

Board Members as Volunteers

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Presentation Objectives

- To review the core roles of the board of directors
- To understand how volunteer management practices can lead to healthy and supportive boards

Presentation Topics

1. Defining Board of Directors
2. Are Board Members Volunteers?
3. Best Practices in Volunteer Management applied to Board Members

Definition

The **Board of Directors** is the governing body of a nonprofit or charitable organization. Individuals who sit on the board are responsible for overseeing the organization's activities. Board members meet periodically to discuss and vote on the affairs of the organization.

McRay, G. (2014, December 11). A nonprofit board of directors – what is a board? Foundation Group.

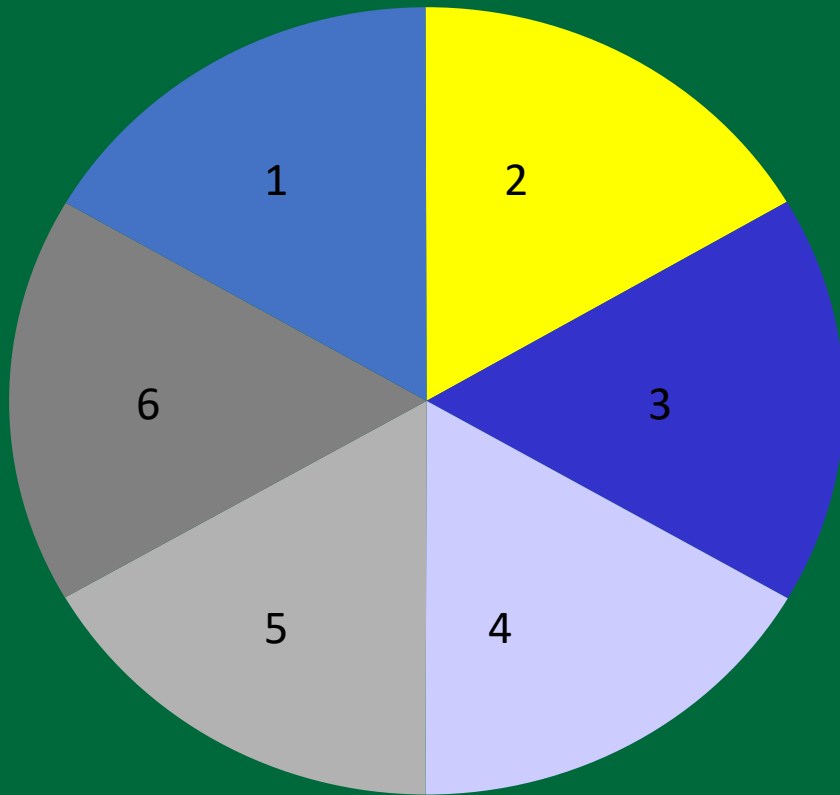
Boards are obliged to:

- Maintain a position of trust and hold rights and powers for your organization
- Bound to act for the benefit of your organization

Directors are obligated to:

- At all times act honestly, ethically and diligently for the organization and its stakeholders
- Be loyal and always act in the best interest of the organization and its stakeholders
- Avoid conflict of interest and subordinate personal interest to those of the organization

Areas of Board Responsibility



- 1. Board Structure and Process**
- 2. Planning & Evaluation**
- 3. Financial Stewardship**
- 4. Human Resources Stewardship**
- 5. Risk Management**
- 6. Community and Stakeholder Relations and Accountability**

Adapted from Board Basics
Manual (United Way of Canada)

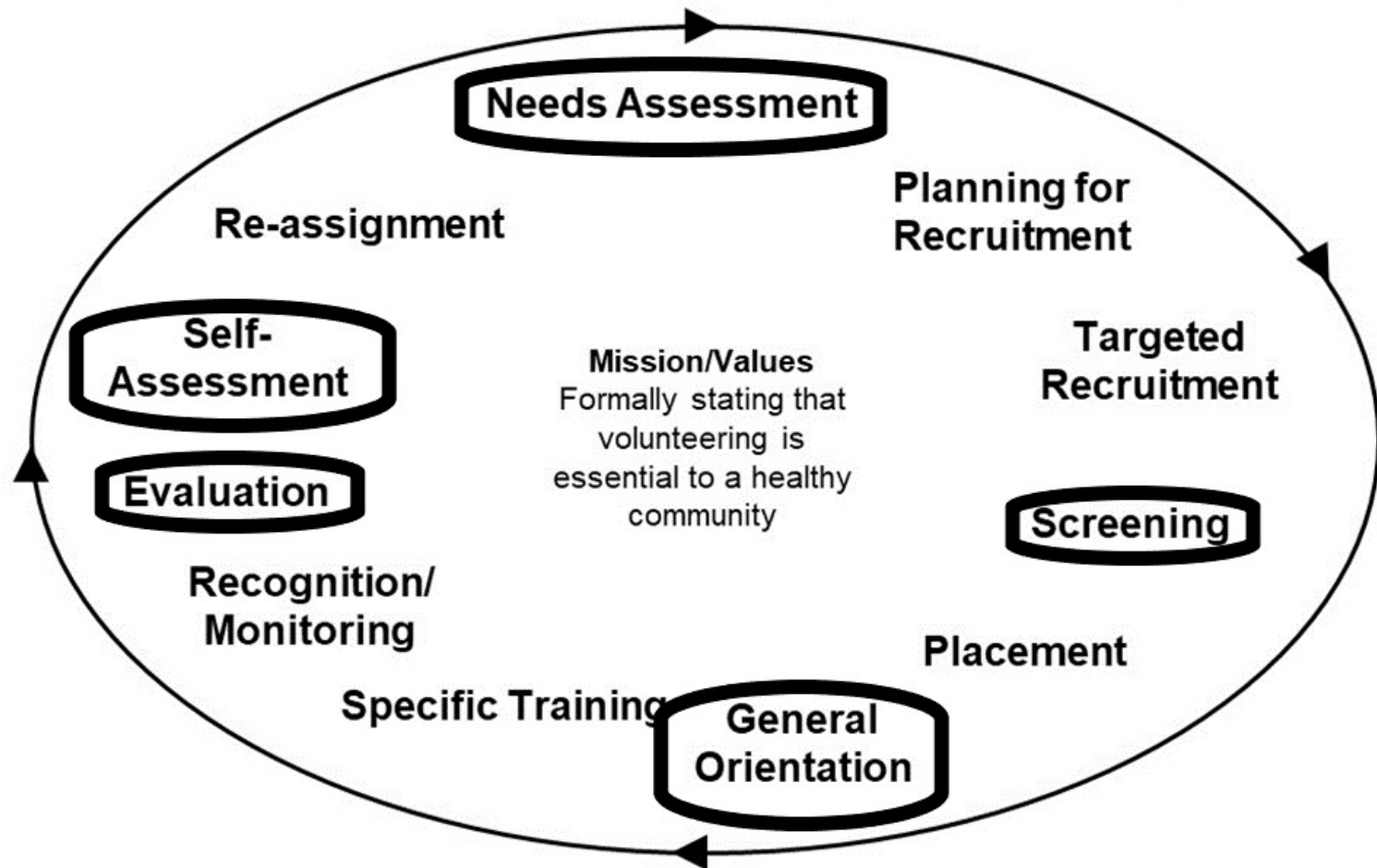
Are Board Members Volunteers?

- Board Members and Executive Directors/CEOs don't always see board members as volunteers
- Best Volunteer Management practices are not always applied to board members

Are Board Members Volunteers?

- Board Members give of their time and skills to build, develop and provide oversight for charities and nonprofit organizations
- Board Members cannot be legally compensated for their work on a board.
- A board member is a volunteer.

Volunteer Development Cycle



Needs Assessment

The Board and senior staff will set the tone or culture of the organization and the board

- A board's culture is defined by the unwritten rules that influence directors' interactions and decisions. These include the mindsets, hidden assumptions, group norms, beliefs, values and artifacts (such as the board agenda) that influence the style of director discussions, the quality of engagement and trust among directors, and how the board makes decisions.

Anderson, G., De Angelis, E., & Vad, M. (2018). In a new era for boards, culture is key. Spencer Stuart.

Needs Assessment

- A more tangible and common means of assessing the skills to target for the board is a Board Composition Matrix

**Board Composition Matrix
2021-2022**

Board Member Name:			
Age		Qualities	
Under 18		Leadership skills/motivator	
19-34		Willingness to work/availability	
35-50		Personal connection to the mission	
51-65		Personal Style	<i>Check the two that best apply</i>
Over 65		Catalyst for change	
Gender		Consensus builder	
Man		Good communicator	
Woman		Mediator	
Non-binary		Implementer/gets things done	
Prefer not to answer		Strategist/asks great questions	
Transgender		visionary	
Yes		Areas of Expertise	<i>Rate each one on a scale of 0 to 5</i>
No		Administration/management	
Prefer not to answer		Advocacy/public policy	
Race/Ethnicity	<i>check all that apply</i>	Education	
Indigenous		Entrepreneurship	
Black Canadian		Financial management: accounting	
Caucasian		Financial management: investments	
Hispanic		Fundraising	
Asian		Government	
Other (please list):		Governance/non-profit management	
Language		Health care/medicine	
French		Human resources	
English		Law	
Other (please list)		Marketing/public relations	
		Newcomer/immigration	
Disability		Physical plant/facilities/engineering	
Visible		Real estate	
Invisible		Social media	
Prefer not to answer		Strategic planning	
Community Connections	<i>Rate each one on a scale of 0 to 5</i>	Technology	
Corporate		Other (please list):	
Education		Availability	
Faith-based organizations		Board meetings (up to 10/year)	
Health care		Committee meetings (up to 10/year)	
Media		Strategic planning	
Philanthropy			
Political			
Small business			
Social services			
Other (please list):			

Screening

- Intake form
- Interview
- Reference Check
- Police Records Check / Vulnerable Sector Check

Orientation

- Intro to organization
- Intro to financials
- Intro to board practices
- Where to find documentation
 - Bylaws, policies
 - Past minutes
 - Current packages

Board Actions

- Board members differ from other volunteers within the organization...
 - They hire and supervise the most senior staff member
 - They have oversight over all organizational actions
 - They set the strategic plan and hold themselves and staff accountable to that plan
 - When a board acts it acts as a unit

Evaluation

- Boards of Directors should regularly evaluate their work
- This differs from being evaluated by a supervisor as it is really a self-assessment that should drive conversation about how to improve board processes and build on the good work that is being done

Evaluation

- The board's meeting agenda clearly reflects our strategic plan or priorities.

1 2 3 4 5

- The board has insured that the organization also has a one-year operational or business plan.

1 2 3 4 5

- All board members participate in important board discussions.

1 2 3 4 5

- We all support the decisions we make.

1 2 3 4 5

- There is a clear understanding of where the board's role ends, and the Executive Director's begins.

1 2 3 4 5

Self-Assessment

- As part of the evaluation of the work of the board as a whole, each member should also assess how they are doing within the board framework.
- Are they keeping board volunteering and program volunteering compartmentalized.

Self-Assessment

- I am aware of what is expected of me as a board member.

1 2 3 4 5

- I have a good record of meeting attendance.

1 2 3 4 5

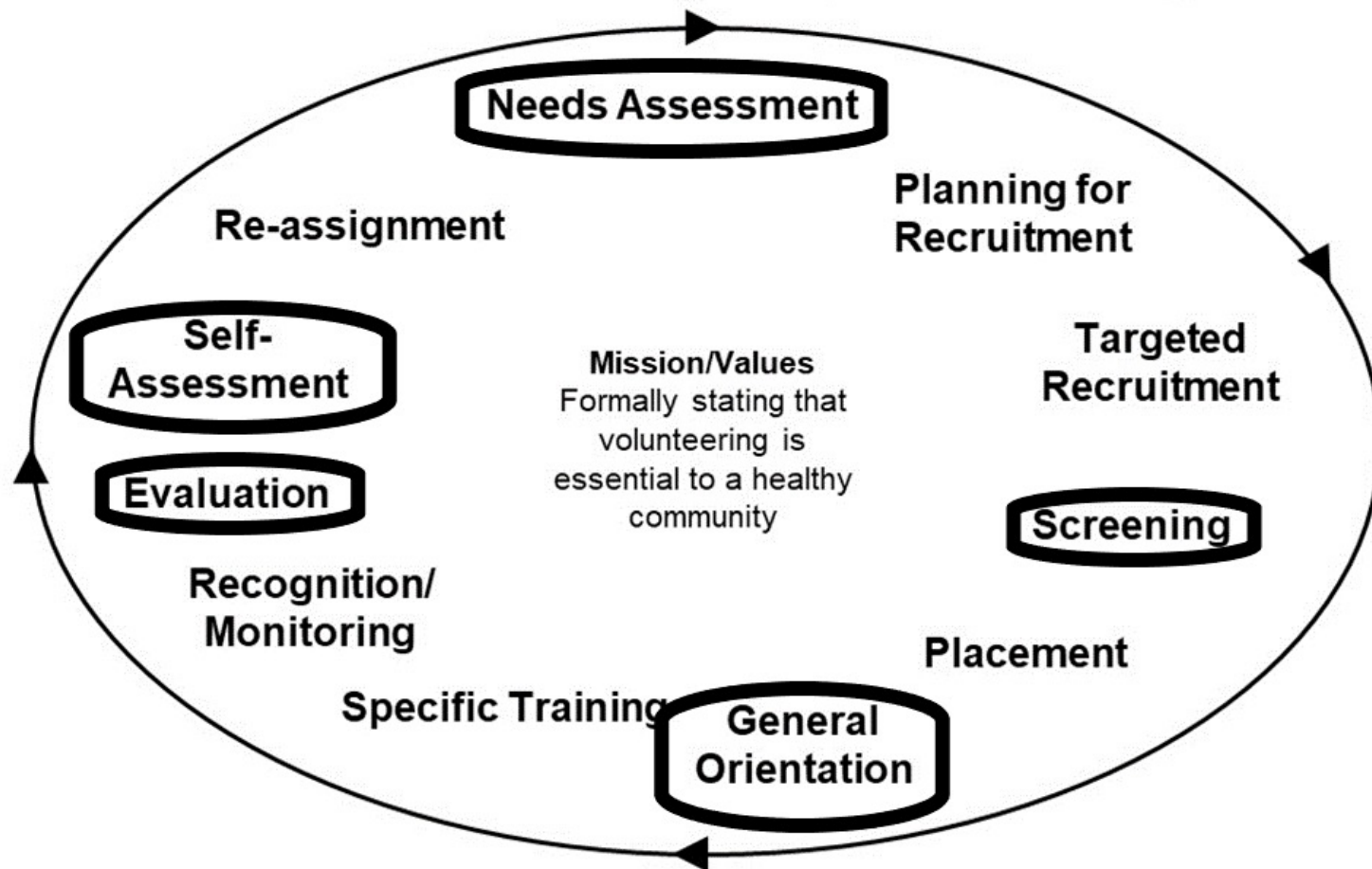
- I read the minutes, reports and other materials in advance of our board meetings.

1 2 3 4 5

- I am familiar with what is in the organization's by-laws and governing policies

1 2 3 4 5

Volunteer Development Cycle



References

Anderson, G., De Angelis, E., & Vad, M. (2018). In a new era for boards, culture is key. Spencer Stuart. <https://www.spencerstuart.com/-/media/2018/pov/pov2018-new-era-boards-culture-key-april.pdf>

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