

## **Board Self-Evaluation Questionnaire**

### **Guidelines on How Best to Use this Tool:**

- This tool is designed to be used as an annual board evaluation. It seeks to help a board answer the question: what are we doing well and what can we do better?
- The tool is designed for organizations large enough to employ staff, those with someone in an Executive Director or CEO role. The concept though, and many of the questions too, may also be of value to all volunteer organizations.
- Section D: the Performance of Individual Directors provides an opportunity for board members to personally reflect on their own performance. This portion of the questionnaire, once completed, should be retained by each board member, although board members may feel comfortable sharing their overall rating for this section at the bottom of the page or what one of the criteria identified they most want to improve upon
- Section E: seeks to provide Feedback to the Chair of the Board. This page, once completed may be separated from the others, collected, and then passed to the chair. This section is optional; the chair may wish to conduct a separate process for soliciting advice and feedback at another time.
- The rating scale at the bottom of each page ("My Overall Rating") asks that board members add up the total of the numbers circled on the page. This number is intended as a rough interpretation of the results of each section. The range of numbers will change with the number of questions asked and answered in the section.
- We would encourage boards to use this as a source of ideas to inform the development of their own board self-evaluation tool. Your board could complete this assessment as an "experiment" and then develop a customized version based this experience.
- Remember that this tool is best used to stimulate reflection and discussion; it is not a scientific survey instrument that has been tested on a large number of boards and for which there are average results.
- Boards might well consider bringing in an independent person (a management student perhaps) to conduct the evaluation and compile, summarize and report on the results. This will insure that individual responses are kept confidential and may result in more honest answers. If you choose to do this then completed copies of Section D could be passed on for that person to compile.
- Consider evaluating other things such as the effectiveness of committees or board "follow-through". Avoid questions that compare individual board member performance; keep the focus on the whole board.
- If your board relies on an Executive Committee which meets between full board meetings, a separate section might be needed to assess its relationship to the board (to be answered by everyone), its relationship to the Executive Director and the conduct of

Executive Committee meetings. Questions for such a section could be drawn from the other sections.

- Section C on the Board's Relationship with the Executive Director is not intended as an evaluation of the Executive Director but rather an evaluation of the quality of the board's relationship with the Executive Director as judged both by the board and by the Executive Director. The items evaluated here should focus on matters that the board can change about its performance.
- Board evaluation can be done at any time of the year and should be put on the board's annual agenda. It may be best not to schedule it at the same time of the year that the board is conducting an evaluation of the Executive Director or preparing for the AGM.



## **Board Self-Evaluation Questionnaire**

### **A Tool for Improving the Governance Practices of Non-Profit Organizations**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ For period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
(Optional)

## Board Self Evaluation Questionnaire

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Questions should be answered by all board members. When completed individually the results of Sections A, B and C should be compiled, shared and discussed by the whole board to determine an average group answer to each question and an overall section rating. Section D should be answered by board members alone but not shared with the group. Sections A, B and C should also be completed by the **Executive Director or CEO**. This questionnaire also includes Section E, which provides feedback to the Chair of the Board.

*Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).*

### **A. How Well Has the Board Done Its Job?**

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our organization operates with a strategic plan or a set of measurable goals and priorities.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The board's regular meeting agenda items reflects our strategic plan or priorities.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The board has created or reviewed, in this period, some key governance job descriptions (e.g. board chair, directors and committees) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The board gives direction to staff on how to achieve the goals by setting, referring to, or revising policies.                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The board has identified and reviewed the organization's relationship with each of its key stakeholders                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The board has ensured that the organization's accomplishments and challenges have been communicated to key stakeholders              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The board has ensured that stakeholders have received reports on how our organization has used its financial and human resources.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. _____  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

*My overall rating (add together the total of the numbers circled):*

Excellent (30-24)  Satisfactory (23-19)  Poor (18- 6)

## **B. How Well Has the Board Conducted Itself?**

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. As board members we are aware of what is expected of us.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The agenda of board meetings are well planned so that we are able to get through all necessary board business.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. It seems like most board members come to meetings prepared.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. We receive written reports to the board in advance of our meetings.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. All board members participate in important board discussions.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. We do a good job encouraging and dealing with different points of view.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. We all support the decisions we make.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The board assesses its composition and strengths in advance of recruiting new board members.                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. The board assumes much of the responsibility for director recruitment and orientation                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Board members have some interaction with external stakeholders at board meetings (e.g as guests) or between meetings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Our board meetings are always interesting.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Our board meetings are frequently fun.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

My overall rating:(add together the total of the numbers circled)

- Excellent (60- 50)       Satisfactory (49-35)       Poor (34-12)

### **C. Board's Relationship with Executive Director**

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).

1. There is a clear understanding on most matters where the board's role ends and the executive director's begins.	1	2	3	4	5
2. There is good two-way communication between the board and the executive director.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The board trusts the judgment of the executive director	1	2	3	4	5
4. The board provides direction to the executive director by setting and reviewing policies.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The board has discussed and communicated the kinds of information and level of detail it requires from the executive director	1	2	3	4	5
6. The board has developed formal criteria and a process for evaluating the executive director	1	2	3	4	5
7. The board, or a committee of the board, has formally evaluated the executive director within the past 12 months.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The board evaluates the executive director primarily on the accomplishment of the organization's strategic goals and priorities and adherence to policy.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The board provides feedback and shows its appreciation to the executive director on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The board ensures that the Executive Director is able to take advantage of professional development opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5
11. _____	1	2	3	4	5

My overall rating: (add together the total of the numbers circled)

Excellent (40+)     Satisfactory (28-39)     Poor (11-27)

**D. My Performance as an Individual Board Member (Not to be shared)**

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).

1. I am aware of what is expected of me as a board member.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have a good record of meeting attendance.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I read the minutes, reports and other materials in advance of our board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am familiar with what is in the organization's by-laws and governing policies	1	2	3	4	5
5. I frequently encourage other board members to express their opinions at board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am encouraged by other board members to express my opinions at board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am a good listener at board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I follow through on things I have said I would do.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I maintain the confidentiality of all board decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
10. When I have a different opinion than the majority, I raise it.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I support board decisions once they are made even if I do not agree with them.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I promote the work of our organization in the community whenever I had a chance to do so.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I stay informed about issues relevant to our mission and bring information to the attention of the board.	1	2	3	4	5

My overall rating: (add together the total of the numbers circled)

Excellent (40+)     Satisfactory (28-39)     Poor (11-27)

### **E. Feedback to the Chair of the Board (Optional)**

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).

1. The chair is well prepared for board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The chair helps the board stick to the agenda.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The chair tries hard to ensure that every board member has an opportunity to be heard.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The chair is skilled at managing different points of view	1	2	3	4	5
5. The chair has demonstrates versatility in facilitating board discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The chair knows how to be direct with an individual board member when their behaviour needs to change.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The chair helps the board work well together.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The chair demonstrates good listening skills.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The board supports the chair.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The chair is effective in delegating responsibility amongst board members.	1	2	3	4	5
11. The chair ensures the board is aware of his/her organizational activities outside of our board meetings	1	2	3	4	5
12. _____	1	2	3	4	5

My overall rating: (add together the total of the numbers circled)

Excellent (40+)     Satisfactory (28-39)     Poor (11-27)