

McKINSEY & COMPANY NONPROFIT BOARD SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL – SHORT FORM

OVERVIEW

The Nonprofit Board Self Assessment Tool is designed to help nonprofit organizations assess their board's performance and identify priorities for board activities going forward. We believe this combination of performance assessment and priority-setting is the foundation of superior nonprofit board performance over time. The tool should be used with our framework for nonprofit board responsibilities, which describes in detail the key elements of effective nonprofit board governance. The output of the assessment is intended to focus discussion among board members around the governance activities that will result in the greatest benefit for the organization. The tool may be used by nonprofit managers and board members:

- To identify the areas of board performance that are strongest and those that need improvement
- To identify priority areas for the board to focus on over the next 1 or 2 years
- To allow different views to emerge – the difference between responses given by two groups of board members or by the board and senior staff can be tracked and then used to start a discussion

Please make generous use of the comments section to expand on or explain your ratings. We typically find summaries of anonymous comments as helpful as the ratings themselves in surfacing issues.

This tool is meant to create an informed starting point for discussion among the leadership of a nonprofit. Informed discussion and commitment to address priorities results in board effectiveness. We encourage you to adapt the tool to meet your own organization's governance needs, and we appreciate feedback on how to improve the usefulness of this tool.

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GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSORS

The Nonprofit Board Assessment Tool has three sections:

1. Performance of the board (or board committee) on its core responsibilities
2. Perceived importance of responsibilities for the next 1-2 years
3. Quality of enablers in place to support board effectiveness

In Section 1, "Performance of board on its core responsibilities," please rate how well your board is performing on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = poor, 2 = average, 3 = distinctive). Please use the comments section to expand on any aspect of performance you wish. If a row is not relevant to the organization assessed, write "N/A" in the comments section; if you simply have no knowledge, write "D/K."

For each of the responsibilities in Section 2, "Perceived importance of responsibilities for the next 1-2 years," indicate how important you believe it will be for the board to focus on each area in order to make the most positive impact on the performance of the organization. Since the board cannot focus on all responsibilities with equal weight at the same time, the ratings are intended to indicate relative priorities for each responsibility.

In section 3, "Enablers of board effectiveness," please indicate your level of agreement with the set of questions designed to evaluate the quality of board enablers in place.

Please return your completed tool to the administrator, who will collate the results and compile an anonymous summary of comments for board discussion.

Please identify your role in the organization:

Board Member _____ Management _____ Other _____

Approximate time needed for completion: 5 minutes

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SECTION 1: ASSESSING THE BOARD’S CURRENT PERFORMANCE ON KEY BOARD FUNCTIONS

Effective nonprofit boards fulfill a number of roles for the organizations they support. Please rate the performance of the board against these nine board responsibilities.

Board function:	Poor	Average	Distinctive
Clarifying the organization’s mission or vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resolving key strategic or policy issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing the CEO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing the financial resources needed to support the strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing expertise or access to policymakers to support organizational priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Building/enhancing reputation of organization with key stakeholders/community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overseeing financial performance and ensuring adequate risk management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessing performance of the organization against its mission and key program priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving board performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please add any additional thoughts to explain your answers:

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SECTION 2: PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE NEXT 1-2 YEARS

A nonprofit board adds value by undertaking each of the nine responsibilities identified; however, boards rarely have time to focus on all of the responsibilities. Good nonprofits prioritize activities depending the context of the organization. As you complete this section please identify those areas of potential board focus that are most needed over the next 1 to 2 years to ensure the organization succeeds against its mission.

How important is it for the board to focus on:	Low	Medium	High
Clarifying the organization’s mission or vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resolving key strategic or policy issues (please identify issues below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing (or replacing) the CEO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing the financial resources needed to support the strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing expertise or access to support organizational priorities (please identify priorities below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Building/enhancing reputation of organization with key stakeholders/community (please identify stakeholders/community targets below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overseeing financial performance and ensuring adequate risk management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessing performance against mission and key program priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving board performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please add any additional thoughts to explain your answers or identify additional needs:

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SECTION 3: ASSESSING KEY ENABLERS OF BOARD PERFORMANCE

Good nonprofit boards have a number of common-sense enablers in place to allow them to work effectively and productively. Please rate the board against these key enablers.

Are enablers of board effectiveness in place?	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Board size is appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board has appropriate committees with clear charters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board composition is appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board has effective processes for identifying, cultivating, and integrating new directors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The right leaders are in place as board chair and committee chairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board has an effective process for selecting, developing, and transitioning new leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board/committee meeting calendars, advance materials, and agendas support the board as needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board and committee meetings run well, e.g. start/end on time, give members a chance to engage in issues, ensure all voices are heard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board strikes the right balance of work and fun activities, including effective efforts to connect board members to the mission of the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please add any additional thoughts to explain your answers:

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OTHER COMMENTS: