



4. Facilitated development session: **Governance performance review**



Introduction

The aim of this governance development session is to:

- conduct a review of the performance of the board or management committee
- assess how well it has been doing its job
- identify any improvements that can be made.

Ideally, this development session should be facilitated by a person with a good understanding of the governance role and governance performance review. This may be an experienced person within the organisation or an external facilitator.

Timing of this program: 2.5 hours

FACILITATOR'S NOTES

15 min

1. Introduction: Purpose of session and overview of review processes for boards or management committees:

- explain the purpose of this session
- overview the review processes for boards or management committees.

At the beginning of the governance pilot program, organisations took part in a detailed review of the foundations of the board or management committee — the resources, systems and processes that were in place, and how well people thought these were working. This type of review looks at what the board or management committee has to work with and identifies items that can be considered to make sure that the foundations of the board or management committee are sound.

This type of review does not need to be conducted very often — something like every five years would be sufficient for most organisations.

The second type of review is a board or management committee performance review — how well the board or management committee has done its job. This type of review should be done annually, and elements of it can be done more often if needed. This is the review process used in this session.

Benefits of board or management committee reviews

Board or management committee reviews provide the opportunity for:

- team building among board or management committee members
- clarifying individual and collective roles in the governance system
- improving the effectiveness of the board or management committee, its overall performance, and the effects of its contribution
- improving working relationships between the board or management committee and staff
- identifying areas for improving compliance and other reporting requirements.

Methods for conducting board or management committee reviews

There are many methods for evaluating board or management committee performance. The key questions to be asked in planning a review:

- What are the objectives and scope of the review?
- Who will be reviewed?
 - whole board or management committee as a group
 - individual board or management committee members (self-evaluation or a peer review might be appropriate where the evaluation is focusing on individual board members)
 - senior staff person (executive officer/manager/coordinator)
 - a combination of the above
- Who will be asked to participate in the review?
 - internal review (board or management committee members, senior staff person and team leaders, other employees, volunteers)
 - external review (clients, government, community groups and other agencies, other related services, peak bodies, other stakeholders)
- Which evaluation methods are the most appropriate?
 - qualitative methods (individual in-depth interviews, group in-depth interviews)
 - quantitative methods (surveys — phone, in person, mail, email)
- Who will conduct or facilitate the review on behalf of the board or management committee?
 - internally conducted reviews (chairperson, individual board or management committee members, the whole board or management committee, consultants)
 - externally conducted reviews (consultants)
- What will the board or management committee do with the results?
 - internal communication (board or management committee only, board or management committee and senior staff person, board or management committee and senior management staff, board or management committee, staff and members, broader dissemination)
 - external communication (annual report, evaluation report, meeting with stakeholders, newsletter).

(Adapted from Kiel and Nicholson, 2003)



The importance of evidence

For a board or management committee review to be valid and more than a series of subjective reflections, evidence for all aspects of the review must also be identified. The feedback of staff, clients and other people outside the board or management committee provides one type of evidence, but for every item that the board or management committee reviews they should also ask themselves:

- How do we know what we claim is true?
- What have we done that shows what we claim is true?
- What has happened that shows what we claim is true?
- Is there any objective data (such as meeting records, client statistics, financial information etc.) that is evidence for performance?

30 min

2. Review area one: Attending to board or management committee business

Give the participants *worksheet one* and ask individuals to consider the questions in *part one* (My contribution as an individual member of the board or management committee), make a few notes in response, and then give themselves a score out of 10 for this area (where one = lowest score). These notes and scores will remain private, and participants will not be asked to share these with the group unless they wish to.

Give the board or management committee members 10 minutes for this individual reflection.

Then ask the group to consider the questions in *part two* of *worksheet one* (The board or management committee as a group) and facilitate discussion of the questions for each section.

Complete discussion of *part A* (What did we do?) for all sections first, and then complete *part B* (How could this be improved) for each section.

Note: If any items require a lengthier discussion, note the key issues and tell the group that they will need to revisit this item.

At the end of the large group discussion of A and B of *part two* (*worksheet one*), ask everyone to individually write down a score out of 10 for the overall board or management committee performance in 'Attending to board or management committee business'.



30 min

3. Review area two: Providing leadership

Give the participants *worksheet two* and ask individuals to consider the questions in *part one* (My contribution as an individual member of the board or management committee), make a few notes in response, and then give themselves a score out of 10 for this area (where one = lowest score). These notes and scores will remain private, and participants will not be asked to share these with the group unless they wish to.

Give the board or management committee members 10 minutes for this individual reflection.

Then ask the group to consider the questions in *part two of worksheet two* (The board or management committee as a group) and facilitate discussion of the questions for each section.

Complete discussion of *part A* (What did we do?) for all sections first, and then complete *part B* (How could this be improved?) for each section.

Note: If any items require a lengthier discussion, note the key issues and tell the group that they will need to revisit this item.

At the end of the large group discussion of A and B of *part two (worksheet two)*, ask everyone to individually write down a score out of 10 for the overall board or management committee performance in 'Providing leadership'.

30 min

4. Review area three: Providing stewardship

Give the participants *worksheet three* and ask individuals to consider the questions in *part one* (My contribution as an individual member of the board or management committee), make a few notes in response, and then give themselves a score out of 10 for this area (where one = lowest score). These notes and scores will remain private, and participants will not be asked to share these with the group unless they wish to.

Give the board or management committee members 10 minutes for this individual reflection.

Then ask the group to consider the questions in *part two of worksheet three* (The board or management committee as a group) and facilitate discussion of the questions for each section.



Complete discussion of *part A* (What did we do?) for all sections first, and then complete *part B* (How could this be improved?) for each section.

Note: If any items require a lengthier discussion, note the key issues and tell the group that they will need to revisit this item.

At the end of the large group discussion of A and B of *part two (worksheet three)*, ask everyone to individually write down a score out of 10 for the overall board or management committee performance in 'Providing stewardship (care)'.

30 min

5. Review area four: Monitoring and accountability

Give the participants *worksheet four* and ask individuals to consider the questions in *part one* (My contribution as an individual member of the board or management committee), make a few notes in response, and then give themselves a score out of 10 for this area (where one = lowest score). These notes and scores will remain private, and participants will not be asked to share these with the group unless they wish to.

Give the board or management committee members 10 minutes for this individual reflection.

Then ask the group to consider the questions in *part two of worksheet four* (The board or management committee as a group) and facilitate discussion of the questions for each section.

Complete discussion of *part A* (What did we do?) for all sections first, and then complete *part B* (How could this be improved?) for each section.

Note: If any items require a lengthier discussion, note the key issues and tell the group that they will need to revisit this item.

At the end of the large group discussion of A and B of *part two (worksheet four)*, ask everyone to individually write down a score out of 10 for the overall board or management committee performance in 'Providing control (monitoring and accountability)'.

**15 min**

6. Summary and next steps

Ask everyone to now share the scores that they have given for the four worksheet areas:

- Review area one: Attending to board or management committee business
- Review area two: Providing leadership
- Review area three: Providing stewardship
- Review area four: Monitoring and accountability

Add all scores for each item and average (divide by number of participants to provide an average score for each item). This will become the benchmark for the board or management committee to review against (and improve on) at the next review.

Identify the next steps required to bring about the improvements the group have decided on.





WORKSHEET ONE: ATTENDING TO BOARD OR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE BUSINESS

PART ONE: My contribution as an individual member of the board or management committee			My overall score out of 10 (1= lowest score/10=highest score):
Questions to consider	My responses – what did I do?	How could I have been more effective?	Do I need anything to help me do this in the future (for example - changes in systems, policies or processes; skill development)
Board or management committee meetings: Do I read the papers before the meeting? Do I attend meetings regularly, arrive on time and stay until the end? Do I participate actively?			
Making and implementing informed decisions: Do I understand all the issues we discuss at meetings? How do I actively participate in making decisions? How do I follow up on whether agreed actions happened?			
Maintaining the board or management committee: How have I contributed to group dynamics? Has my behaviour had a negative or positive effect on the group? What have I done about finding new board or management committee members?			

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**WORKSHEET ONE: ATTENDING TO BOARD OR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
BUSINESS (continued)**

Part two: The board or management committee as a group			Overall score for the group out of 10 (1= lowest score/10=highest score):
Questions to consider	A: Responses – what did we do?	B: How could this be improved?	C: Action plan (task, responsibility, time frame)
<p>Meeting attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are the papers always sent on time in advance of meeting? ▪ What % of board or management committee attend meetings promptly and regularly? ▪ What % of meetings start on time? ▪ What % meetings finish on time? ▪ What % of agendas is completed in the meeting? 			
<p>Making and implementing informed decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is sufficient, useful information provided for decision making? ▪ Is there active discussion and debate? ▪ Is there good facilitation of discussion? ▪ Are decisions reached easily? ▪ Are decisions well informed and wise? ▪ Does the board or management committee make sure decisions and actions are implemented? 			
<p>Maintaining the board or management committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are group dynamics on the board or management committee positive and healthy? ▪ Do all individual board or management committee members generally behave in ways that contribute positively? ▪ If the board or management committee has a succession plan, is it implemented successfully? 			

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WORKSHEET TWO: PROVIDING LEADERSHIP

PART ONE: My contribution as an individual member of the board or management committee			My overall score out of 10 (1 = lowest score/10=highest score):
Questions to consider	My responses – what did I do?	How could I have been more effective?	Do I need anything to help me do this in the future (for example - changes in systems, policies or processes; skill development)
<p>Vision and broad direction: Do I look at a 'big picture' or just the day to day concerns? How do I contribute ideas?</p>			
<p>Problem solving and strategic thinking: Have I been able to help solve problems that have arisen on the board or management committee or for the organisation more generally? Have I been able to bring information to assist in developing a broader understanding of an issue or problem? Have I ever taken the lead in doing this?</p>			
<p>Information, issues and external relationships: How do I contribute information on issues or share my area/s of expertise? How do I keep up to date on developments or issues that may impact on the organisation? What external relationships do I maintain on behalf of the board or management committee for the benefit of the organisation?</p>			

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WORKSHEET TWO: PROVIDING LEADERSHIP (continued)

Part two: The board or management committee as a group			Overall score for the group out of 10 (1= lowest score/10=highest score):
Questions to consider	A: Responses – what did we do?	B: How could this be improved?	C: Action plan (task, responsibility, time frame)
Vision and broad direction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the board or management committee provide leadership and set direction? ▪ How has this impacted on the organisation's development? 			
Problem solving and strategic thinking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the board or management committee deal with and resolve problems for the organisation? ▪ How does the committee deal with new challenges that the organisation faces? 			
Information, issues and external relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the board or management committee stay informed about developments in areas relevant to the organisation's business? ▪ How well have external relationships important to the organisation been maintained? 			

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WORKSHEET THREE: PROVIDING STEWARDSHIP

PART ONE: My contribution as an individual member of the board or management committee			My overall score out of 10 (1 = lowest score/10 = highest score):
Questions to consider	My responses – what did I do?	How could I have been more effective?	Do I need anything to help me do this in the future (for example - changes in systems, policies or processes; skill development)
Organisational performance: Do I know how well the organisation is performing? How have I assured myself that all aspects are functioning well?			
Risk management and response: Have I been able to recognise risks and suggest appropriate action?			
Relationship with senior staff person: How have I contributed to building an effective relationship with the senior staff person (manager/ coordinator)? How do I know how well the senior staff person is performing?			
Profile and reputation of organisation: Do I know how the organisation is viewed by others? How do I contribute to representing the organisation positively?			
Long term viability of organisation: Do I know how the organisation's resources are likely to change over time? How do I contribute to ensuring the organisation is viable in the future?			

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WORKSHEET THREE: PROVIDING STEWARDSHIP (continued)

Part two: The board or management committee as a group			Overall score for the group out of 10 (1= lowest score/10=highest score):
Questions to consider	A: Responses – what did we do?	B: How could this be improved?	C: Action plan (task, responsibility, time frame)
Organisational performance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the board or management committee contribute to the performance of the organisation? 			
Risk management and response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has the board or management committee reviewed the risk management plan in the last year? ▪ How well does the board or management committee deal with any situations presenting a risk to the organisation? ▪ Have any situations that presented a risk to the organisation been anticipated and avoided? 			
Relationship with senior staff person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the board or management committee contribute to building an effective relationship with the senior staff person (manager/coordinator)? ▪ How does the board or management committee contribute to managing the performance of the senior staff person? ▪ How does the board or management committee assist the senior staff person to improve their performance and extend their competencies? 			



<p>Profile and reputation of organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the board or management committee know how the organisation is viewed by others? ▪ How does the board or management committee contribute to maintaining a positive profile for the organisation? 			
<p>Long term viability of organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the organisation in a stronger or weaker position than a year ago? ▪ How has the board or management committee contributed to this? 			

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WORKSHEET FOUR: MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

PART ONE: My contribution as an individual member of the board or management committee			My overall score out of 10 (1= lowest score/10=highest score):
Questions to consider	My responses – what did I do?	How could I have been more effective?	Do I need anything to help me do this in the future (for example - changes in systems, policies or processes; skill development)
Accountability and reporting: Do I read and understand all reports I receive as a board or management committee member? Do I check that decisions of the board or management committee have been implemented in a timely manner? Can I tell when someone or an area of the organisation is not performing well?			
Taking action: How do I contribute to taking action when things are not performing well?			
Progress on the board or management committee work plan: Have I completed all tasks assigned to me on time? Do I check to see that other board or management committee members have completed their assigned tasks?			

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WORKSHEET FOUR: MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY (continued)

Part two: The board or management committee as a group			Overall score for the group out of 10 (1= lowest score/10=highest score):
Questions to consider	A: Responses – what did we do?	B: How could this be improved?	C: Action plan (task, responsibility, time frame)
<p>Accountability and reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the board or management committee set clear expectations for staff? ▪ Has the board or management committee monitored progress with implementation of decisions, plans, compliance with obligations and overall performance? ▪ How does the board or management committee know how the organisation is performing? Does the board or management committee have a clear picture of: progress and implementation of the organisational plan, service quality, staff performance, administration, finances? 			
<p>Taking action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has the board or management committee taken effective action when required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – if there were issues with progress or performance of the organisation? – if there were issues with the performance of the senior staff person? – if there were issues with the performance of individual members of the board or management committee? 			



<p>Progress on the board or management committee work plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has the board or management committee set itself a work program or plan? ▪ Has the progress or implementation of this been monitored? ▪ What % of the program or plan is completed within an agreed time frame? 			
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