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| Governance Capability Framework |
| **Tool Kit** |
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# Introduction

The not-for-profit (NFP) community sector encompasses organisations with diverse missions including:

* Providing community services Building skills and connection through the arts, and sport and recreation programs
* Focusing on community and local issues, such as small local volunteer organisations.

The Community Sector Governance Capability Framework (Governance Capability Framework) describes the broad capabilities required by people on Boards or Committees of Management in community sector organisations. It provides Board or Committee members with a common language for the knowledge and skills that are critical for the stewardship of an organisation, and also includes knowledge and skills required for particular roles on the Board, such as that of Board Chair.

The Governance Capability Framework can be accessed at [Governance Capability Framework](https://fac.dffh.vic.gov.au/governance-capability-framework) <fac.dffh.vic.gov.au/governance-capability-framework>.

# Purpose of the Governance Capability Framework

The Governance Capability Framework was developed for use in the NFP community sector to:

* Improve the identification of skills that NFP Boards need now and into the future
* Improve overall quality and effectiveness of governance now and into the future

Identify any gaps in governance skills

* Improve and assist with the recruitment of effective Board members.

By using the Governance Capability Framework people on Boards of community sector organisations will be able to develop flexible and transferable skills that can be used in a range of governance contexts.

Note that in this Tool Kit the terms ‘Board’ and ‘Board members’ are used to describe those in governance positions within community organisations. If your organisation uses other terminology such as ‘Committee of Management’ and ‘Committee members’ please make changes to suit your own context. Many of the tools contained in this Tool Kit can also be used by sub-committees established by the Board.

Before you begin using the Tool Kit also please note that the Governance Capability Framework was developed as a resource to assist Board governance. It is not mandatory, nor is it a legal or compliance framework.

As a Board member it is important that you are aware of your legal responsibilities and the compliance requirements of your organisation. If you require additional information on legal or compliance issues go to [Not for profit Law](https://www.nfplaw.org.au/free-resources/who-runs-the-organisation/responsibilities-of-the-board-and-committee-members) <https://www.nfplaw.org.au/free-resources/who-runs-the-organisation/responsibilities-of-the-board-and-committee-members>.

It is also important that you are aware of how your organisation is funded, as well as any quality standards or frameworks and associated audit requirements that might apply to your organisation.

# Using the Governance Capability Framework

The Governance Capability Framework can be used by community sector Boards to:

* Align whole of Board capability to the governance needs of the organisation
* Identify any gaps in skills, knowledge and behaviours that could be addressed through training or mentoring
* Assist with a range of Board functions including recruitment and induction, Board review and development, and succession planning

The Governance Capability Framework can be used by individual Board members to:

* Identify the capabilities required of themselves as Board members
* Identify any gaps in skills, knowledge and behaviours that could be addressed through training or mentoring
* Form the basis of plans for further development.

The Governance Capability Framework can be used by potential members of community sector Boards to:

* Understand the capabilities required to work effectively on a community sector Board
* Identify any gaps in skills, knowledge and behaviours that need addressing prior to applying for membership of a Board
* Provide a basis for discussion during the Board recruitment process.

## Adapting the Governance Capability Framework to your organisation

As each community sector board is different the Governance Capability Framework, which is based on generic skills and knowledge, can be adapted to reflect the specific needs of your community organisation Board.

This may mean adapting the Framework:

* To reflect your unique culture, value and mission
* To align with key documents, for example the organisational policy and procedures
* To the language or terminology used in your organisation, for example ‘Committee of Management’ instead of ‘Board’.

If your organisation has an existing governance capability framework, this can be aligned with the Community Sector Governance Capability Framework. If any gaps are identified, these can be added to the existing framework to meet your Board’s specific requirements.

# About the Governance Capability Framework

## Four key streams

The Governance Capability Framework is structured into four key streams. These categorise the work of an effective Board. The Streams are described below:

### Planning and organising

The capabilities that are required to take an overview of the organisation and to focus on future direction such as establishing the vision and planning for sustainability.

### Monitoring and reviewing

The skills associated with overseeing the operations of the organisation such as ensuring compliance, monitoring budgets and managing risks.

### Working together

This includes all forms of communicating and working effectively with others, such as engaging with community/members, contributing to meetings and leadership and teamwork.

### Being effective and accountable

Those capabilities that deal with all aspects of Board decision making such as behaving ethically and respecting confidentiality.

## Twenty capabilities for all Board members

Each stream has five capabilities, making a total of 20 capabilities, and each capability has a descriptor. These 20 capabilities are required by all Board members. An extract from the Planning and Organising Stream is shown below.

Example of capabilities from the Stream: Planning and Organising

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Establishes the vision | Creates a clear and inspiring vision for the future and demonstrates understanding of, and commitment to, the primary purpose of the organisation. |
| Designs the strategy | Contributes to the development of a sound strategic plan so that staff and members can work to achieve identified outcomes and vision. |
| Is informed | Understands the big picture and emerging issues that will impact the organisation; reads papers prior to meetings and obtains good information to actively participate in discussion and decision-making. |

## Additional capabilities for office bearers

The Framework also includes a set of capabilities specifically designed for the Board office bearers – the Board Chair, the Secretary and the Treasurer.

The Board office bearers require these capabilities to effectively carry out their designated duties. In the most effective Boards, all Board members fully understand the roles and responsibilities of office bearers, and work together to ensure that all Board responsibilities are fulfilled.

Example of capability for Chair

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Leads the board | Demonstrates leadership; inspires trust and confidence in Board members; creates an inclusive environment; fosters collaborative processes; provides a positive public face to the organisation; demonstrates commitment to organisational values; resolves disputes; fosters development of the Board and ensures regular review of Board performance. |

Example of capability for Secretary

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Develops agenda and minutes of Board meetings  | Consults the Chair and other relevant people to develop agenda; circulates agenda and meeting papers prior to meetings; creates minutes that are timely, true and accurate. |

Example of capability for Treasurer

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Manages financial risk  | Monitors financial systems to identify errors and discrepancies; ensures that the finances are protected against theft and criminal activities; arranges regular audits and supports the audit process. |

For a copy of the complete Governance Capability Framework see [Appendix 1](#_Appendix_1:_Governance).

# Using the Governance Capability Framework

## Reviewing the capability of your Board

The Governance Capability Framework has been developed to assist Boards to review their collective Board capability. The Board Review Tool [Appendix 2](#_Appendix_2:_Board) can help you work together as a Board to:

* Evaluate the Board’s performance and the overall capabilities of the Board members
* Provide an opportunity for the Board to identify any gaps in capabilities, skills, knowledge or behaviours and address these through training and development for the Board as a whole or for individual Board members
* Analyse Board skill gaps to ensure better targeting of potential recruits to the Board
* Conduct an annual Board review using the Board Review Tool.

### Using the Board Review Tool

1. Use the Board Review Tool and individually rate the Board on each capability using a five point scale according to how regularly and how well you feel the Board collectively displays this capability

Rating scale

| Use the rating | If  |
| --- | --- |
| 5 | We consistently do this and we do it very well |
| 4 | We are mostly consistent in this and/or we do it reasonably well |
| 3 | We sometimes do this and/or we only do it moderately well |
| 2 | We do this poorly and/or irregularly |
| 1 | We do not do this/I’m not sure what it means |

1. Nominate someone to collate the outcomes from each Board member’s rating. A worked example of collated outcomes is provided below.

Example of collated board review outcomes
**Stream: Monitoring and Reviewing**

| Capability | Descriptor | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reviews budgets and financial reports | Ensures solvency of the organisation and that the organisation is protected against fraud and theft; interprets regular financial reports; monitors and reviews financial performance; ensures expenditure aligns with objectives and priorities | | (1) | | | | | (4) | | | | (3) | | | (2) |  |
| Ensures compliance | Ensures that the organisation is accountable and meeting reporting requirements of funding bodies, employment and other legislative responsibilities; has adequate insurances and provides a safe environment for staff and Board members | | | | (3) | ~~| | | |~~ (5) |  |  |  |
| Manages risk | Establishes a risk management framework to review and prioritise risks to the organisation; and develops strategies to control or mitigate risks that could threaten the organisation | | (1) | ~~| | | |~~ (5) | | | (2) | | (1) |  |
| Critically reviews reports | Critically reviews CEO and other reports on the activities and financial position of the organisation to ensure the organisation remains viable and working to its strategic vision | | | | | (4) | ~~| | | |~~ | (6) |  |  |  |
| Monitors strategy and reviews achievements | Working with the CEO, monitors progress against strategic plan; revises strategy as required; and celebrates organisational achievements with staff and other stakeholders | | | | (3) | ~~| | | |~~ | (6) | | (1) |  |  |

1. Discuss where the Board is performing well and where the Board could improve. Use the collated outcomes to develop a Board Action Plan, which prioritises the capability gaps, includes ideas for developing capabilities, and designates responsibility and timeframes for development

[Appendix 3](#_Appendix_3:_Board) includes the Board Action Plan Template and a worked example of the Action Plan Template is provided below.

#### Example of a completed Action Plan

| Capability | Priority | How these capabilities will be developed | Who will take responsibility | When the development will happen |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ensure compliance | 1 | Source information about compliance responsibilities | Jane | By June 30 |
| Manages risk | 1 | Training with a consultant specialising in risk management | Vanessa | By September 30 |
| Engages with community / members | 2 | Each board member to nominate one network or key organisation they will contact to promote the work of our organisation; then report back on how it went | Chris | By November 30 |

When will the Board next review capabilities? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sign off by Board Chair \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. The [Governance Capability Framework](https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/governance-community-organisations)<https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/governance-community-organisations> provides links to support, resources and training materials to include in your Action Plan template. [Appendix 6](#_Appendix_6:_Learning) in this Tool Kit also includes a summary of the different training and learning options you might like to pursue to develop your whole of Board capabilities

## Reviewing the capabilities of individual Board members

The Governance Capability Framework can assist individual Board members to review their own governance capabilities and to define where they might need further development. The Self-Assessment Tool is used to:

* Identify capabilities that need development. These are capabilities where you have rated your performance as under skilled or where you may have an interest in further development
* Create a hierarchy for development: those rated as under skilled will take priority over those rated good.

### Using the Self-Assessment Tool

1. Use the Governance Capability Framework Self-Assessment Tool to highlight any capabilities that you need to improve. See [Appendix 4](#_Appendix_4:_Self-Assessment) for the Self-Assessment Tool
2. For each capability, ask yourself: At this capability am I, Under skilled, Skilled, or Highly skilled?

Rating for the Self-Assessment Tool

| Use the rating | If you are |
| --- | --- |
| Under skilled | Performing the capability at a minimum level or don’t have the skill |
| Skilled | Performing the capability well and adding value |
| Highly skilled | Performing the capability at a high level and could teach others to develop this capability. |

1. Type: “Under skilled”, “Skilled” or “Highly skilled” in the section of the following table to record your response and include ideas of how you can develop this area

Example of a self-assessment

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| Makes clear and timely decisions  | Makes timely and transparent decisions that reflect a commitment to organisational sustainability and strategic vision; acts in good faith, and publicly stands by agreed Board position | Skilled |  |
| Reviews budgets and financial reports | Ensures solvency of the organisation and that the organisation is protected against fraud and theft; interprets regular financial reports; monitors and reviews financial performance; ensures expenditure aligns with objectives and priorities | Under skilled |  |

Use the outcomes from the Self-Assessment Tool to determine and prioritise the areas in which you require further skills and knowledge. Complete your own Action Plan by customising the Board Action Planning template ([Appendix 3](#_Appendix_3:_Board)).

You might also like to discuss your development needs with your Board Chair as there may be others on the Board who are interested in similar further development activities.

## Potential Board members – assessing skills and experience

The Governance Capability Framework can be used by people who are thinking of joining a Board to:

* Define what they might bring to a Board opportunity
* Identify what skills and experience they may wish to develop before they join a Board.

The Potential Board Members Tool can be used to:

* Identify capabilities that you already have. These are the ones that you have rated yourself as having some experience or very experienced. When you approach a Board opportunity, these are the capabilities you should highlight
* Create a hierarchy of capabilities; those you have rated as no experience will ideally need to be developed and practised prior to you expressing an interest in joining a Board.

See [Appendix 5](#_Appendix_5:_Potential) for the Potential Board Members Tool.

### Using the Potential Board Members Tool

1. Use the Potential Board Members Tool and ask yourself: At this capability I have... no experience, some experience, or lots of experience?
2. Make sure you think laterally, for example, while you may not have ever Planned for the sustainability of a Board, you may have been involved in employee recruitment and selection and supported the induction of new staff members

Rating for the Potential Board Members Tool

| Use the rating | If you are |
| --- | --- |
| No experience | Have never performed this capability or don’t have the skill |
| Some experience | Performed this capability in the past (whether as a Board member, an employee or a community member) |
| Very experienced | Performed this capability often and at a high level |

1. Type: “Under skilled”, “Skilled” or “Highly skilled” in the section of the following table to record your response and include ideas of how you can develop this area
2. You might also like to record how you have used this capability, as this will help you when you discuss your interest in filling a Board vacancy

Example potential Board-member rating

| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I have | Example of how I have used this capability |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Establishes the vision | Creates a clear and inspiring vision for the future and demonstrates understanding of, and commitment to, the primary purpose of the organisation | Some experience | I am aware of my organisation’s strategic plan and have been responsible for monitoring its implementation within my work group |

## Putting the Governance Capability Framework into practice

The following scenarios provide examples of how the Governance Capability Framework can be used in practice. They make reference to the following:

* Governance Capability Framework - [Appendix 1](#_Appendix_1:_Governance)
* Board Review Tool - [Appendix 2](#_Appendix_2:_Board)
* Board Action Plan template - [Appendix 3](#_Appendix_3:_Board)
* Self-Assessment Tool - [Appendix 4](#_Appendix_4:_Self-Assessment)
* Potential Board Members Tool - [Appendix 5](#_Appendix_5:_Potential).

Examples of how the Governance Capability Framework can be used in practice

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scenario | This scenario covers |
| 1. Reviewing Board capabilities
 | An organisation uses the Governance Capability Framework Board Review Tool to review current capabilities to identify areas for development. |
| 1. Creating selection criteria to fill a Board vacancy
 | After using the Board Review Tool to establish the range of capabilities existing Board members have, the Board uses the outcomes from the review to develop selection criteria on which to base the recruitment of a new Board member. |
| 1. Applying for a Board position
 | A prospective Board member responds to the selection criteria for a Board position using the capabilities they have identified after completing the Self-Assessment Tool. |
| 1. Board induction
 | A new Board member uses the Governance Capability Framework as part of the Board induction process. |
| 1. Identifying learning and development needs
 | An individual uses the Board Chair capabilities to identify strengths and areas for development to progress to a Board Chair role. |
| 1. Mentoring for leadership
 | A Board Chair mentors an aspiring community leader to build key capabilities identified in the Governance Capability Framework. |

NOTE: A Facilitator’s [Guide to Reviewing Board Capabilities](https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/governance-community-organisations) <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/governance-community-organisations> is available for download and can be used as a step by step guide to a Board review.

###

## Scenarios

### Reviewing Board capabilities

**Jane is Board Chair of a service for people with disabilities and is ready to conduct the Annual Board Review.**

Jane:

* Agendas the Board Review as an item for the next Board meeting and suggests that prior to the meeting, Board members reflect on how the Board has performed over the past 12 months
* Prints off enough copies of the Governance Capability Framework and the Board Review Tool for each Board member
* At the Board meeting asks each Board member to complete the Review tool, emphasising that individual responses are confidential and that members focus on how well and how consistently the Board as a whole performs on each capability
* Collects the individual review tools and collates the responses
* Discusses the trends from the Review with Board members and completes a Board Action Plan template which defines the development activities that can be undertaken by the Board as a group to ensure each governance capability is performed consistently and well
* Sets aside time at following Board meetings to review how development opportunities are progressing
* Uses the outcomes from the Review as a benchmark for the next Board Review
* Notes any major gaps in Board capability and uses this as a basis to recruit to any Board vacancies as these occur

### 2. Creating selection criteria to fill a Board vacancy

**Bruno, who is the Board Chair for a housing and homeless service, needs to recruit a new Board member to fill a Board vacancy.**

Bruno:

* Has previously conducted the Annual Board Review, see Scenario 1 above
* Locates the collated Board Review Tool and assesses where major gaps in Board capability still exist
* Selects four capabilities which have been identified during the Review
* Reviews the descriptors for these capabilities, in particular those in the Monitoring and Reviewing stream, which he feels are most important for the Board to build
* Asks the two other members of the Board Recruitment Sub Committee to do the same
* Compares the selections and chooses the capabilities which are seen to be the ones that are lacking or require building
* With the help of the Sub Committee, adapts the specific wording of the capabilities and their descriptors to reflect the unique requirements of the organisation
* Uses this as the basis for selection criteria to circulate to prospective Board members

### 3. Applying for a Board vacancy

**Anna is interested in becoming a Board member. She has been volunteering at a children’s service for the past 12 months and hears that there is a vacancy on the Board.**

Anna:

* Completes the Potential Board Members Tool to determine her current level and readiness to become a Board member. She notes that she has excellent skills in the Planning and Organising, Working Together and Being Effective and Accountable streams but needs to develop further some of the capabilities in the Monitoring and Reviewing stream
* Further unpacking the Monitoring and Reviewing stream she identifies that although as a Board member she has not been responsible for reviewing budgets and financial reports, managing risk or ensuring compliance, her paid employment as an administrator in a small business has involved aspects of these capabilities. She notes this down
* Makes an appointment with the Board Chair to discuss her interest in the Board position and the capabilities she would bring to the position, based on the results obtained through using the Potential Board Members Tool
* After discussion with the Board Chair, she meets with the Board Recruitment Sub Committee, again emphasising her capabilities and her previous related experience and formally applies for membership of the Board
* The Chair speaks with the Treasurer, who agrees to provide Anna with some mentoring around reading financial reports and managing risks and compliance
* Anna is asked to join the Board

### 4. Board induction

**Nick is joining the Board of community arts organisation. Although he has been involved in fundraising for the organisation, he has not previously been a member of the Board.**

Nick:

Speaks with the Chair prior to the first Board meeting to discuss any information he might need prior to joining the Board. The Chair gives him the Board Members Induction Kit which includes the Self-Assessment Tool

* Completes the Self-Assessment Tool listing relevant capabilities and notes recent examples of when he has demonstrated the capabilities, as well as areas where he may need some further development
* Meets with the Chair to talk about development opportunities.

### 5. Identifying learning and development needs

**Nadja has been a member of a State Sports Assembly Board for two years and wants to gain wider experience so that she can apply for a Board Chair role.**

Nadja:

* Prints out the Governance Capability Framework
* Uses the Self-Assessment Tool to highlight the capabilities that she would bring to the role of Board Chair
* For each capability, she asks herself “At this capability am I… Under skilled, Skilled, or Highly skilled?” She pays particular attention to the additional capabilities for Chair
* Meets with the Board Chair to discuss her aspirations and the outcomes from the review
* Asks if it may be possible to have some mentoring in those areas in which she believes she requires more skill development. The Board Chair agrees to provide some mentoring assistance

### 6. Mentoring for leadership

**Tony is a member of the Board of an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO). His aim is to move into a Board leadership role. He decides he needs a mentor to build his confidence and skill development.**

Tony:

* Approaches Sam who is the Chair of an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) Board; Sam agrees to mentor Tony and they schedule regular sessions
* Sam works with Tony to review the Governance Capability Framework and they select the Planning and Organising capabilities for development. They decide to focus on the, “is informed capability”
* Tony uses his mentoring sessions to discuss practical ways he could build this capability, including ways to gain more information on emerging issues that impact on his organisation
* With assistance from Tony, Sam prepares a presentation to his Board about future directions and challenges for the ACCO sector.

# Appendix 1: Governance Capability Framework

Good Governance provides organisational leadership: it defines the organisation’s mission and values and focuses on outcomes and sustainability.

## Capabilities for all board members

### Planning and Organising

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor |
| Establishes the vision | Creates a clear and inspiring vision for the future and demonstrates understanding of, and commitment to, the primary purpose of the organisation. |
| Designs the strategy | Contributes to the development of a sound strategic plan so that staff and members can work to achieve identified outcomes and vision. |
| Is informed | Understands the big picture and emerging issues that will impact the organisation; reads papers prior to meetings and obtains good information to actively participate in discussion and decision-making. |
| Plans for sustainability of Board | Plans for organisational sustainability and financial viability; recruits new Board members with relevant and diverse skills and experience; supports induction; undertakes Board reviews and Board development activities. |
| Focuses on key issues | Works together with fellow Board members to prioritise the Board’s work, focus on outcomes and address issues that impact on the organisational sustainability. |

### Monitoring and Reviewing

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Reviews budgets and financial reports | Ensures solvency of the organisation and that the organisation is protected against fraud and theft; interprets regular financial reports; monitors and reviews financial performance; ensures expenditure aligns with objectives and priorities. |
| Ensures compliance | Ensures that the organisation is accountable and meeting reporting requirements of funding bodies, employment and other legislative responsibilities; has adequate insurances and provides a safe environment for staff and Board members. |
| Manages risk | Establishes a risk management framework to review and prioritise risks to the organisation; and develops strategies to control or mitigate risks that could threaten the organisation. |
| Critically reviews reports | Critically reviews CEO and other reports on the activities and financial position of the organisation to ensure the organisation remains viable and working to its strategic vision. |
| Monitors strategy and reviews achievements | Working with the CEO, monitors progress against strategic plan; revises strategy as required; and celebrates organisational achievements with staff and other stakeholders. |

### Working Together

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Contributes to meetings | Regularly attends meetings; works to meeting protocols; listens actively; focuses on the presenting issue; and provides relevant and succinct contributions that assist the meeting to efficiently work through the agenda. |
| Engages with community / members | Builds and maintains relationships that will ensure decisions are informed by community’s /members’ best interests; promotes the organisation through various networks; and supports fundraising initiatives. |
| Works to a sound policy framework | Establishes Board policies to address financial management, terms for officeholders, conflict of interest, relations with CEO and code of conduct for Board; establishes other policies as required; ensures decisions are guided by agreed policies. |
| Fosters stakeholder engagement  | Communicates with stakeholders; ensures that appropriate mechanisms are in place to inform and engage with stakeholders to further the achievement of organisational objectives. |
| Provides leadership and works collaboratively | Works together to provide organisational leadership; respects differences and values diversity; supports the Chair and CEO to meet their obligations; and commits to agreed decisions. |

### Being effective and accountable

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Clarifies roles and responsibilities | Establishes appropriate Board and sub-committee structures; ensures that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined; is clear about the distinction between governance and management; critically reviews Board performance. |
| Behaves ethically | Ensures Board independence; acts in the best interests of the organisation; avoids conflicts of interest; does not use position as a Board member to obtain advantages for self or others. |
| Makes clear and timely decisions  | Makes timely and transparent decisions that reflect a commitment to organisational sustainability and strategic vision; acts in good faith, and publicly stands by agreed Board position. |
| Operates within constitutional requirements | Ensures that the requirements and obligations of the constitution are met. |
| Respects confidentiality | Maintains confidentiality about decision-making and ensures that information is not misused. |

## Additional capabilities for the Office Bearers

### Chair

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Leads the Board | Demonstrates leadership; inspires trust and confidence in Board members; creates an inclusive environment; fosters collaborative processes; provides a positive public face to the organisation; demonstrates commitment to organisational values; resolves disputes; fosters development of Board and ensures regular review of Board performance. |
| Establishes a dynamic and productive relationship with the CEO | Establishes clarity about the role of Board and role of CEO; delegates management to CEO; encourages trust and regular communication; provides direction to the CEO in line with Board decisions; ensures that the Board engages constructively and honestly with the CEO to evaluate performance against stated objectives. |
| Chairs regular and focused meetings | Adheres to clear agendas and timeframes for discussion, supports and focuses discussion, manages differences of opinion and ensures that clear outcomes are agreed; promotes Board engagement; calls special meetings of the Board or subcommittees as required. |

### Secretary

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Meets reporting requirements | Oversees the timely and accurate preparation and lodging of statements to meet compliance reporting requirements. |
| Develops agenda and minutes of Board meetings | Consults the Chair and other relevant people to develop agenda; circulates agenda and meeting papers prior to meetings; creates minutes that are timely, true and accurate. |
| Handles correspondence and records | Maintains membership records and ensures all necessary records are accessible for reports, elections and other votes; deals with correspondence and disseminates information promptly. |

### Treasurer

| Capability | Descriptor |
| --- | --- |
| Ensures solvency and financial sustainability | Monitors financial position, including cash flow and estimates of future financial performance; oversees financial systems, and takes appropriate actions to ensure that the organisation has necessary resources to meet its obligations. |
| Manages financial risk | Monitors financial systems to identify errors and discrepancies; ensures that the finances are protected against theft and criminal activities; arranges regular audits and supports the audit process. |
| Controls finances | Ensures budget and expenditure reflect strategic intent of Board; assists in the preparation of the budget and presents it to the Board for approval; establishes financial processes and delegations; oversees all financial transactions and signs cheques within limits of authority. |

# Appendix 2: Board Review Tool

This tool is used by Board Members to score how well and how consistently the Board as a group displays each of the capabilities. The collated review sheets will be used to develop an Action Plan to improve Board capability into the future.

| Use the rating | If  |
| --- | --- |
| 5 | We consistently do this and we do it very well |
| 4 | We are mostly consistent in this and/or we do it reasonably well |
| 3 | We sometimes do this and/or we only do it moderately well |
| 2 | We do this poorly and/or irregularly |
| 1 | We do not do this/I’m not sure what it means |

## Capabilities for all board members

### Stream: Planning and Organisation

| Capability | Descriptor | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Establishes the vision | Creates a clear and inspiring vision for the future and demonstrates understanding of, and commitment to, the primary purpose of the organisation. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Designs the strategy | Contributes to the development of a sound strategic plan so that staff and members can work to achieve identified outcomes and vision. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Is informed | Understands the big picture and emerging issues that will impact the organisation; reads papers prior to meetings and obtains good information to actively participate in discussion and decision-making. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Plans for sustainability of Board | Plans for organisational sustainability and financial viability; recruits new Board members with relevant and diverse skills and experience; supports induction; undertakes Board reviews and Board development activities. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Focuses on key issues | Works together with fellow Board members to prioritise the Board’s work, focus on outcomes and address issues that impact on the organisational sustainability. |  |  |  |  |  |

### Stream: Monitoring and Reviewing

| Capability | Descriptor | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reviews budgets and financial reports | Ensures solvency of the organisation and that the organisation is protected against fraud and theft; interprets regular financial reports; monitors and reviews financial performance; ensures expenditure aligns with objectives and priorities. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ensures compliance | Ensures that the organisation is accountable and meeting reporting requirements of funding bodies, employment and other legislative responsibilities; has adequate insurances and provides a safe environment for staff and Board members. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Manages risk | Establishes a risk management framework to review and prioritise risks to the organisation; and develops strategies to control or mitigate risks that could threaten the organisation. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Critically reviews reports | Critically reviews CEO and other reports on the activities and financial position of the organisation to ensure the organisation remains viable and working to its strategic vision. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Monitors strategy and reviews achievements | Working with the CEO, monitors progress against strategic plan; revises strategy as required; and celebrates organisational achievements with staff and other stakeholders. |  |  |  |  |  |

### Stream: Working together

| Capability | Descriptor | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Contributes to meetings | Regularly attends meetings; works to meeting protocols; listens actively; focuses on the presenting issue; and provides relevant and succinct contributions that assist the meeting to efficiently work through the agenda. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Engages with community / members | Builds and maintains relationships that will ensure decisions are informed by community’s /members’ best interests; promotes the organisation through various networks; and supports fundraising initiatives. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Works to a sound policy framework | Establishes Board policies to address financial management, terms for officeholders, conflict of interest, relations with CEO and code of conduct for Board; establishes other policies as required; ensures decisions are guided by agreed policies. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fosters stakeholder engagement | Communicates with stakeholders; ensures that appropriate mechanisms are in place to inform and engage with stakeholders to further the achievement of organisational objectives. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Provides leadership and works collaboratively | Works together to provide organisational leadership; respects differences and values diversity; supports the Chair and CEO to meet their obligations; and commits to agreed decisions. |  |  |  |  |  |

### Stream: Being effective and accountable

| Capability | Descriptor | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Clarifies roles and responsibilities | Establishes appropriate Board and sub-committee structures; ensures that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined; is clear about the distinction between governance and management; critically reviews Board performance. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Behaves ethically | Ensures Board independence; acts in the best interests of the organisation; avoids conflicts of interest; does not use position as a Board member to obtain advantages for self or others. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Makes clear and timely decisions | Makes timely and transparent decisions that reflect a commitment to organisational sustainability and strategic vision; acts in good faith, and publicly stands by agreed Board position. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Operates within constitutional requirements | Ensures that the requirements and obligations of the constitution are met. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Respects confidentiality | Maintains confidentiality about decision-making and ensures that information is not misused. |  |  |  |  |  |

## Additional capabilities for the Office Bearers

Rating scale for the Self Assessment Tool

| Use the rating | If you are |
| --- | --- |
| Under skilled | Performing the capability at a minimum level or don’t have the skill |
| Skilled | Performing the capability well and adding value |
| Highly skilled | Performing the capability at a high level and could teach others to develop this capability. |

### Role: Chair

| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Leads the Board | Demonstrates leadership; inspires trust and confidence in Board members; creates an inclusive environment; fosters collaborative processes; provides a positive public face to the organisation; demonstrates commitment to organisational values; resolves disputes; fosters development of Board and ensures regular review of Board performance. |  |  |
| Establishes a dynamic and productive relationship with the CEO | Establishes clarity about the role of Board and role of CEO; delegates management to CEO; encourages trust and regular communication; provides direction to the CEO in line with Board decisions; ensures that the Board engages constructively and honestly with the CEO to evaluate performance against stated objectives. |  |  |
| Chairs regular and focused meetings | Adheres to clear agendas and timeframes for discussion, supports and focuses discussion, manages differences of opinion and ensures that clear outcomes are agreed; promotes Board engagement; calls special meetings of the Board or subcommittees as required. |  |  |

### Role: Secretary

| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Meets reporting requirements | Oversees the timely and accurate preparation and lodging of statements to meet compliance reporting requirements. |  |  |
| Develops agenda and minutes of Board meetings | Consults the Chair and other relevant people to develop agenda; circulates agenda and meeting papers prior to meetings; creates minutes that are timely, true and accurate. |  |  |
| Handles correspondence and records | Maintains membership records and ensures all necessary records are accessible for reports, elections and other votes; deals with correspondence and disseminates information promptly. |  |  |

### Role: Treasurer

| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ensures solvency and financial sustainability | Monitors financial position, including cash flow and estimates of future financial performance; oversees financial systems, and takes appropriate actions to ensure that the organisation has necessary resources to meet its obligations. |  |  |
| Manages financial risk | Monitors financial systems to identify errors and discrepancies; ensures that the finances are protected against theft and criminal activities; arranges regular audits and supports the audit process. |  |  |
| Controls finances | Ensures budget and expenditure reflect strategic intent of Board; assists in the preparation of the budget and presents it to the Board for approval; establishes financial processes and delegations; oversees all financial transactions and signs cheques within limits of authority. |  |  |

# Appendix 3: Board Action Plan Template

Capabilities for all board members

| Capability | Priority | How these capabilities will be developed | Who will take responsibility | When the development will happen |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |

When will the Board next review capabilities? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sign off by Board Chair \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix 4: Self-Assessment Tool

Rating for the Self Assessment Tool

| Use the rating | If you are |
| --- | --- |
| Under skilled | Performing the capability at a minimum level or don’t have the skill |
| Skilled | Performing the capability well and adding value |
| Highly skilled | Performing the capability at a high level and could teach others to develop this capability. |

## Capabilities for all board members

### Stream: Planning and Organisation

| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Establishes the vision | Creates a clear and inspiring vision for the future and demonstrates understanding of, and commitment to, the primary purpose of the organisation. |  |  |
| Designs the strategy | Contributes to the development of a sound strategic plan so that staff and members can work to achieve identified outcomes and vision. |  |  |
| Is informed | Understands the big picture and emerging issues that will impact the organisation; reads papers prior to meetings and obtains good information to actively participate in discussion and decision-making. |  |  |
| Plans for sustainability of Board | Plans for organisational sustainability and financial viability; recruits new Board members with relevant and diverse skills and experience; supports induction; undertakes Board reviews and Board development activities. |  |  |
| Focuses on key issues | Works together with fellow Board members to prioritise the Board’s work, focus on outcomes and address issues that impact on the organisational sustainability. |  |  |

### Stream: Monitoring and Reviewing

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| Reviews budgets and financial reports | Ensures solvency of the organisation and that the organisation is protected against fraud and theft; interprets regular financial reports; monitors and reviews financial performance; ensures expenditure aligns with objectives and priorities. |  |  |
| Ensures compliance | Ensures that the organisation is accountable and meeting reporting requirements of funding bodies, employment and other legislative responsibilities; has adequate insurances and provides a safe environment for staff and Board members. |  |  |
| Manages risk | Establishes a risk management framework to review and prioritise risks to the organisation; and develops strategies to control or mitigate risks that could threaten the organisation. |  |  |
| Critically reviews reports | Critically reviews CEO and other reports on the activities and financial position of the organisation to ensure the organisation remains viable and working to its strategic vision. |  |  |
| Monitors strategy and reviews achievements | Working with the CEO, monitors progress against strategic plan; revises strategy as required; and celebrates organisational achievements with staff and other stakeholders. |  |  |

### Stream: Working together

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| Contributes to meetings | Regularly attends meetings; works to meeting protocols; listens actively; focuses on the presenting issue; and provides relevant and succinct contributions that assist the meeting to efficiently work through the agenda. |  |  |
| Engages with community / members | Builds and maintains relationships that will ensure decisions are informed by community’s /members’ best interests; promotes the organisation through various networks; and supports fundraising initiatives. |  |  |
| Works to a sound policy framework | Establishes Board policies to address financial management, terms for officeholders, conflict of interest, relations with CEO and code of conduct for Board; establishes other policies as required; ensures decisions are guided by agreed policies. |  |  |
| Fosters stakeholder engagement  | Communicates with stakeholders; ensures that appropriate mechanisms are in place to inform and engage with stakeholders to further the achievement of organisational objectives. |  |  |
| Provides leadership and works collaboratively | Works together to provide organisational leadership; respects differences and values diversity; supports the Chair and CEO to meet their obligations; and commits to agreed decisions. |  |  |

### Stream: Being effective and accountable

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| Clarifies roles and responsibilities | Establishes appropriate Board and sub-committee structures; ensures that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined; is clear about the distinction between governance and management; critically reviews Board performance. |  |  |
| Behaves ethically | Ensures Board independence; acts in the best interests of the organisation; avoids conflicts of interest; does not use position as a Board member to obtain advantages for self or others. |  |  |
| Makes clear and timely decisions  | Makes timely and transparent decisions that reflect a commitment to organisational sustainability and strategic vision; acts in good faith, and publicly stands by agreed Board position. |  |  |
| Operates within constitutional requirements | Ensures that the requirements and obligations of the constitution are met. |  |  |
| Respects confidentiality | Maintains confidentiality about decision-making and ensures that information is not misused. |  |  |

## Additional capabilities for the Office Bearers

Rating scale

| Use the rating | If you are |
| --- | --- |
| Under skilled | Performing the capability at a minimum level or don’t have the skill |
| Skilled | Performing the capability well and adding value |
| Highly skilled | Performing the capability at a high level and could teach others to develop this capability. |

### Chair

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| Leads the Board  | Demonstrates leadership; inspires trust and confidence in Board members; creates an inclusive environment; fosters collaborative processes; provides a positive public face to the organisation; demonstrates commitment to organisational values; resolves disputes; fosters development of Board and ensures regular review of Board performance. |  |  |
| Establishes a dynamic and productive relationship with the CEO  | Establishes clarity about the role of Board and role of CEO; delegates management to CEO; encourages trust and regular communication; provides direction to the CEO in line with Board decisions; ensures that the Board engages constructively and honestly with the CEO to evaluate performance against stated objectives. |  |  |
| Chairs regular and focused meetings  | Adheres to clear agendas and timeframes for discussion, supports and focuses discussion, manages differences of opinion and ensures that clear outcomes are agreed; promotes Board engagement; calls special meetings of the Board or subcommittees as required. |  |  |

### Secretary

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| Meets reporting requirements  | Oversees the timely and accurate preparation and lodging of statements to meet compliance reporting requirements. |  |  |
| Develops agenda and minutes of Board meetings  | Consults the Chair and other relevant people to develop agenda; circulates agenda and meeting papers prior to meetings; creates minutes that are timely, true and accurate. |  |  |
| Handles correspondence and records | Maintains membership records and ensures all necessary records are accessible for reports, elections and other votes; deals with correspondence and disseminates information promptly. |  |  |

### Treasurer

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I am | Ideas of how I can develop this area |
| Ensures solvency and financial sustainability  | Monitors financial position, including cash flow and estimates of future financial performance; oversees financial systems, and takes appropriate actions to ensure that the organisation has necessary resources to meet its obligations. |  |  |
| Manages financial risk  | Monitors financial systems to identify errors and discrepancies; ensures that the finances are protected against theft and criminal activities; arranges regular audits and supports the audit process. |  |  |
| Controls finances | Ensures budget and expenditure reflect strategic intent of Board; assists in the preparation of the budget and presents it to the Board for approval; establishes financial processes and delegations; oversees all financial transactions and signs cheques within limits of authority. |  |  |

# Appendix 5: Potential Board Member Tool

This tool is for prospective Board members to evaluate their skills, knowledge and ability to be a board member.

Rating for the Potential Board Members Tool

| Use the rating | If you have |
| --- | --- |
| No experience | Have never performed this capability or don’t have the skill |
| Some experience | Performed this capability in the past (whether as a Board member, an employee or a community member) |
| Very experienced | Performed this capability often and at a high level |

## Capabilities for all board members

### Stream: Planning and Organisation

| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I have | Example of how I have used this capability |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Establishes the vision | Creates a clear and inspiring vision for the future and demonstrates understanding of, and commitment to, the primary purpose of the organisation. |  |  |
| Designs the strategy | Contributes to the development of a sound strategic plan so that staff and members can work to achieve identified outcomes and vision. |  |  |
| Is informed | Understands the big picture and emerging issues that will impact the organisation; reads papers prior to meetings and obtains good information to actively participate in discussion and decision-making. |  |  |
| Plans for sustainability of Board | Plans for organisational sustainability and financial viability; recruits new Board members with relevant and diverse skills and experience; supports induction; undertakes Board reviews and Board development activities. |  |  |
| Focuses on key issues | Works together with fellow Board members to prioritise the Board’s work, focus on outcomes and address issues that impact on the organisational sustainability. |  |  |

### Stream: Monitoring and Reviewing

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I have | Example of how I have used this capability |
| Reviews budgets and financial reports | Ensures solvency of the organisation and that the organisation is protected against fraud and theft; interprets regular financial reports; monitors and reviews financial performance; ensures expenditure aligns with objectives and priorities. |  |  |
| Ensures compliance | Ensures that the organisation is accountable and meeting reporting requirements of funding bodies, employment and other legislative responsibilities; has adequate insurances and provides a safe environment for staff and Board members. |  |  |
| Manages risk | Establishes a risk management framework to review and prioritise risks to the organisation; and develops strategies to control or mitigate risks that could threaten the organisation. |  |  |
| Critically reviews reports | Critically reviews CEO and other reports on the activities and financial position of the organisation to ensure the organisation remains viable and working to its strategic vision. |  |  |
| Monitors strategy and reviews achievements | Working with the CEO, monitors progress against strategic plan; revises strategy as required; and celebrates organisational achievements with staff and other stakeholders |  |  |

###  Stream: Working together

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I have | Example of how I have used this capability |
| Contributes to meetings | Regularly attends meetings; works to meeting protocols; listens actively; focuses on the presenting issue; and provides relevant and succinct contributions that assist the meeting to efficiently work through the agenda. |  |  |
| Engages with community / members | Builds and maintains relationships that will ensure decisions are informed by community’s /members’ best interests; promotes the organisation through various networks; and supports fundraising initiatives. |  |  |
| Works to a sound policy framework | Establishes Board policies to address financial management, terms for officeholders, conflict of interest, relations with CEO and code of conduct for Board; establishes other policies as required; ensures decisions are guided by agreed policies. |  |  |
| Fosters stakeholder engagement  | Communicates with stakeholders; ensures that appropriate mechanisms are in place to inform and engage with stakeholders to further the achievement of organisational objectives. |  |  |
| Provides leadership and works collaboratively | Works together to provide organisational leadership; respects differences and values diversity; supports the Chair and CEO to meet their obligations; and commits to agreed decisions. |  |  |

Stream: Being effective and accountable

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I have | Example of how I have used this capability |
| Clarifies roles and responsibilities | Establishes appropriate Board and sub-committee structures; ensures that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined; is clear about the distinction between governance and management; critically reviews Board performance. |  |  |
| Behaves ethically | Ensures Board independence; acts in the best interests of the organisation; avoids conflicts of interest; does not use position as a Board member to obtain advantages for self or others> |  |  |
| Makes clear and timely decisions  | Makes timely and transparent decisions that reflect a commitment to organisational sustainability and strategic vision; acts in good faith, and publicly stands by agreed Board position. |  |  |
| Operates within constitutional requirements | Ensures that the requirements and obligations of the constitution are met. |  |  |
| Respects confidentiality | Maintains confidentiality about decision-making and ensures that information is not misused. |  |  |

## Additional capabilities for the Office Bearers

Rating for the Potential Board Members Tool

| Use the rating | If you have |
| --- | --- |
| No experience | Have never performed this capability or don’t have the skill |
| Some experience | Performed this capability in the past (whether as a Board member, an employee or a community member) |
| Very experienced | Performed this capability often and at a high level |

### Chair

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I have | Example of how I have used this capability |
| Leads the Board  | Demonstrates leadership; inspires trust and confidence in Board members; creates an inclusive environment; fosters collaborative processes; provides a positive public face to the organisation; demonstrates commitment to organisational values; resolves disputes; fosters development of Board and ensures regular review of Board performance. |  |  |
| Establishes a dynamic and productive relationship with the CEO  | Establishes clarity about the role of Board and role of CEO; delegates management to CEO; encourages trust and regular communication; provides direction to the CEO in line with Board decisions; ensures that the Board engages constructively and honestly with the CEO to evaluate performance against stated objectives. |  |  |
| Chairs regular and focused meetings  | Adheres to clear agendas and timeframes for discussion, supports and focuses discussion, manages differences of opinion and ensures that clear outcomes are agreed; promotes Board engagement; calls special meetings of the Board or subcommittees as required. |  |  |

### Secretary

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I have | Example of how I have used this capability |
| Meets reporting requirements  | Oversees the timely and accurate preparation and lodging of statements to meet compliance reporting requirements. |  |  |
| Develops agenda and minutes of Board meetings  | Consults the Chair and other relevant people to develop agenda; circulates agenda and meeting papers prior to meetings; creates minutes that are timely, true and accurate. |  |  |
| Handles correspondence and records | Maintains membership records and ensures all necessary records are accessible for reports, elections and other votes; deals with correspondence and disseminates information promptly. |  |  |

### Treasurer

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capability | Descriptor | At this capability I have | Example of how I have used this capability |
| Ensures solvency and financial sustainability  | Monitors financial position, including cash flow and estimates of future financial performance; oversees financial systems, and takes appropriate actions to ensure that the organisation has necessary resources to meet its obligations. |  |  |
| Manages financial risk  | Monitors financial systems to identify errors and discrepancies; ensures that the finances are protected against theft and criminal activities; arranges regular audits and supports the audit process. |  |  |
| Controls finances | Ensures budget and expenditure reflect strategic intent of Board; assists in the preparation of the budget and presents it to the Board for approval; establishes financial processes and delegations; oversees all financial transactions and signs cheques within limits of authority. |  |  |

#

# Appendix 6: Learning and Development options

The following information can assist in developing the Board’s capabilities.

## Learning and development options

* learning as you do (doing the ‘business’ of the Board)
* attending a formal training program (internal or external)
* shadowing an expert
* coaching and mentoring
* action learning
* e-learning or self-paced learning

## Selecting the right training program

Please consider

* the course content – will it address all of your needs?
* cost
* duration and location of the program
* the reputation of training organisation or entity
* the opportunities the program presents to make direct links with your needs and your board situation
* the qualifications and experience of the trainer
* the size of the group – small groups are generally better
* the learning methods – for example lectures, group discussion, experiential, demonstration, practice
* whether there are any assessments or projects following the training
* whether it is accredited and can be linked to a qualification that you are pursuing

Many of these learning and development options are available free of charge or at low cost through your organisation’s peak body or can be accessed through the agency that funds your organisation.

Local government also may make learning and development opportunities available in the area in which your organisation is based.

Support, resources and training materials are available on the [Providers website](https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/governance-community-organisations) <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/governance-community-organisations>.

Look around at all the options and choose the ones that suit you and your individual needs.

## Explanation of learning and development options

### Learning as you do

This is where you learn through actually doing the tasks. It usually involves an instructor or more experienced person (such as the Board Chair) assisting in the performance of tasks related to the role, showing you how it should be done and assisting you with any difficulties. The advantages of learning as you do include:

* it provides experience
* it is highly relevant to the Board experience and needs
* the Board member is carrying out their tasks while learning
* it builds a relationship between the Board Chair and the Board members. Its drawback can be that the Board Chair might not be a highly skilled trainer or teacher.

### Training

Some learning lends itself to a classroom situation. The training can be mainly ‘intellectual’ or essentially ‘practical’. Classrooms also allow people to learn from the trainer or facilitator, and with others with the same need to know. The advantages of training include:

* it removes participants from the ‘distraction’ of the Board room
* it is independent of the organisation allowing for alternative views
* it enables them to focus directly of their learning needs
* in some instances people can develop skills before exposing themselves to the possible embarrassment of errors in the Board room.

### Shadowing an expert

Shadowing involves a less experienced person ‘shadowing’ a more experienced person during while they are undertaking tasks associated with the Board. In practice this would mean accompanying them to meetings, both Board meetings and those related to the Board, and watching them as they work. Usually shadowing is for a short intense period, such as a week. The advantages of shadowing include:

* No direct cost
* The learning occurs within the context of the organisation’s business

### Coaching and mentoring

Mentoring is a developmental technique that can offer significant benefits to the less experienced Board member (the mentee), as well as to the mentor. Mentoring and coaching share the key similarities of being task-oriented, people-oriented, process oriented and goal-oriented, however there is a difference between mentoring and coaching.

**Coaching** – works best when the need is the acquisition of new skills. Coaching is often carried out by the Board Chair, or a fellow Board member, who can give guidance and immediate feedback. Coaching is goal focused and usually works to tight and agreed timelines – it is very focused on a specific skill need.

**Mentoring** –works best when the need is the acquisition of wisdom. It is built on a relationship, not just a procedure or process like coaching and training. It is best undertaken by someone who is not a fellow Board member, usually someone who has more Board experience, who is able to objectively share their professional and personal skills, insights and experiences with someone who is less experienced to assist in their personal growth and development.

Advantages of coaching and mentoring:

* focuses on development of individual board members learning needs
* immediate support, guidance and feedback for the individuals
* encourages reflective practice for all involved including the coaches and mentors.

### Action learning

Action learning can be defined as a process in which a group of people come together more or less regularly to help each other to learn from their experience. The participants typically come from different situations where each of them is involved in different activities on different Boards and face individual challenges and issues.

It may also be possible to set up an action learning program for a group of Board members from the same Board. The group may face a common task or challenge. There may or may not be a facilitator for the learning groups which are formed.

The advantages of Action learning include:

* group members sharing knowledge and experience
* group members being able to share and learn from the challenges, issues and successes of their roles
* learning from other organisations governance structures and processes
* creating professional networks with other organisations.

# Document Version

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version     | Date    | Content changes    | Affected sections    |
| 1.0    | September 2012  | Original content    | Not applicable    |
| 2.0  | 2017  | Department names and weblinks   | Whole document   |
| 3.0   | August 2024  | Updated template, department names and weblinks   | Whole document   |

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