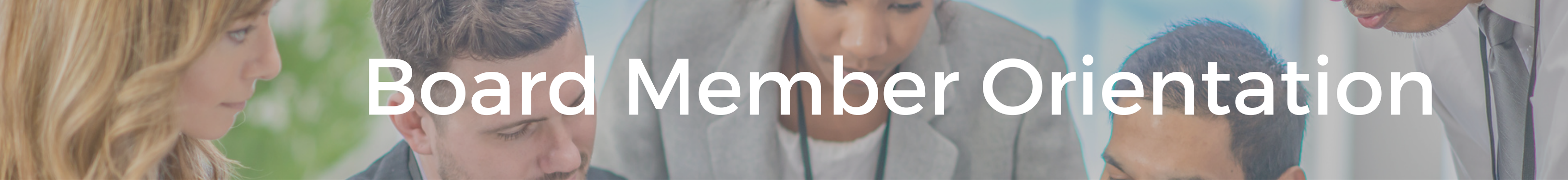


Board Member Orientation

Just as you would do an employee orientation with a recently hired team member, it is just as important to have an orientation process for when a new Board member joins your nonprofit organization.

Onboarding new Board members is a crucial process that helps them understand the organization's mission, culture, and expectations while effectively integrating them into their roles. This is one of the first impressions they will have of the organization, and putting care and intention into this process is likely to deepen their connection and commitment to succeeding in their role.

Below is a step-by-step guide for onboarding new Board members. It is recommended that this orientation is conducted as soon as possible they are elected to the board and definitely before they are assigned tasks.

Step 1: Welcome and Introduction

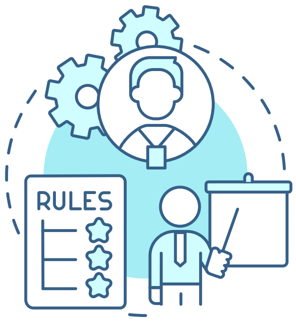
Objective: Set a positive tone and create a welcoming environment.

- Send a warm welcome email or letter expressing excitement about their decision to join the Board.
- Provide essential details about the organization, its mission, and its impact.

Step 2: Orientation

Objective: Provide an overview of the organization and its operations.

- Schedule an orientation meeting with key Board members, executives, and staff.
- Present an overview of the organization's history, mission, and current initiatives.
- Introduce key staff members and their roles.



Step 3: Board Handbook and Materials

Objective: Equip new members with essential documents and information. (A helpful handbook checklist is included below)

- Create a comprehensive handbook containing organizational Bylaws, policies, and key documents.
- Include a copy of the strategic plan and recent financial reports.

Step 4: Clarify Roles and Expectations

Objective: Ensure clarity on Board member roles and responsibilities.

- Clearly articulate the expectations of Board members.
- Discuss the roles of various committees and how they contribute to the organization's goals.
- Review and collect signed Commitment Form if not already done. (Sample included below.)

Step 5: Training and Development

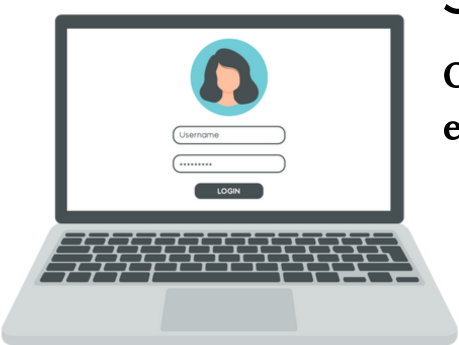
Objective: Build skills and knowledge necessary for effective Board service.

- Offer training sessions on topics such as nonprofit governance, fundraising, and financial oversight.
- Encourage participation in relevant workshops, webinars, or conferences.

Step 6: Introduce to Committees

Objective: Facilitate engagement through committee involvement.

- Assign new members to committees aligned with their skills and interests.
- Provide information on committee goals, meeting schedules, and key contacts.



Step 7: Mentorship Program

Objective: Foster a supportive environment and encourage relationship-building.

- Pair new members with experienced Board mentors.
- Encourage regular check-ins to address questions and provide guidance.

Step 8: Establish Communication Channels

Objective: Ensure clear communication and accessibility.

- Set up communication channels, such as email groups or collaboration platforms.
- Provide access to all of the necessary systems and documents they may need.
- Share contact information for key Board members and staff.

Step 9: Evaluation and Feedback

Objective: Gather feedback to improve the onboarding process.

- Conduct a feedback session to understand the new member's experience.
- Use feedback to make continuous improvements to the onboarding process.

Step 10: Schedule Regular Check-Ins

Objective: Monitor progress and address any concerns.

- Schedule regular one-on-one check-ins with the Board Chair or Executive Director.
- Encourage open communication related to experiences, challenges, and feedback.

Step 11: Ongoing Professional Development

Objective: Support continuous learning and growth.

- Share information on ongoing training opportunities and resources.
- Encourage participation in relevant industry events and workshops.

Step 12: Celebration and Recognition

Objective: Acknowledge milestones and contributions.

- Celebrate the successful completion of the onboarding process.
- Acknowledge the new member's contributions and commitment to the organization.

By following these steps, your nonprofit organization can establish a robust onboarding process that sets the stage for new Board members to actively contribute to the organization's success. Remember to tailor the process to fit the specific needs and culture of your organization.

Board Manual Checklist

A comprehensive Board manual is a valuable resource for Board members, providing them with essential information about the organization, its governance structure, policies, and procedures. Here's a checklist to help you create a thorough Board manual:

Section 1: Introduction and Welcome

- Welcome letter from the Board Chair or Executive Director
- Overview of the organization's mission, vision, and values
- Brief history of the organization

Section 2: Governance Structure

- Bylaws of the organization
- Organizational chart indicating Board and staff structure
- Roles and responsibilities of Board members
- Committees' purposes, structures, and members

Section 3: Board Meetings

- Schedule of regular Board meetings
- Agendas and minutes from previous Board meetings
- Guidelines for effective participation in Board meetings
- Information on special meetings and their procedures

Section 4: Financial Information

- Annual budget
- Recent financial statements and reports
- Policies related to financial management and controls
- Overview of the audit process (if applicable)

Section 5: Strategic Planning

- Copy of the organization's strategic plan
- Overview of the strategic planning process

Section 6: Policies and Procedures

- Code of Conduct and ethics policies
- Conflict of Interest Policy and disclosure forms
- Whistleblower Policy
- Document Retention and Destruction Policy

Section 7: Programs and Services Information

- Overview of current programs and services
- Impact reports and success stories
- Key performance indicators

Section 8: Legal and Compliance Documents

- Legal documents (e.g., articles of incorporation, tax-exempt status)
- Compliance checklist and requirements
- Insurance policies

Section 9: Board Member Resources

- Contact information for Board members and key staff
- Board member directory
- Board member biographies and photos
- List of key external contacts and stakeholders

Section 10: Orientation and Training Materials

- Onboarding process and materials
- Training resources and opportunities
- Professional development resources

Section 11: Emergency and Crisis Response

- Emergency contact information
- Crisis communication plan

Section 12: Additional Resources

- Relevant industry publications and articles
- Links to external resources
- Glossary of key terms and acronyms

Section 13: Forms and Templates

- Template for meeting agendas
- Template for meeting minutes
- Conflict of Interest disclosure form
- Expense reimbursement form

Section 14: Acknowledgment and Agreement

- Board member agreement form
- Acknowledgment of receipt of the Board manual

Section 15: Appendices

Additional documents and materials relevant to the organization

Notes:

- Ensure that the manual is regularly updated to reflect any changes in policies, procedures, or key personnel
- Include a table of contents for easy navigation
- Provide a printed and digital copy of the manual to each Board member

This checklist serves as a starting point, and you will need to tailor it to the specific needs and structure of your nonprofit organization. Regularly review and update the Board manual to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in supporting the Board's work.

Board Member Job Description and Commitment Form
[Your Nonprofit Name]

Members of the [Your Nonprofit Name] Board of Directors work with the Executive Director and Staff to provide expertise and guidance to the organization. Board members efforts are focused on matters which will have the greatest impact on the organization and on the policies related to accountability, quality of service and long-term stability.

Serving on the [Your Nonprofit Name] Board of Directors involves a legal, spiritual and moral commitment. Board members are accountable in three areas: responsible governance, principles of commitment, and financial responsibility.

A board member shows responsible governance as follows:

- Reads and has knowledge of the organization Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and pursues first-hand knowledge about the organization's services
- Ensures effective strategic planning and reviews organizational reports and activities to identify potential issues threatening the health of the [Your Nonprofit Name]
- Avoids self-dealing and conflicts of interest

A board member acts on principles of commitment as follows:

- Regularly attends all board and committee meetings and calls the board/committee chair or director when they cannot attend
- Keeps informed of general organizational activities
- Reads monthly minutes and reports
- Maintains confidentiality in all Board matters
- Cares for the organization, its staff, and clients
- Has long-term vision for the organization

A board member accepts fiduciary responsibility as follows:

- Acts to ensure the long-term financial stability and viability of the organization such as: oversight of investments, real estate, and income and expenses
- Pursues financial partners for the organization

Board member responsibilities:

- Serve a 3-year term of office. Can serve one additional term for a total of 6 years
- Serve on at least 1 standing committee
- Volunteer at events/activities throughout the year
- Attend board meetings (in person, phone or video conference), normally held every two months (5/6 attendance required)
- Attend the required Board retreat when scheduled, along with Board trainings
- Be a community ambassador for [Your Nonprofit Name] and its mission.
- Support the [Your Nonprofit Name]'s financial goals through assisting in fundraising activities or personal financial contributions to "give or get" $5,000 per year in donations.

________________________________ ________________________________

Signature Date Board Chair Date