

Principles and Practices of Effective Board Governance

**A board self-assessment tool and a vehicle for dialogue
around the Board table**

Principles and Practices of Effective Board Governance

| Principle I | Ranking | | | | Notes |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 4 – Strongly agree | 3 - Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 – Strongly disagree | |
| The board uses the organization’s Mission, Vision and Values to guide their work and decision-making. | | | | | |
| Practices | | | | | |
| Our Mission, Vision, and Values are in place | | | | | |
| We review our Mission, Vision and Values on a regular basis | | | | | |
| Our Mission, Vision and Values are brief, inspiring, unique and memorable | | | | | |
| Our Mission, Vision and Values are reflected and integrated in all aspects of the organization’s policies and practices – governance, operations, human resources management, service delivery | | | | | |
| Our Mission, Vision and Values appear on our website, our marketing materials and are displayed in our office | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 24 | | | | | |

| Principle 2 | Ranking | | | | Notes |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 4 – Strongly agree | 3 - Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 – Strongly disagree | |
| The board is explicit about its authorities, processes and the obligations of its Directors | | | | | |
| Practices | | | | | |
| Our bylaws have been recently reviewed and updated to reflect our needs and practices | | | | | |
| We have a skills-based, strategic board recruitment process based on our needs and current inventory of board members | | | | | |
| We provide orientation to new board members and ongoing training/development | | | | | |
| Our board members agree to and sign off on code-of-conduct, confidentiality and conflict-of-interest policies | | | | | |
| All our committees have terms of reference | | | | | |
| We have a strong set of governance policies –which we regularly review and updated, that include how we govern, how/what we delegate to the CEO and the results we hope to achieve | | | | | |
| We have a board succession plan, including replacing out-going board members and moving current members into Officer roles. | | | | | |
| We include governance costs in our budget | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 36 | | | | | |



| Principle 3 | Ranking | | | | Notes |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 4 – Strongly agree | 3 - Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 – Strongly disagree | |
| No individual board member has more rights than another | | | | | |
| Practices | | | | | |
| The power of our board is as a whole | | | | | |
| Our board speaks and acts through its motions, resolutions and policies | | | | | |
| Once our board has made a decision, the decision is final and they move on to other matters | | | | | |
| Our board Chairperson is the link with and messenger to the CEO on behalf of board, but has no more power than other directors | | | | | |
| Our board Chairperson ensures that everyone has a chance to be heard before calling for a vote | | | | | |
| Our board has clear conflict-of-interest policies that are regularly reviewed and signed by each board member | | | | | |
| If a board member acts out of order, the Chairperson and/or the rest of the board gently, but clearly, reminds them of the correct protocol | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 32 | | | | | |

| Principle 4 | Ranking | | | | Notes |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 4 – Strongly agree | 3 - Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 – Strongly disagree | |
| The board sorts among competing priorities to represent the interests of the organization’s owners (its key stakeholder and major beneficiary of services) | | | | | |
| Practices | | | | | |
| Our board has established who are the organization’s owners | | | | | |
| Our board represents the interests of the owners at the board table & in its decision-making | | | | | |
| Our board puts aside their personal or professional allegiances in the best interests of the organization and the owners | | | | | |
| Our board connects with the owners at least once a year to find out their needs and how well the board has represented them | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 20 | | | | | |



| Principle 5 | Ranking | | | | Notes |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 4 – Strongly agree | 3 – Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 – Strongly disagree | |
| The board is diverse and encourages disagreement | | | | | |
| Practices | | | | | |
| Our board members have diverse viewpoints and experiences | | | | | |
| Our board strategically recruits new members and focuses on filling gaps in skills, experiences and perspectives | | | | | |
| Our board has a regular turn-over of directors, with finite terms of office | | | | | |
| At our board meetings, ample time is allocated for discussion | | | | | |
| At our board meetings, different opinions are encouraged and conflict is managed | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 24 | | | | | |



| Principle 6 | Ranking | | | | Notes |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 4 – Strongly agree | 3 - Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 – Strongly disagree | |
| The board forges a linkage with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that is both empowering and safe | | | | | |
| Practices | | | | | |
| Our board transfers certain authorities to the CEO | | | | | |
| Our board sets clear limits on the CEO’s authority | | | | | |
| Our board tells the CEO what they must not fail to do, not what to do or how to do it | | | | | |
| All our board members know what kinds of decisions the CEO can make without board approval, and those which must be made by the board | | | | | |
| Our board transfers all authority for day-to-day operations, including human resource management, to the CEO | | | | | |
| Our board conducts an annual performance review with the CEO | | | | | |
| The board has developed succession plans for the CEO – emergency, short-term and permanent. | | | | | |
| The level of authority transferred from the board to the CEO, is written in policy | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 32 | | | | | |



| Principle 7 | Ranking | | | | Notes |
|--|-------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 4 –Strongly agree | 3 - Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 – Strongly disagree | |
| Performance of the organization and the CEO is monitored rigorously, against certain criteria | | | | | |
| Practices | | | | | |
| Our board uses a current, updated version of our strategic plan to measure organizational outcomes in key priority areas | | | | | |
| Specific, planned, realistic outcomes, for the organization and the CEO to attain by certain dates, are agreed to by our board and CEO | | | | | |
| Our board regularly monitors results and checks actuals against pre-determined targets | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 16 | | | | | |

| Principle 8 | Ranking | | | | Notes |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 4 – Strongly agree | 3 - Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 – Strongly disagree | |
| Board meetings are well-attended, productive and enjoyable | | | | | |
| Practices | | | | | |
| We use a consistent (standing) agenda, which includes board education and social time. | | | | | |
| Most agenda items focus on the future, risk management and measuring success | | | | | |
| Meeting materials are distributed a week before so that board members can come prepared for discussion and decision-making | | | | | |
| Board materials are brief, concise, clear and marked as either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – for decision-making purposes – for monitoring purposes, or – for information only | | | | | |
| We meet in a comfortable, private setting with food and drink | | | | | |
| Our board meetings are the right length of time to cover the agenda and relevant board business. | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 20 | | | | | |



| Principle 9 | Ranking | | | | Notes |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 4 – Strongly agree | 3 - Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 – Strongly disagree | |
| There is alignment throughout the organization | | | | | |
| Practices | | | | | |
| Our organization’s Mission, Vision and Values are evident and consistently reflected in the organization’s work and in its bylaws, policies, marketing, behaviours and practices | | | | | |
| Our board and CEO roles are clear, explicit and differentiated from each other in policy | | | | | |
| The beliefs, actions and behaviours of our Board and Staff are in sync and rooted in our values | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 16 | | | | | |

TOTAL CHECKLIST SCORE OUT OF 220: _____

