



# What Makes for a Great Non-Profit Board and Why is it so Important?

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# Five Essentials of Board Excellence

*An excellent board...*

## **1. Embraces the value proposition of the institution, its mission and culture**

- The promise the institution makes to its constituency
- Institutional purpose, heritage, and ethos
- Institutional distinctives, brand and value
- Guards against institutional drift

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## 2. Creates and maintains a steward board culture

- Steward board vs owner board
- Stewards the institution as a spiritual enterprise
- Cultivates the board's spiritual vitality
- Understands and nurtures the calling of each board member

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## **3. Understands and exercises steward board authority**

- Board authority expressed as one voice vs individual voices
- Policy governance and board policy manual
- Prudent plans for presidential selection and evaluation
- Effective path for board chair and presidential partnership

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## **4. Ensures the sustainability of the institution via strategic thinking and planning**

- Modes of governance as leadership – fiscal, strategic and generative
- Accurate assessment of institutional SOAR
- User friendly dashboard of institutional KPI's
- Compliance, risk assessment and crisis management

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## 5. Practices strategic board development and evaluation

- A robust and highly effective board governance committee
- Strategic board member recruitment and selection, and a comprehensive orientation program
- Board evaluations
- Continuous board development

# Next Steps

1. Board Assessment
  - A. Honest appraisal of your strengths and areas for improvement
  - B. Use good assessment tools: corporate and individual
  - C. Use the Five Essentials or other template for your evaluations
  
2. Create recommendations for improvement
  - A. Create your Board Development Plan
  - B. Use the Five Essentials as an outline
  - C. Identify resources you will need to be successful
  
3. Evaluate and adjust
  - A. Create metrics to track performance
  - B. Evaluate regularly
  - C. Adjust as needed to stay on track