

WIND BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL – 2023 **(BASED ON MCKINSEY & COMPANY NONPROFIT BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL)**

OVERVIEW

The Nonprofit Board Self-Assessment Tool is designed to help nonprofit organizations assess their board's performance and identify priorities for board activities going forward.

Respondents should use their best judgment to rate their board in the spirit if not in the letter of the performance description. The scores are meant to provide a general indication – a “temperature” taking – of a board’s performance, in order to identify potential areas for improvement.

Please make generous use of the comments section to expand on or explain your ratings. Summaries of anonymous comments are typically as helpful as the ratings themselves in surfacing issues.

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSORS

The Nonprofit Board Assessment Tool has three sections:

1. Performance of the board on its core responsibilities
2. Quality of enablers in place to support board effectiveness
3. Performance of board committees

In each section, a description of distinctive performance has been given for each responsibility and enabler. Please rate how well your board (or board committee) is performing on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good and 4 = distinctive). An organization’s performance does not need to match the distinctive description precisely in order to be distinctive. Rather, the description is given as an indication of the general level of performance to help calibrate your rating. Please use the comments section to expand on any aspect of performance you wish. If you simply have no knowledge, write “D/K.”

Please return your completed tool to the administrator, the Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee, who will collate the results and compile an anonymous summary of comments for board discussion.

Approximate time needed for completion: 20 - 40 minutes

AREAS COVERED BY THE ASSESSMENT'S 3 SECTIONS

SECTION 1: PERFORMANCE OF BOARD ON ITS CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Shape mission and strategic direction

- Clarify mission and vision
- Participate in and approve strategic and policy decisions

B. Ensure leadership and resources

- Ensure adequate financial resources
- Build reputation
- Provide expertise and access for organizational needs

C. Monitor and improve performance

- Oversee financial and risk management
- Improve board performance
- Monitor organizational performance

SECTION 2: ENABLERS OF BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

- Composition
- Size and Structure
- Leadership
- Processes

SECTION 3: PERFORMANCE OF BOARD COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: PERFORMANCE OF BOARD ON ITS CORE RESPONSIBILITIES – A. *Shape Mission and Strategic Direction*

Shape the Mission and Vision	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Common understanding of mission	All board members share a common understanding of the mission that has been stress tested through discussion		
Common understanding of vision (i.e., what the organization aspires to become in 5 years)	All board members share common understanding of where organization wants to be in 5-10 years; vision is well documented with concrete goals		
Use of mission and vision in policy/strategy decisions	All major policy/strategy discussions include explicit consideration of fit with mission and vision		
Process for raising mission and vision issues	Formalized process (e.g., board retreats) to foster active board member participation in examining mission-related issues		
Engage in Strategic Planning and Policy Decisions	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Process for strategic planning and quality of board participation	Formal process for board involvement that specifies broad framework (timing and content) for strategic planning; joint board and management ownership of strategic plan with some board members heavily involved; active discussion by the entire board supported by needed facts/materials before final approval		
Quality of strategic plan	Robust plan covers all key strategic elements; agreed upon program outcomes are tightly linked to mission and vision and results inform subsequent decisions; clear plan for closing resource gaps if any		
Agreement on the distinction between board level and management-level decisions	Board and staff have a shared understanding of relative roles (written or explicitly discussed); all parties feel their views are heard in the process; frequent interaction between President, CEO and Board Chair ensure “no surprises” environment		

SECTION 1: PERFORMANCE OF BOARD ON ITS CORE RESPONSIBILITIES – B. Ensure Leadership and Resources

Ensure Adequate Financial Resources	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Financial needs assessment	Board works with management as a part of strategic planning process, Board develops a multi-year view of funding requirements and trade-offs embedded in different resource levels; board feels strong ownership for the targets		
Individual donations to the organization	All board members financially support organization, which is a priority for each board member’s charitable giving; board consistently meets/sometimes exceeds “donation” goals		
Involvement in fundraising planning and execution	Board and management develop clear plan to meet fund-raising targets; board drives fund-raising activities		
Build Reputation	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Board <i>understanding</i> of reputation objectives and of the role the board can play in building/enhancing reputation	Needs for reputation building based on strategic view of organizational objectives; needs identified in detail to allow meaningful roles to be identified for individual directors		
Board <i>effectiveness</i> in enhancing reputation of organization in the relevant communities	Board members proactively reach out in community to build awareness and excitement about the organization; board members seen to be very effective ambassadors for organization		

SECTION 1: PERFORMANCE OF BOARD ON ITS CORE RESPONSIBILITIES – B. Ensure Leadership and Resources Cont.

Provide Expertise and Access for Organizational Needs	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Board <i>understanding</i> of needed access and influence to support organizational objectives (e.g., legislative access, community access)	Needs for access and influence based on strategic view of organizational objectives; needs identified in detail to allow meaningful roles to be identified for individual directors		
Effectiveness of board to provide access and influence needed	Board proactively reaches out to further organizational goals and is frequently very influential in achieving them		
Board understanding of needed expertise to support organizational objectives, e.g. financial, strategic, subject matter expertise	Needs for expertise based on strategic view of organizational objectives; needs identified in detail to allow meaningful roles to be identified for individual directors		
Ability of board to provide expertise	Board expertise addresses most needs and is seen as source of distinctive value to organization		

SECTION 1: PERFORMANCE OF BOARD ON ITS CORE RESPONSIBILITIES – C. *Oversee Financial and Risk Management*

Oversee Financial Performance, Ensure Risk Management	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Board role in financial planning	Board's active involvement in preparing/reviewing multi-year financial plan results in robust discussion of resource allocation, funding plans, and investment objectives in context of strategic goals		
Ongoing monitoring of financial and investment performance	Board monitors financial statements regularly; key performance indicators routinely reported to whole board		
Fiduciary and other regulatory compliance	Board ensures timely, independent audit of results processes; board understands compliance required to regulatory bodies		
Improve Board Performance	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Goal setting for the board as a follow-on to strategic planning	Board translates the strategic plan for the organization into a set of concrete goals for the board and board committees, including timelines and required staff support		
Evaluation of board performance against goals	Board evaluates its performance against the goals and uses the lessons learned to develop plans to improve board effectiveness		
Developing a plan for improving board performance over time	Formal process (e.g., annual self-assessment) results in a clear plan for improvement; board collectively owns the topic of improving its value to the organization		
Monitor Performance and Ensure Accountability	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Process for monitoring performance	Board routinely monitors and discusses the performance of program/organization and uses results to inform the strategic plan and resource allocation		

SECTION 2: ENABLERS OF BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

Composition	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Understanding of board composition needed to meet organizational goals	Systematic process for identifying needed board skills driven by strategic plan; gaps are understood and agreed to by the entire board; most new board members seem to “fit our needs well”		
Process and criteria for recruitment	Formal process with clear evaluative criteria in place; whole board reaches out to potential members from a wide range sources; recruitment process is continuous and with multi-year horizon; new members are seen as great additions to the board		
Diversity on the board	Board understands types of diversity needed for organization and the value of diversity; current diversity on the board adequately reflects the diversity needed		
Term limits	Term limits effectively balance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for new members/skills • Retention of valuable directors Mechanisms are in place for ensuring continued involvement of high-performing retiring board members		
Orientation of new members	Formal orientation process covers key topics (mission, organization, finances, responsibilities of directors); committee assignments are welcomed by new directors who quickly become effective members of the board		

SECTION 2: ENABLERS OF BOARD EFFECTIVENESS CONT.

Size and Structure	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Board Size	Board discusses issue of size explicitly and directors widely believe the current size adequately balances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coverage of roles • Cohesiveness among members • Work load 		
Committee structure: Purpose and charter of committees	Committee structure explicitly designed with clear charter around organizational priorities; board effectively uses mix of ad-hoc and standing committees to fulfill objectives		
Mechanisms for increasing affiliation with organization other than governance board membership	Board has effective structures/ mechanisms for affiliation, such as advisory groups with well-defined roles or such options have been considered and rejected as not necessary		
Leadership (Board Chair, Committee Leaders)	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Process for deciding who leads and for how long	Clear, well-understood and accepted process is in place to select and transition board and committee leadership. Board leadership decisions seen to strengthen performance of institution		
Effectiveness of board leadership	Current board leadership has the necessary skills, enthusiasm, energy and time to provide leadership to the board		
Succession planning and development of board leaders	Process in place to identify and develop board leaders; committee assignments rotated to give board members experience and opportunity to lead; board seen to have a rich set of future leaders		
Quality of leadership relationship with management	Board leadership has an effective working relationship with management		

SECTION 2: ENABLERS OF BOARD EFFECTIVENESS CONT.

Processes	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Quality of preparation	Calendar of meetings set and distributed for the year; agenda for the individual meetings sent out ahead of time with indication of expected focus/high impact areas for board consideration; board receives quality background materials well in advance of meetings and arrive prepared		
Effective meeting processes	Meetings start and end on time and time is managed to ensure board discussion on all important topics; most time dedicated to board discussion and debate on important issues. Board members feel involved and their contributions valued		
Fun and Passion	Board interactions are productive and enjoyable; good mixture of work and fun activities including effective efforts to connect board members to the mission (e.g., site visits); board members hate to miss meetings		

SECTION 3: PERFORMANCE OF BOARD COMMITTEES

Processes	Description of Distinctive Performance	Current Performance (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=distinctive)	Comments
Common understanding of committee mission	Committee members share a common understanding of the mission and remit of the Committee		
Goal setting for the committee as a follow on to strategic planning	Committee members have a clear understanding of a set of concrete goals coming out of the strategic plan, including timelines		
Use of mission and goals in committee decisions/ meetings	Committee has regular meetings where mission and goals inform discussions and decisions		
Reporting to the board	Committee reports on its progress to the full board regularly and when needed, on an ad hoc basis		
Evaluation of committee performance against goals	Committee evaluates its performance against its goals and uses lessons learned to improve effectiveness and inform future goals		

OTHER COMMENTS:
