

Luncheon Meeting for Professional Board Staff

**West Virginia Higher Education
Policy Commission
Board of Governors Summit
August 7, 2015**

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Practical guidance for president's assistants and board liaisons for more effective volunteer leadership by:

- identifying current and future leadership needs
- developing effective orientation and ongoing education
- enhancing the effectiveness of board and committee work
- assessing governance practices

1. Establish, disseminate and keep current the institution's mission.
2. Select a president to lead the institution.
3. Support and periodically assess the performance of the president and establish and review the president's compensation.
4. Charge the president to lead a strategic planning process, participate in the process, approve the plan, and monitor its progress.

5. Ensure the institution's fiscal integrity, preserve and protect its assets and engage directly in fundraising and philanthropy.
6. Ensure the educational quality of the institution.
7. Preserve and protect institutional autonomy and academic freedom.
8. Ensure that policies and processes are current and properly implemented.

9. In concert with senior administration, engage regularly with major constituencies.

10. Conduct the board's business in an exemplary fashion and with appropriate transparency, ensure the currency of board governance policies and processes, and periodically assess the performance of the board, its committees and its members.

Are engaged and informed—understand and respect differences between governing and managing.

Support presidential leadership—build a partnership around the distinct roles of the board and the president.

Balance oversight and advocacy—serve as ambassadors of the institution while ensuring institutional accountability.

Provide opportunities for meaningful deliberation.

Are forward-looking and strategic.

Understand the value of formal and informal communication.

Observe the highest ethical standards and avoid conflict of interest.

Engage in robust debate and speak with one voice once decisions are made.

Engage with important constituencies but reserve the authority for decisions.

**How should you
function?
Influence without
Authority**

- Profile the current board.
- Identify future needs.
- Write a statement of expectations for members.
- Build the pipeline.
- Plan for several years.

Resource:

The Governance Committee: Independent Institutions, AGB Effective Committee Series, E.B.Wilson and James Lanier (AGB, 2013). Version for public institutions is in preparation.

- Statement of Expectations/Commitment
- Orientation of new board members
- Mentor programs
- Continuing education of the board

Resources:

Consequential Boards: Adding Value Where it Matters Most, Report of the National Commission on College and University Board Governance, (AGB, 2014)

- Make committee assignments strategically: use talent, develop leadership, rotate assignments.
- Reexamine committee structure—does it meet current needs?
- Tips to enhance board engagement

Resources:

Artis Hampshire Cowan, “Marshalling the President’s Cabinet for Effective Governance,” *Trusteeship Magazine*, March/April 2015

- Organize most of the board's work by committee.
- Each committee should have a clear charge in the bylaws or other board documents which reflect strategic board responsibilities.
- Committees should monitor strategic performance and recommend decisions and actions to the full board.
- The executive committee should also have a clear charge and not encroach on the work of others.
- Committee performance should be monitored by the executive committee and assessed annually.

- Each committee should have a *chair and vice chair* (board members) who rotate periodically – three years is ideal.
- Each committee should have a senior staff member assigned who can facilitate its work and support the chair.
- Committee members should receive *concise, focused agenda and supporting material* from the committee chair and senior staff prior to meetings.

- Set annual board and committee goals.
- Establish an annual calendar for meetings.
- Match agenda, goals, reports, and seasonal decisions.
- Use consent agendas, **minimize reports, make time for strategic discussions.**
- Provide materials well in advance of meetings.

- Each board member, individually
- Committees
- Board
- Other times: meetings, campaigns, leadership transitions, strategic plans

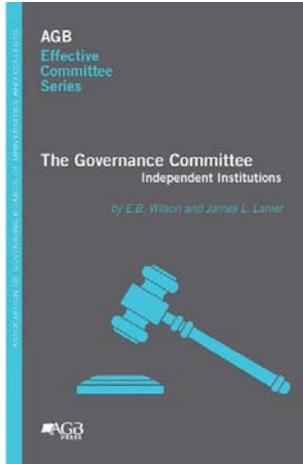
Unleashing Your Own Potential: Influence without Authority

- How do you communicate these ideas to the president?
- How do you enhance your value as a trusted advisor?
- How do you relate to the president's cabinet?

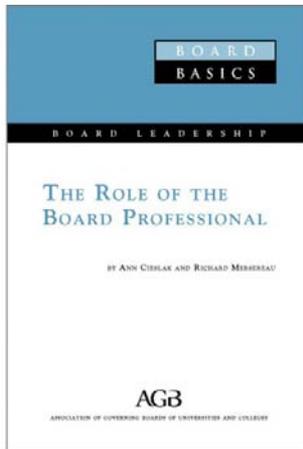
Resources:

David Rubenstein and Richard Riddell, "Board Chairs and Board Professionals, Partners in Governance," *Trusteeship Magazine*, Jan/Feb 2014.

Merrill Schwartz, "The Expanding Role of Board Professionals," *Trusteeship Magazine*, Sept/Oct 2010.



Effective Committee Series, The Governance Committee—Independent Institutions, by EB Wilson and James Lanier, (AGB, 2013). Version for public institutions in preparation.



Board Basics, The Role of the Board Professional, by Ann Cieslak and Richard Mersereau, (AGB, 2008)

Web site: www.agb.org

Ning Network for Board Professionals—a secure website for AGB member board professionals.

www.agb.org/ning-network-board-professionals.

Workshops and conferences, especially the Workshop for Board Professionals, National Conference on Trusteeship in April each year. Also, check regional meetings for board professionals. Next one is October 4-5, 2015 in Denver, CO.