



MANAGING ASSOCIATION BOARDS

Don't you ask yourself always the same questions when meeting with your association board:

- ✓ Are our board meetings productive and efficient?
- ✓ Are we getting the most from our meetings?
- ✓ Does the board meet to conduct business or to socialize?
- ✓ How can we become more effective and efficient?
- ✓ How can we enhance the value of our board meetings?

Whoever is involved in the management of a board (AMCs or PCOs) is considered as a partner of the association, someone who is taking care of all the details, someone who handles the preparation for the meetings, assists in the different processes, records minutes, helps to define the communications and represents the association board with dedicated team members to provide a physical presence and a personal touch.

Looking at our 5 questions let's sum them up in one:

Are we capable of running all the board processes smoothly and achieve results? These concepts are important to the answer: efficiency, effectiveness, value, and productivity, while focusing on three points, ie priorities, data, and meeting pace.

When an association board meets we must define and focus on **priorities**. Unrealistic agendas with 50 objectives may be impressive but are unrealistic and counter-productive. We need to set a list of priorities for each meeting and focus on those issues. If you have many issues to address spread them out over the course of the year. You will be more efficient and see better results. In the end, **less is more in driving focus and alignment.**

WHEN AN ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETS WE MUST DEFINE AND FOCUS ON PRIORITIES. UNREALISTIC AGENDAS WITH 50 OBJECTIVES MAY BE IMPRESSIVE BUT ARE UNREALISTIC AND COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE

COME PREPARED WITH THE RIGHT DATA

Be familiar with the issue that will be addressed at the meeting. It is particularly important to engage in weekly conversations with board members, association members, and customers: **qualitative and quantitative feedback provides clarity and foresight.**

MEETING PACE

When you get a group of people together addressing communication is always a challenge. A structured meeting creates the space and time for boards to debate and make the important decisions that drive the organisation. **But give your board enough time to make better/faster decisions** - during the meeting always move forward, make decisions!

Every item up for discussion should end with a vote to approve, reject or table the issue with a clear understanding of why the item is being postponed and when it will be revisited. When taking action on an item, make sure it is clear who will be responsible for getting that task completed. We should always remember that **ambiguity cripples boards.**

Board members should also recognise that they are part of a team and not take a confrontational position with fellow board members or their management company: **even disagreement can bring compromise and consensus.**

HEALTHY BOARD MEETINGS MEANS A HEALTHY ASSOCIATION

The tone of the board can set the tone for the community. So if you want a healthy, vibrant and successful community, that image should be reflected at your board meetings!

Also, be a team player, remember to help your leader to inspire others to serve, to build a team of future leaders who will want to emulate their leadership. By doing so the board members will find serving on the board not a burdensome chore but a rewarding experience that they will value for years to come.

People aren't machines - just because we can automate meetings doesn't mean we are machines ourselves. The software and the agenda are here to make things easier and to free up more time to focus on people.

Back to our 5 questions: we can reach outstanding results from a good management of association boards. Collective intelligence (preparation and involvement), peer pressure (inspiring others to serve at their best), clear communication (knowing how to reach them, defining the rules of the game) and a good mix can be the oil of the engine that accelerates professional development and productivity in your association.



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