NPO GOVERNANCE TOOL BOX SERIES

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AREAS TO BE COVERED IN BOARD ORIENTATION PROCESS

fmsf

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OUTLINE OF GOVERNANCE TOOL BOX

Tools for identifying, recruiting and developing a Board

- Characteristics of Board Member- Click here to download
- What materials to be shared with the Board Members- Click here to download
- Board Members commitment sheet (to be reviewed every year)- Click here to download
- **Areas to be covered in Board Orientation process**
- Board Diversity Matrix
- Board Size
- Source for Potential Board Members
- Creating a database of the Board Members

Job description (Including do's and don'ts)

- Chairperson (Including do's and don'ts)
- Board Members
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Vice-Chairman

Board Evaluations

- Board Evaluation Form
- CEO performance appraisal form

Board Committee

- Executive Committees
- Audit Committee
- Finance Committee
- Human Resource Committee
- Program Committee

Policies
• Human Resource Policy • Finance Policy • Conflict of Interest Policy • Gender Policy
Conducting Meetings/Making Decisions
• Notice • Setting the Agenda • Writing Minutes • Taking Resolutions • Attendance • Following up on Decision • Evaluating a Board Member
Creating a Board Manual
• Need for the Board Manual • Organization Essentials • Board Structure and Processes • Board – ED Relations • Executive Parameters • Review of Board Manual

AREAS TO BE COVERED IN BOARD ORIENTATION PROCESS

CONTENTS

1. WHAT IS BOARD ORIENTATION?

Board orientation is a process to thoughtfully provide new Board members with the precise information they need on their role in the organization. The purpose of Board orientation is to provide important information about the organization and about the Board's roles and responsibilities. It also serves to build a working relationship among Board members and helps to recognize the various skills available within the Board.

2. WHY IS BOARD ORIENTATION IMPORTANT?

Board orientation is important and required so that new Board members can find answers to some critical questions:

- What skills and knowledge do each of us bring to the table?
- What do we need to know and learn?
- How will we function as a Board?
- Within what principles will we operate?
- What resources are available?
- How often and where should we meet?
- How will we run our meetings?
- With whom and how will we communicate?
- What administrative systems will we require?
- Will we require outside advice on legal, planning and financial matters?
- What are our legal responsibilities?
- What decision-making and problem-solving techniques will we use?

New Board members need to feel like they are an integral part of the Board as soon as possible. Providing Information about the organization and roles/responsibilities will help them to feel at ease.

3. ORIENTATION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS:

There are steps you can take to move this process along. Conducting an orientation session of the entire Board shortly after the election is essential. It should occur well before the first Board meeting and can be as short as 2 to 4 hours or as long as a two-day special retreat which could be linked with a planning session.

It is important to spend time going over background material about the organization and bring them up-to-date on the issues facing the Board. (Refer to the earlier topic in blog "What materials to be shared with the Board").

Getting Board members comfortable with Board responsibilities and participating in meetings is a key objective. Not only do the new Board members start contributing right away during the meetings, they also develop a good working relationship with the veteran Board members.

The following are some key aspects to consider as part of the Board orientation:

- Hold a meeting with the Board Chairperson / President, Executive Director, and new Board members. The purpose of the meeting is to set the standard for conduct and achievement required from Board members, as well as to highlight the vision of the organization that the Board is endeavoring to achieve.
- Provide some of the history and evolution of the organization and review short term and long term goals.
- Provide Board members with information on organizational policies and procedures.
- Consider assigning a mentor - a senior member of the Board is assigned to tutor a new member in the operations of the Board.
- Consider incorporating teambuilding exercises for the Board as part of the orientation process.

4. DEVELOPING A BOARD ORIENTATION TIMETABLE:

After the new Board member has been brought onto the Board, the Board orientation process should be continued in a systematic way considering the information to be shared and time required. The first meeting should be scheduled with the chief functionary or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) where information about the history, vision, mission and ethos of the organization is to be shared.

As a second step, the meeting should be done to introduce new Board members with the staff and programs of the organization. In the third step, meeting should be scheduled with the current Board members and key individuals in the organization and also a detailed Board Manual should be provided.

Board Orientation Timetable

	Activity	Focus	Time Required
Step-1	Initial meeting/discussion with the Chief Functionary/ Chief Executive Officer(CEO)	Understand history, vision, mission and ethos of the organization. (Refer Checklist 1 in Board Orientation Checklist)	3 hours
Step-2	Meeting with the CEO and Staff Team	Understand the staff, their roles and responsibilities, Organization's Program and services. (Refer Checklist 2 in Board Orientation Checklist)	3 hours
Step-3	Meeting with the Board	Understand the Board member's role, Board policies, expectation from new Board etc. (Refer Checklist 3 in Board Orientation Checklist)	3 hours

5. BOARD ORIENTATION CHECKLIST:

Below are the items to be considered in developing an orientation session for new Board members. Much of this information will be covered in the Board Manual, but should be reviewed with new Board members to ensure they are comfortable with the information.

Checklist-1	Information about the Organization	
➢	History of the organization	
➢	Organizational / Board / Staff structure	
➢	Copy of constitution & by-laws	
➢	Vision & mission of the organization	
➢	Strategic priorities, goals and objectives	
➢	Summary of the programs and services	
➢	List of Board members / staff and their contact information	
➢	Provided brochures and other promotional materials	
Checklist-2	**Information about Staff and Financial Management**	
➢	Reviewed Executive's / Officers' role	
➢	Reviewed staff roles	
➢	Discussed Budget process	
➢	Provide current year's budget	
➢	Provided a copy of up-to-date audited financial statements	
➢	Provided a copy of most recent annual report	
Checklist-3	**Board Roles and Responsibilities and Other Information**	
➢	Reviewed Board member's role	
➢	Provided copies of minutes from previous Board meetings	
➢	Discussed expectations for and of new Board members	
➢	Gave a tour of facilities and offices	
➢	Reviewed committees and their roles	
➢	Had new Board members sign required paper work (i.e. Oath of Confidentiality, Memo of Understanding regarding roles and responsibilities etc.)	

6. CONCLUSION:

At the completion of the Board orientation process, members can be encouraged to provide feedback and recommendations. This will help strengthen the process for the future. The Board chair can periodically involve the members in one-on-one reviews of the progress following the orientation.

Watch out for the next issue on " Board Diversity Matrix".

Published by Mr. Sanjay Patra on behalf of

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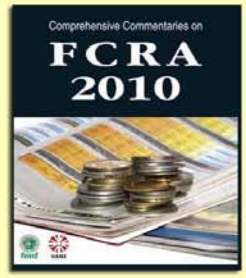

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The highlights of the book are:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Analysis of Foreign Contribution & Foreign Hospitality
- Analysis of Foreign Source & Foreign Company
- Analysis of Organisations of Political Nature
- Analysis of Audio Visual Broadcast & Community Radio
- Analysis of Gift Received from Relatives & Foreign Sources
- Procedure for obtaining Registration & Prior Permission
- Common grounds for rejection of Applications for Registration & Prior Permission
- Procedure for Renewal of Registration
- Suspension & Cancellation of Registration Certificate
- Law relating to Board Member and Changes in Board
- Administrative Expenses & Speculative Investments
- Designated & Multiple Bank Accounts
- Procedure for Change in Bank Account
- Procedure for change in Address, Nature or Objectives
- Role & Responsibility of Bank
- Investment & Fixed Assets
- Custody and Management of FC & Assets by Central Government
- Transfer of Funds to other FC Registered Organisations
- Transfer of Funds to other Unregistered Organisations
- Loan from Domestic & Other Sources
- Applicability to Liaison Offices & Branch Offices of Foreign NGOs
- International Transfers, Activities & Transactions
- Supporting individual Beneficiaries, CBOs and SHGs
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