

Building Better Boards

By Ed Bronsdon, President, Bronsdon for Good



Session Presenter



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Learning Objectives

1

Introduce best practices of The Board-Building Cycle

2

Review and showcase the three phases of building better boards

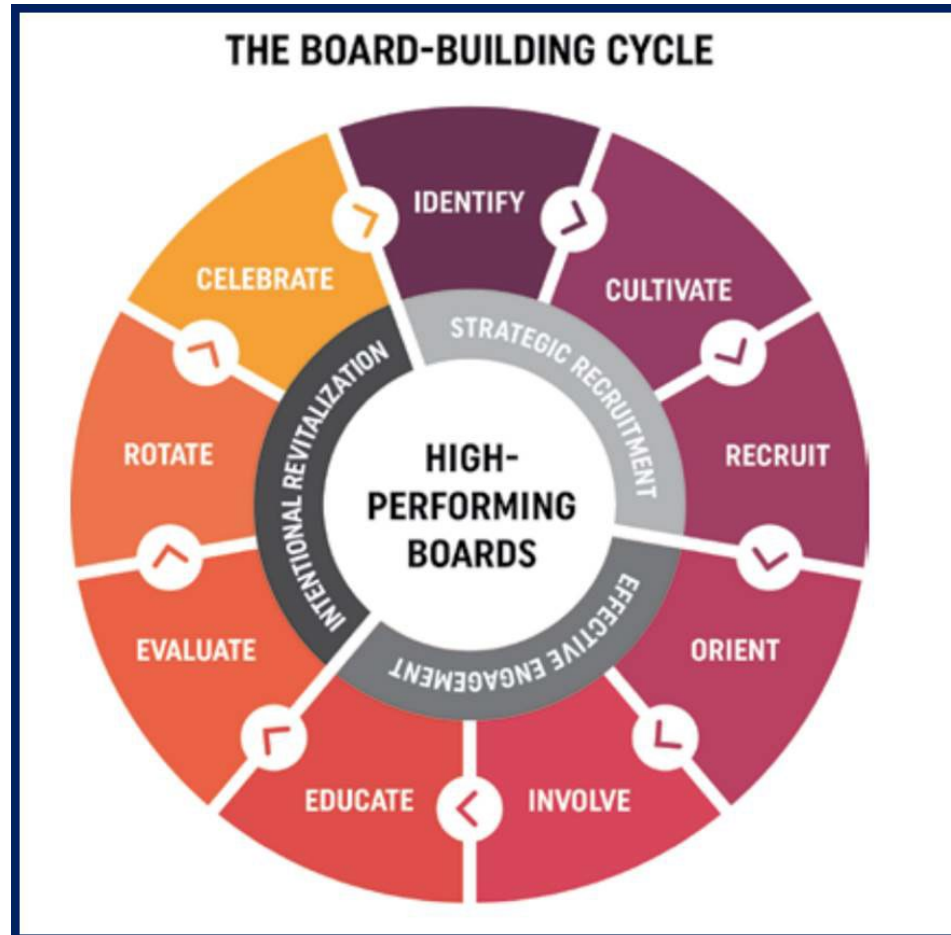
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How to put together an action plan to engage better board governance work for your organization

Key Reference Tools:

- 1) *The Board-Building Cycle* – Susan S. Meier
- 2) *BoardSource* Membership
- 3) *BoardSource* Board Assessment
- 4) *Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations* – Judith Sharken Simon

The Board-Building Cycle



Phase 1: Strategic Recruitment

Three step process:

- 1) Identify +
- 2) Cultivate +
- 3) Recruit



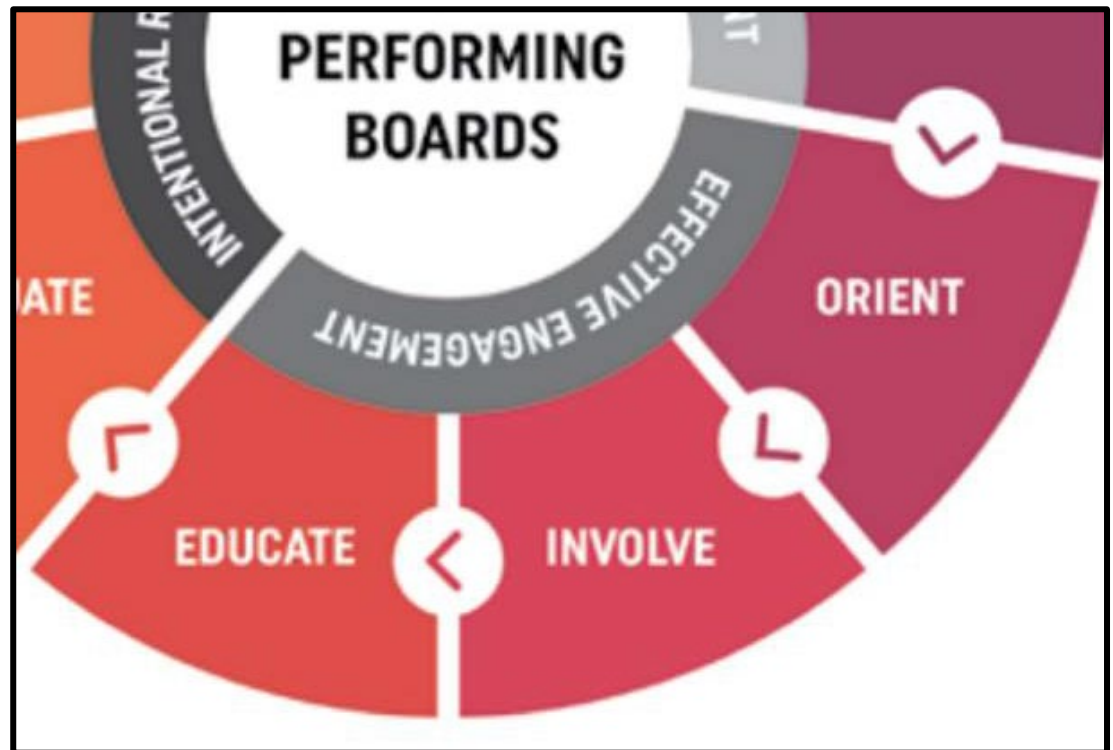
Phase 1: Strategic Recruitment

- Step 1: Identify the future needs of the board. Determine the diversity of skills, knowledge, backgrounds, and perspectives you need to implement the strategic plan or framework and address upcoming opportunities and challenges. What do you have? What is missing?
- Step 2: Cultivate potential board members and identify individuals with the desired characteristics. Ask current board members, senior staff, past board leaders, and key supporters to suggest potential candidates, but also seek diverse prospects from beyond familiar circles of connections. Find ways to connect with candidates, get them interested in your organization, and keep them informed of your process.
- Step 3: Recruit prospects. Describe why prospective members are wanted and needed. Explain THE BOARD-BUILDING CYCLE 13 Introduction expectations and responsibilities of board members, and don't minimize requirements. Invite questions, elicit prospects' interest, and find out if they are prepared to serve.

Phase 2: Effective Engagement

Also three steps:

- 1) Orient +
- 2) Involve +
- 3) Educate



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Phase 3: Intentional Revitalization

And yes, three more steps:

1. Evaluate +
2. Rotate +
3. Celebrate





Key Questions

1. What are your Board Governance needs for the future?
2. Do you have agreement to pursue best practices? If so, then conduct a self-assessment
4. Do all involved understand board vs staff roles? If not, educate.
5. Do you have agreement on who will do what and when? Engage a task force or committee for follow up.
6. How do you eat an elephant?
Three phases for follow up:
Recruit + Engage + Revitalize
Remember, it is an ongoing cycle.

Putting together an action plan for your board

BOARD GOVERNANCE				
Issue	Discussion	Recommendation	Who	When
What are ____ Board Governance needs for the future?	Discuss as a board at April 30, ____ meeting	If agreement, then act.	Board	April 30, ____
Is there agreement on a call to action? We may not need consensus, but do seek a strong majority to move forward	Educate and Communicate:	Utilize The Board-Building Cycle book as a framework for best practices; confirm Who will do What by When	Board Governance Work Group >> Executive Com. >> Full Board	April 30, ____
Board-Building Cycle 1. Strategic Recruitment 2. Effective Engagement 3. Intentional Revitalization Should this framework be used?	More details in the notes below.	Use best practices to Intentionally Revitalize the board and our actions to support the future needs of the organization	Board & E.D. / CEO	Beginning ____ + timeline going forward
If agreement, then conduct board self-assessment	_____	Use BoardSource tool	Each Board Member	By May 31, ____ (self-assess); each Board Member

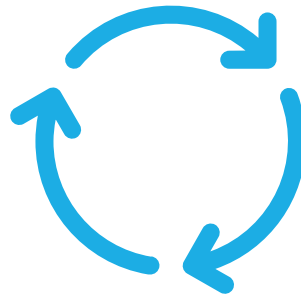
Be clear about Board vs Staff roles.	Is there mutual understanding of these differing roles?	Clarify through education.	_____	By July 1, _____ through Board Assessment
Currently a relatively passive board; _____	Is that what is best for the future of _____	_____	Board & Executive Staff	By July 1, _____
Assess board efficacy What is our division of labor as a board? What are we called to do?	Should we utilize the BoardSource tool to assess this? Cost? If so, Executive Summary and Recommendations for follow up	Yes? No? Need more info?	Board	By August 1, _____
Use recommendations from the board assessment to update our Board Governance	Job description? Committees? Term limits? Recruitment? Orientation? Executive Com titles? Elections?	_____	_____	By Oct. 31, ____
Renew / refresh board engagement by individual board members and the board collectively	_____	_____	_____	By Oct. 31, ____

Sustain the renewal of board engagement so that Board Governance best practices are codified into regular annual, quarterly and other time-related best practices	_____	What are annual metrics to keep us on the renewed track?	_____	By August 31, ____ December 31, ____ April 30, (following year)
Board Governance Committee reviews self-assessment and presents recommendations to the Executive Committee	_____	_____	Board Governance	By June 30, ____
What are the needs of the organization today and for the future for board members? What are we asking board members to do?	Should sponsors / major donors have a seat at the table? Should we have more than one board? One, a board of governance and another, an advisory board?	Review, update if necessary, and share out job descriptions for board members.	Board Governance	By July 31, ____
Executive Summary of Board Self-Assessment shared with full Board along with recommendations for action	_____	_____	Board Governance and Executive Committee	By July 31, ____
What else....?				

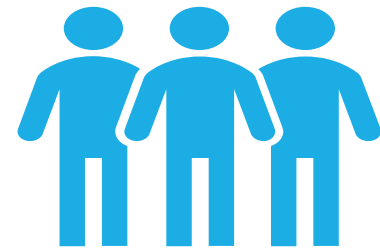
Summary



Building a better board is
an ongoing process



It is a cycle with three key
phases: finding, engaging
and strengthening



It is a human resources
endeavor

Thank you!
Q&A



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Session Presenter Contact Information



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consulting for nonprofits and
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