

Improving the Effectiveness of Your Board

Essentials of Nonprofit Governance and Board Relations

Course overview

Effective governance is essential to the long-term success of an organisation. In the NGO sector (as in other sectors) stakeholders are becoming more demanding in terms of what they expect. Donors want to be sure that their money is going to a well-governed and accountable organisation. Board members want to be satisfied that the time they are contributing to the affairs of the organisation is well spent. And leaders, managers and staff want to feel that their relationship with the Board is constructive and mutually supportive.

It is widely recognised in the NGO sector that there is much scope for improving governance. This three-day course is designed to equip Board Members, Executive Directors and other staff with the knowledge, skills and tools to identify that scope and devise and implement measures to exploit it.

Who should attend

The course will help:

- Board Members
- Executive Directors
- Managers and staff involved in Board relations
- Founders
- Consultants who carry out assignments for NGOs

Learning objectives: How you and your organization will benefit

The course will enable participants to:

- Understand why good governance is important
- Review the merits of different governance structures and models
- Understand why the composition of a Board is important
- Become familiar with good governance standards and codes
- Understand the roles and functions of Board Members, the Chairperson and Sub-Committees
- Assess the performance of a Board and implement strategies to enhance its effectiveness
- Create and maintain a constructive relationship between the Board and management

Course programme

Day 1	NGO Governance: Linking experience to Best Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting the scene:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governance concepts, challenges and perspectives• Impact of different governance structures• Meeting expectations: Good Governance standards codes and accountability• The relationship between Board Members, Executive Directors, Senior Managers, Founders and other stakeholders
Day 2	Board Structure, Roles & Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Composition of the Board• The roles and responsibilities of Board Members• The roles and functions of the Chairperson• Sub-committees of the Board
Day 3	Board Relationships and Behaviours <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Characteristics of effective boards• The relationship between the Board and Management• Board performance and development• Tools and practice for good governance

Format

The course will be in workshop format and will comprise lectures, facilitated discussions and case studies. Participants should expect to be challenged and stretched. To encourage frank discussion of what is sometimes a difficult and sensitive subject, the course will be conducted under “Chatham House Rules”. Participants will be expected to identify a set of personal objectives for the course when they apply; and to complete some background reading in advance. They will be encouraged to devise a short action plan to take away.

Trainers

The course will be jointly conducted by Anthony Beattie and Jonathan Wood. See www.ngoms.org/contacts.htm for more information.

Course options

The level and emphasis of the course will be adapted to meet the needs of participants identified in their personal objectives.

Subject to demand, separate tailored courses are available for 1) new Board Members, Executive Directors and Founders, 2) experienced Board Members 3) experienced Executive Directors, Senior Managers and other staff NGO staff members responsible for Board relations.

The course is also offered as a workshop for the Board and/or staff of a particular organisation.