



Is your Board Effective or Expendable?

Rick Moyes, a well-known nonprofit commentator and researcher, concluded: “A decade’s worth of research suggests that board performance is at best uneven and at worst highly dysfunctional. The experiences of serving on a board – unless it is high functioning, superbly led, supported by a skilled individual and working in a true partnership with the executive – is quite the opposite of *engaging*.”

I recently read an article by Dr. Eugene Fram, in which he states that a recent google search on “Dysfunctions in Nonprofit Boards & Organizations” yields 4,3330,000 items in a .53 of a second” <https://non-profit-management-dr-fram.com/author/eugenefram>. Dr. Fram goes on to say that these dysfunctions appear on charter school boards, church boards, healthcare boards, human service agency boards and trade associations and many others.

Is your board effective and engaged? If yes, congratulations. If no or maybe, ponder that one cause for a poor functioning nonprofit board is a poorly run board meeting. This oftentimes creates dissatisfaction and confusion and is a key contributor to bored and unengaged board members. Listening to dull committee reports, digressing, endless discussion and irrelevant commentary all contribute to frustrated and disappointed board members.

If your board meeting is not enlightening and engaging, consider tightening up your preparation so you can run a brilliantly effective board meeting.

- Prepare the Board agenda well in advance of your meeting.
- Send an announcement reminder with the agenda and necessary reports, documents, and financials at least 5 days in advance.
- Use a Consent agenda for approval of routine items
- Include review of at least one strategic goal
- Remain mission focused
- Make the meeting about decisions NOT updates
- Ensure all members participate
- Empower the board chair to steer discussions
- Appoint a person to record minutes
- Start and end on time

Remember, the experiences of serving on a board – unless it is high functioning, superbly led, supported by a skilled staff, and working in a true partnership with the executive – is quite the opposite of **engaging**. Use this time to strengthen the partnership with your board. It makes the difference between a performing and effective board and a dysfunctional one.

For an effective board meeting agenda, you can download my sample template at <https://www.mpekalaconsulting.com/free-resoures>

If you have questions or would like additional information, schedule a no fee phone all with me now.

I would love to hear about your organization.

Stay well and safe.

Marianne