, we are almost done! Through participating in this workshop you have taken a closer look at board and staff roles and relationships.

Completing inventories of your own organization has increased your awareness of problems and perceptions about roles and responsibilities. You explored different legal frameworks, legal issues, and legislation and references that may be useful to your operation.   Thinking about your organization's functions and resources laid the foundation for exploring policy and procedures. Effective stewardship begins with a commitment by an organization's board to govern appropriately.

Modules 5 and 6 looked at different governance models and provided a blue-print for building a shared vision. Effective communications and clear understanding are the building blocks for all the rest. You had opportunity to evaluate communication patterns in your organization and make plans to overcome barriers. Implementation, reporting and monitoring are the actions that make boards and staff accountable. Board and staff performance can be supported by feedback and problem solving.

The focus of the workshop has been on building your skills and knowledge. The information, activities and resources are meant to encourage staff and board to work together for the best interests of the organization.

Now, the time has come for you to take action.

Module 8 - 4

Discussion questions

1. As a result of taking this course, what are you going to do

❑ Tomorrow?

❑ Next month?

❑ Next year?

Thank you for participating!

**A full evaluation of the workshop content and delivery is to follow.
Please take time to fill it out!**

Summary

This workshop, the information, tools and resources have been designed for staff, directors, and volunteers of community based literacy agencies. Through participating in the Staff and Board Relationships and Responsibilities workshop, you have had an opportunity to consider who does what and identify problems and solutions within your organization. A review and discussion of legal obligations and implications, policy and procedures has made you more aware of guiding and operating principles. Through examining various governance models and building a shared vision for your organization you have been able to consider and develop the ideal governance structure. Rediscovering the importance of effective communications, and thoughts about accountability through staff reporting and board monitoring will help strengthen working relationships and accountability.   Several valuable resources and tools have been developed for your use.

All of these workshop components will help you move forward on Staff and Board Relationships and Responsibilities.

Now the challenge - making use of the information and turning good intention into action. We wish you the best as you strive to make your organization the best it can be!

Evaluation of the Online Workshop on Board / Staff Relations

Thank you for participating in our workshop. There were a variety of ways you could gain information from the course. The modules were designed with information to read, activities to do, questions to answer, resources and references. There was an opportunity to read answers and comments from other participants, and asks direct questions of the facilitators. By completing this evaluation you can help us assess what was most valuable and how we could improve future course content and delivery.

1. What parts of the workshop were most useful to you.

    a) Contents of the modules

    ☐ very useful   ☐ somewhat useful   ☐ not useful

    b) Completing the activities

    ☐ very useful   ☐ somewhat useful   ☐ not useful

    c) Answering discussion questions

    ☐ very useful   ☐ somewhat useful   ☐ not useful

    d) Viewing discussion and answers from other participants

    ☐ very useful   ☐ somewhat useful   ☐ not useful

    e) References and Resources

    ☐ very useful   ☐ somewhat useful   ☐ not useful

    f) Input by workshop facilitators

    ☐ very useful   ☐ somewhat useful   ☐ not useful

2. With respect to content, was there (check one)

    ☐ too much   ☐ too little   ☐ just the right amount

3. The workshop was six weeks. Was this (check one)

    ☐ too long   ☐ too short   ☐ just right

4. The workshop was offered by posting one or two modules per week. Was this

    ☐ too frequent   ☐ not frequent enough   ☐ just right

5. Were each of the modules

    ☐ too long   ☐ too short   ☐ just right

6. In terms of assisting you with the workshop material, activities and responding to questions, the input provided by the workshop facilitators was

[ ] very useful   [ ] somewhat useful   [ ] not useful

7. Were you comfortable about participating in the workshop discussions?

[ ] Yes   [ ] No

Why or Why Not??

_____

_____

8. What did you like best about the workshop?

_____

_____

9. What would you change to make the workshop more useful to you?

_____

_____

10. Would you like to like to take another online workshop?

[ ] Yes   [ ] No

11. Did you have any technical problems?

[ ] Yes   [ ] No

Comments:

_____

_____

12. Approximately how much time did it take to complete the workshop including the activities and discussion questions?

[ ] 1-4 hours   [ ] 4-8 hours   [ ] 8-12 hours   [ ] Other

If you chose OTHER please specify: _____

Please add any other comments or suggestions:

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE WORKSHOP