How to build a Powerhouse Board

Whole board learning

Role of the board
Build an effective board
Roles and responsibilities
Work well together

www.nonprofitlearning.center
Potential energy

Energy stored as the result of its position
Powerhouse [pou-er-hous]

A person, group, team, or the like, having great energy, strength, and potential for success.

Our goal is to turn potential into action.
Purpose

Why your organization exists

Why your organization has decided to make a difference
“We can all get more together than we can apart. And this is the way we gain power. Power is the ability to achieve purpose, power is the ability to effect change, and we need power.”

— Martin Luther King Jr.
We provide low-income housing. 

Families are struggling because housing is so expensive. 

Our communities are stronger when families have their basic needs attended to. 

Everyone should be housed within our community.

We help Native people with land allotments. 

The paperwork for land allotments is complicated. 

Native people are suffering because they have been displaced from the land. 

Our survival depends on our connection to our ancestral lands.
Start with your mission to determine your purpose.

PURPOSE

We provide free healthcare to those in need.

Healthcare is expensive, and many people don't have insurance.

When people get sick, everyone in the community is impacted.

Our communities are stronger when everyone has access to healthcare.
We provide free healthcare to those in need.

Healthcare is expensive, and many people don’t have insurance.

Money shouldn’t be a barrier to someone’s ability to access healthcare.

Healthcare is a human right.

What will it take to achieve this purpose?

Everyone has access to healthcare.

PURPOSE

- Housing providers (Landlords, housing agencies, etc.)
- Faith communities
- Mental health services
- Medical professionals
- Medical institutions and suppliers
- Insurance companies
- Poverty-related wrap around support (food, clothes, etc.)
- Employers
- Communities
- Schools
Draw your purpose. Write your purpose in the center. Add elements that support that purpose.

Practice this sentence.

Our mission is _____ because __________.
Composition

BOARD DIVERSITY
What and why it matters

- Do I feel a strong connection with the mission and purpose?
- Do I understand the job as that organization defines it?
- Am I ready to contribute in meaningful ways?
Board recruitment

PURPOSE

Everyone should be housed

Research and data
Corporations

Wrap around support (food, clothes, etc.)

Financial service institutions

Low-income housing

Emergency housing

Mental health services

Faith communities

Work placement/school support

Schools

BOARD DIVERSITY
Approaches to the work

ISSUE KNOWERS
Know the problems and opportunities faced by individuals and the community

RESOURCE ACCESSORS
Can access important community resources of all types

INNOVATORS
Creative people who know how to solve problems and get things done

NETWORKERS
Bring different individuals and groups together and to work collaboratively
# BOARD MATRIX

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**NUMBER**

- Board members
- Learning plan
- Engagement plan

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9/16/2022
Imagine a board matrix for your organization. What goes across the top?

| BOARD MATRIX |

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Culture
Culture is the way a group of people does things.
HOW CULTURE SHOWS UP

Imagine you are a fly on the wall in your board meetings. How does culture show up?

Stuff

Actions

Assumptions

As new people join your board…

What aspects of your culture should stay?

What aspects of your culture should shift?

BOARD CULTURE
Focus

What conversations do you need the full brain power of your board focused on?
Board – Executive Director communication

**KEY NUMBERS Dashboard**
- Metrics
- Programs
- Financial

**ACTION TOPICS**
- Key decisions
  - To be made by board/ need board input
- Top of mind
  - Areas of focus/concern for ED

**INFORM TOPICS**
- Big Wins/ Learning
  - What board members need to know
- ED Summary
  - What board members need to know

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Board meeting agenda

**KEY NUMBERS Dashboard**
- MISSION
- PROGRESS TO MAKE THIS MEETING
  - Discuss
  - Deliberate
  - Decide

**ACTION TOPICS**
- CONSENT AGENDA
  - Topic 1
  - Topic 2
  - Topic 3

**INFORM TOPICS**
- CLOSURE

How do you have conversations of consequence?
What is one next step that you will take because of our conversation today?