



Board Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

A Tool for Improving the Governance Practices
of Non-Profit Organizations

Name _____ (optional) For period from _____ to _____

Board Self Evaluation Questionnaire

This tool is designed to be used as an annual or biennial board self-evaluation. It seeks to help a board answer the question: *what are we as a board now doing well and what can we do better?*

This tool is intended to stimulate reflection and discussion; it is not a scientific survey instrument that has been tested on a large number of boards and for which there are average results. **It is also a “paper” survey rather than an online survey.** Paper surveys and the act of using a pen or pencil are often superior to online surveys in encouraging reflection.

All board members should answer the questions. Feel free to make marginal notes and comments about your board or even critique the questions themselves. There are five sections:

- A. How well had the board done its job?
- B. How well as the board conducted itself?
- C. How is the Board’s relationship with the CEO or Executive Director?
- D. What about my performance as an individual director?
- E. Feedback to the Board Chair (Optional)

The overall rating for each section is meant to offer a rough score only.

Section D should be answered by board members but not shared with the group. Please remove this sheet before submitting your completed questionnaire if an independent person is tabulating the results.

Sections A, B and C should also be completed by the **Executive Director or CEO.**

This questionnaire also includes **Section E**, which provides feedback to the Chair of the board if he/she so desires it. This section is perhaps best used in cases where the person has been in this post for 6 months or more. This section can also be used to stimulate discussion in a separate board agenda item on the role of the chair initiated by the chair.

Here are two other questions, the second may be best answered upon completion of the questionnaire:

- a. How long have you served on this board? _____
- b. How many other boards have you (or do you serve on? _____. What are two or three words that distinguish this board from other boards you have served on? _____; _____ ; _____

Instructions:

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).

A. How well has the board done its job?

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our organization operates with a strategic plan or a set of measurable goals and priorities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The board's regular meeting agenda items helps focus our attention on our strategic plan or priorities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The board assesses how the organization is achieving its mission and goals. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The board makes time to explore external challenges and opportunities facing the organization in the community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The board has created or reviewed, in this period, some of its key governance documents (e.g. policies, by laws, board position descriptions, committee terms of reference). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The board gives direction to staff on how to achieve the goals primarily by setting, referring to, or revising policies. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The board has identified and reviewed the organization's relationship with each of its key stakeholders. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The board ensures that the organization's accomplishments and challenges are communicated to key stakeholders. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. The board has ensured that stakeholders have received reports on how our organization has used its financial and human resources. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Add your own question here:

- | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10. _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|

My overall rating (add together the total of the numbers circled):

Excellent (40+) Satisfactory (39-24) Poor (24- 10)

B. How well has the board conducted itself?

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. As board members we are aware of what is expected of us. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The agenda of board meetings are well planned so that we are able to get through all necessary board business. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. It seems like most board members come to meetings prepared. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. We receive written reports to the board in advance of our meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. All board members participate in important board discussions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. We do a good job encouraging and dealing with different points of view. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. We all support the decisions we make. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The board assesses its make-up, diversity and skills in advance of recruiting new board members. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. The board assumes much of the responsibility for director recruitment and orientation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Board members have some interaction with external stakeholders at board meetings (e.g. as guests) or between meetings in their role as board members. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

My overall rating:(add together the total of the numbers circled)

- Excellent (40 +)
 Satisfactory (39-24)
 Poor (23-10)

C. The board's relationship with Executive Director

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. There is a clear understanding on most matters where the board's role ends and the executive director's begins. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. There is good two-way communication between the board and the executive director. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The board trusts the judgment of the executive director | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The board provides direction to the executive director by setting and reviewing policies. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The board has reviewed the kinds of information and level of detail it requires from the executive director | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The board has developed formal criteria and a process for evaluating the executive director | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The board, or a committee of the board, has formally evaluated the ED within the past 12-24 months. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The board evaluates the executive director primarily on the accomplishment of the organization's strategic goals and priorities and adherence to policy. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. The board provides feedback and shows its appreciation to the executive director on a regular basis. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. The board ensures that the executive director is able to take advantage of professional development opportunities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

My overall rating: (add together the total of the numbers circled)

- Excellent (40+) Satisfactory (39-24) Poor (23-10)

D. My performance as a board member (Not to be shared)

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I am aware of what is expected of me as a board member. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I have a good record of meeting attendance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I read the minutes, reports and other materials in advance of our board meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I am familiar with what is in the organization's by-laws and governing policies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I frequently encourage other board members to express their opinions at board meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I am encouraged by other board members to express my opinions at board meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I am a good listener at board meetings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I follow through on things I have said I would do. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. I maintain the confidentiality of all board decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. When I have a different opinion than the majority, I raise it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. I support board decisions once they are made even if I do not agree with them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I promote the work of our organization in the community whenever I had a chance to do so. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. I stay informed about issues relevant to our mission and bring such information to the attention of the board. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

My overall rating: (add together the total of the numbers circled)

Excellent (55+) Satisfactory (54-40) Poor (39-13)

E. Feedback to the Chair of the Board (Optional)

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Maybe or Not Sure (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).

1. The chair is well prepared for board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The chair helps the board stick to the agenda.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The chair tries hard to ensure that every board member has an opportunity to be heard.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The chair is skilled at managing different points of view	1	2	3	4	5
5. The chair has demonstrated versatility in facilitating board discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The chair knows how to be direct with an individual board member when their behaviour needs to change.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The chair helps the board work well together.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The chair demonstrates good listening skills.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The board supports the chair.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The chair is effective in delegating responsibility to board members where necessary.	1	2	3	4	5

My overall rating: (add together the total of the numbers circled)

Excellent (40 +) Satisfactory (39-29) Poor (28-10)