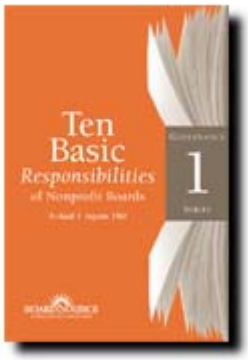
Ten Responsibilities of the Board

The board can protect itself and govern the organization by understanding what is required of it.

1. **Determine the Organization's Mission and Purposes**
   A statement of mission and purposes should articulate the organization's goals, means, and primary constituents served. It is the board of directors' responsibility to create the mission statement and review it periodically for accuracy and validity. Each individual board member should fully understand and support it.

2. **Select the Chief Executive**
   Boards must reach consensus on the chief executive's job description and undertake a careful search process to find the most qualified individual for the position.

3. **Support the Chief Executive and Assess Performance**
   The board should ensure that the chief executive has the moral and professional support he or she needs to further the goals of the organization. The chief executive, in partnership with the entire board, should decide upon a periodic evaluation of the chief executive's performance. [CEO is responsible unless the actions of the board prevent the CEO from performing his or her job.]



4. **Ensure Effective Organizational Planning**
   As stewards of an organization, boards must actively participate with the staff in an overall planning process and assist in implementing the plan's goals.

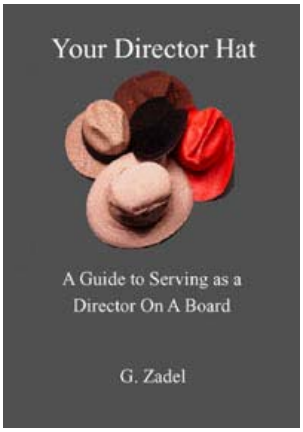
5. **Ensure Adequate Resources**
   One of the board's foremost responsibilities is to provide adequate resources for the organization to fulfill its mission. The board should work in partnership with the chief executive and development staff, if any, to raise funds from the community.

6. **Manage Resources Effectively**
   The board, in order to remain accountable to its donors, the public, and to safeguard its tax-exempt status, must assist in developing the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place.

7. **Determine, Monitor and Strengthen Programs And Services**
   The board's role in this area is to determine which programs are the most consistent with an organization's mission, and to monitor their effectiveness.

8. **Enhance the Organization's Public Image**
   An organization's primary link to the community, including constituents, the public,

and the media, is the board. Clearly articulating the organization's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public, as well as garnering support from important members of the community, are important elements of a comprehensive public relations strategy.



9. Ensure Legal and Ethical Integrity and Maintain Accountability

The board is ultimately responsible for ensuring adherence to legal standards and ethical norms. Solid personnel policies, grievance procedures, and a clear delegation to the chief executive of hiring and managing employees will help ensure proper decorum in this area. The board must establish pertinent policies, and adhere to provisions of the organization's bylaws and articles of incorporation.

10. Recruit and Orient New Board Members; Assess Board Performance

All boards have a responsibility to articulate and make known their needs in terms of member experience, skills, and many other considerations that define a "balanced" board composition. Boards must also orient new board members to their responsibilities and the organization's history, needs, and challenges. By evaluating its performance in fulfilling its responsibilities, the board can recognize its achievement and reach consensus on which areas need to be improved.

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