
THE BOARD SELF-EVALUATION

Successful board teams pay attention to the process of how they operate. Just as they evaluate the progress of their library, they must also assess the operation of the board team and determine how they can do the job better.

It's up to the library board to hold itself accountable for good performance. To do that correctly, your board should take time every year to formally evaluate board performance. The purpose of the evaluation is not to find fault with board members or the full board, but to examine strengths and weaknesses. The formal self-evaluation should be followed with a plan to improve board performance.

Does our board prepare to do its job by:

1. conducting a thorough orientation for all new board members? Yes No
2. integrating new members into the team as quickly as possible? Yes No
3. participating in continuing education? Yes No
4. providing regular board development activities for all board members? Yes No
5. performing an annual self-evaluation of board operations? Yes No
6. providing all board members with copies of the mission statement, bylaws, ordinance, plan, library laws, and all other important documents of the library? Yes No
7. touring all facilities at least once a year? Yes No

Does our board ensure good meetings by:

1. limiting most meetings to two hours or less? Yes No
2. providing a comfortable meeting room conducive to business? Yes No
3. convening and adjourning on time? Yes No
4. having the board chairperson lead the meetings? Yes No
5. sticking to the prepared agenda? Yes No

6. ensuring the board has enough information to make decisions? Yes No
7. working for consensus rather than fighting for a majority? Yes No
8. discussing issues cordially, avoiding personal attack? Yes No
9. following a business-like system of parliamentary rules? Yes No
10. including the director as a resource for all deliberations? Yes No
11. confining all discussion to policy issues and avoiding management issues? Yes No
12. allowing/encouraging all board members to participate in discussion and not letting one or two persons dominate? Yes No

Do individual board members:

1. attend at least 90 percent of all board meetings and committee meetings to which they're assigned? Yes No
2. come to meetings prepared? Yes No
3. come to meetings on time? Yes No
4. feel free to express even dissenting viewpoints? Yes No
5. leave meetings with a feeling of accomplishment? Yes No
6. see themselves as part of a team effort? Yes No
7. act as advocates for the library? Yes No
8. know their responsibility as board members of the library? Yes No
9. attempt to exercise authority only during official meetings of the board? Yes No
10. represent the broad interest of the library and all constituents, not special interests? Yes No
11. understand that the most effective way to govern is to delegate management to the director? Yes No

Does our board plan for the future of the library by:

1. annually reviewing and approving the mission statement? Yes No
2. annually reviewing yearly objectives/work plan? Yes No
3. annually reviewing progress toward the long-range plan and modifying the long-range plan? Yes No
4. having board committees work and produce results? Yes No
5. operating from opportunity rather than crisis to crisis? Yes No

In which of the major categories above does our board show real strengths? In which of the major categories above does our board need improvement?