



8. Facilitated development session: Recruitment, induction and succession planning for boards and management committees



Introduction

The aim of this governance development session is to assist a board or management committee to develop comprehensive recruitment, induction, and succession planning processes for new board or management committee members. The activities will guide the board or management committee in:

- reviewing the types of skills and experience that the organisation needs on its board or management committee, and assessing the extent to which the board or management committee currently has these skills and experience
- identifying the types of skills and experience the board or management committee would like to recruit in the future
- developing a recruitment strategy
- developing an orientation or induction program for new board or management committee members
- designing a succession plan for the board or management committee.

Ideally, this development session should be facilitated by a person with a good understanding of succession planning and recruitment strategies. This may be an experienced person within the organisation or an external facilitator.

Timing of this program: 3 hours

FACILITATOR'S NOTES

20 min

1. Reviewing the board's skills and experience profile

Skills

Circulate copies or data project *worksheet one* and ask the group to look through the list of skills. Work through the list with the group, and for each item:

- identify whether the item is important for the board or management committee (delete any items that are not relevant to the group)
- ask the group to assess whether they have this skill already within the current board or management committee membership, and mark each item with:
 - ✓ **yes:** the board or management committee has particular expertise in this area
 - ◆ **some:** the board or management committee has limited expertise in this area
 - × **no:** the board or management committee has no real expertise in this area.



Add any skill areas suggested by the group, and ask the group to also assess whether they have this skill already within the current board or management committee membership.

Experience

Now ask the group to look through the list of experience:

- For each item, identify whether the item is important for the board or management committee (delete any items that are not relevant to the group).
- If an item is identified as important, ask the group to explain in what way this attribute contributes to the functioning of the board.
- Ask the group to assess whether they have this experience already within the current board or management committee membership, and mark each item with: **yes (✓) or no (✗)**

15 min

2. Meeting the gaps

Work back through the list of skills and talk about the items where there is limited or no real expertise within the current board or management committee membership. Ask the group to identify the best way to develop these skills in the board or management committee:

- Which items could be dealt with through training of current board or management committee members (mark with 'T')?
- Which items need to inform recruitment of new board or management committee members (mark with 'R')?

Review the list and address the items where there is nobody with this experience on the current board or management committee membership, and identify whether there is any specific type of experience within the board or management committee that they would want to recruit for. Note this in the 'Recruitment' column.



15 min

3. Diversity in board or management committee membership

Working through the list in *worksheet two*, ask the group to identify which of the attributes are important for the board or management committee and why. For each attribute that is important, ask the group to assess whether or not the current board or management committee has sufficient diversity.

✓ **yes**: The board or management committee has diversity in this area.

✗ **no**: The board or management committee has no diversity in this area.

Then make a note of the ways in which representation needs to be extended for this attribute in the 'Recruitment' column (e.g. more women, more people from SE Asia).

(Delete any attributes that are not considered important for board or management committee diversity.)

20 min

4. Development of recruitment strategy

Briefly summarise the skill areas that have been identified for training. These should then be taken care of by the organisation in a board or management committee development program.

From *worksheet one*, briefly summarise the skills and experience areas that have been identified as needing to be recruited and, from *worksheet two*, the personal attributes that the board or management committee should look for to increase its diversity.

Recruitment strategy

Work the group through the checklist in *worksheet three*:

- Discuss each question and note the key points of response (where possible, use the checklist provided).
- If time allows, identify what needs to be done (tasks), who will take responsibility, and the timeframe for this.



15 min

5. Steps in recruiting and appointing new board or management committee members

Using *Info sheet: Recruiting and appointing to the board or management committee*, briefly review the steps involved in recruiting and appointing board or management committee members:

- **producing an information pack** for prospective board or committee members. This should include:
 - an overview of the organisation, its services and activities, staffing and committee structures, and its resources
 - a position description for board or management committee members (for a pro forma position description, refer to *Tool: Position descriptions for members of boards or management committees*)
 - a description of what the organisation expects from board or management committee members (meeting frequency, other participation or contributions, time commitment etc.)
 - the specific governance skills and experience being sought by the organisation
 - a nomination form that includes space for the nominee to provide evidence of their relevant skills and experience.
- **drafting an invitation to nominate or lodge an expression of interest.** This is similar to a job advertisement, and should contain:
 - a brief description of the organisation and its activities
 - a summary of the main duties of board or committee members (drawn from the position descriptions developed in step two above)
 - a description of the specific governance skills and experience being sought by the organisation
 - a description of the benefits to the individual of being part of the board or management committee
 - the process for obtaining more information and for nominating for election to the board or management committee, including the closing date for nomination
 - details for the organisation's contact person.
- **conducting the election and appointment process.** The details of this process will depend on the constitution of the organisation, but will usually involve the circulation of information about the nominees prior to the annual general meeting (AGM) and then a ballot of members either prior to the meeting (if a postal system is used), or an election by members at the AGM.

If nominees are being invited from outside the existing membership of the organisation, then it may also be necessary for them to join the organisation as members prior to their nominations being accepted.



- **appointing new board or management committee members.** Following the AGM, new board or committee members should be provided with a formal letter of appointment. Where organisations are incorporated as companies, they are required by corporations law to have new directors sign a *Consent to act* form.

However, it is good practice to require a formal acceptance of the position on a board or management committee whether the organisation is a company or not, and to use a more detailed form of acceptance. This formal acceptance is an opportunity to have new board or committee members agree not just to 'act' but to act in accordance with the requirements of the position and the organisation's own policies and practices. A pro forma for this is provided in *Tool: Agreement to act as a board or committee member*.

15 min

6. Development of position descriptions

Review any existing duty statements or position descriptions for board or management committee members with the group, comparing these with the samples provided in *Tool: Position descriptions for members of boards or management committees*. Ask the group to decide what changes they want to make to existing documents, or whether they wish to adapt the samples provided. The *Tool: Agreement to act as a board or committee member* may then be adapted to incorporate the final position descriptions.

10 min

7. Introduction to orientation for board members

Check that participants understand what is meant by board or management committee orientation or induction:

Orientation is the guided familiarisation of a member of a board or committee to the organisation, its operational and management requirements, the role and processes of the board or management committee and their role and responsibilities as a member of the board or management committee.

Bradfield Nyland Group, *Tool: Board or committee of management orientation kit*, 2005

Ask the group to discuss how orientation currently happens in the organisation:

- How do new board or management committee members find out about their job?
- How did they find out about their role when they first joined?
- How well does this work and what are the limitations of the current process?
- Have they had other experiences of board or management committee orientation, and what do they think works well?



Ask the group to discuss what they would like orientation to achieve for their new board or management committee members. What would be the benefits of an orientation program to new members and to the organisation as a whole? If convenient, use a whiteboard or butcher's paper to list responses.

Check that the following potential benefits are covered and add any that are missing:

- reduction in anxiety associated with beginning a 'new job'
- gaining a detailed understanding of the roles and responsibilities of board of management members, particularly relating to their fiduciary responsibilities
- gaining a detailed understanding of the particular member's area of responsibility on the board of management, particularly if an office bearer
- acquisition of general management and operational knowledge that will lead to effective and efficient management performance
- understanding of the financial, human resource and infrastructure resources of the organisation and their impact on the activities of the organisation
- new member able to perform their role more effectively and more quickly
- increased potential for 'job' satisfaction as a member of a board of management
- maximisation of effective productivity for the organisation
- efficient use of board of management time and resources
- a reduction in unnecessary demands on paid managers/coordinators, staff, volunteers and other members of the board of management
- members being able to accurately and effectively promote the mission, aims and philosophy of the organisation.

Bradfield Nyland Group *Tool: Board or committee of management orientation kit, 2005*

What makes an effective orientation program?

Lead a group discussion on what makes an effective orientation program, covering the following points:

- Orientation should take place as soon as possible after the election of a new board of management.
- Orientation should be for both new members of management and 'old' members who may be serving for another term and will benefit from a refresher orientation program.
- Longer standing members may also assist in the orientation of new members.
- Orientation should involve both verbal and written information, and include documentation relating to the key aspects of the organisation's management and operational requirements.
- It is also important to ensure that 'information overload' does not occur and that the program is paced to the capacity of the participants.
- The orientation program should be flexible, ensuring both coverage of core information that is relevant to all members as well as information that relates to the specific needs and skill levels of the member.

Bradfield Nyland Group, *Tool: Board or committee of management orientation kit, 2005*



20 min

8. Planning orientation

Using the two checklists on *worksheet four*, either as a handout or on a data projector, work through with the group identifying:

- the areas of information they would like to include in an orientation program
- the process/es for providing the program. This checklist also includes space to note timing and actual dates if required.

20 min

9. The orientation kit

Using an overhead or data projector, show the group the pro forma from *Tool: Board or committee orientation kit*. Check that the group are happy to use the tool and then work through each section, making any immediate text changes and making any changes or additions to the content outline.

Of the documents identified for inclusion in the kit, check which are already available and what may have to be developed.

Using *worksheet five*, identify how the orientation kit will be compiled.

25 min

10. Succession planning

Using the *Tool: Board or management committee succession policy and plan*, develop a succession policy by working through:

- Turnover frequency for the board or management committee: What proportion of the board or management committee will turn over at an AGM? Will this be limited or regulated? If so, how?
- Length of time for terms of office for members: Will there be set minimum and maximum terms of office? How does this fit with any turnover targets?
- How the board or management committee will identify the skills and attributes it needs – both in casual and annual vacancies.

Bradfield Nyland Group, *Tool: Board or management committee succession policy and plan*, 2005

Materials to use

- *Info sheet: Recruiting and appointing to the board or management committee*
- *Tool: Position descriptions for members of boards or management committees*
- *Tool: Agreement to act as a board or management committee*
- *Tool: Board or committee orientation kit*
- *Tool: Board or management committee succession policy and plan*



WORKSHEET ONE: BOARD OR COMMITTEE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

| Areas of responsibility and related skills | Current board or committee ✓ yes : the board or committee has particular expertise in this area ◆ some : the board or committee has limited expertise in this area × no : the board or committee has no real expertise in this area | Train (T) or recruit (R) |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| Knowledge of issues/services related to core business of organisation | | |
| Understanding social issues impacting on client/target group | | |
| Strategic and business planning | | |
| Policy development | | |
| Incorporation and legal compliance | | |
| Financial management | | |
| Funds development and fundraising | | |
| Administration of board business (coordination of meetings, agendas, minutes etc) | | |
| Marketing and promotion | | |
| Staff recruitment, management and industrial relations | | |
| Performance monitoring and evaluation | | |
| Other (specify): | | |

| Areas of experience | How this contributes to the board or committee | Current board or committee ✓ yes × no | Recruitment |
|---|--|---|-------------|
| Community sector experience | | | |
| Government sector experience | | | |
| Business sector experience | | | |
| Other experience (specify): | | | |
| Representation of particular group (specify): | | | |

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WORKSHEET TWO: BOARD OR COMMITTEE DIVERSITY

| Diversity | How this contributes to the board or committee | Current board or committee ✓ yes : the board or committee has diversity in this area ✗ no : the board or committee has no diversity in this area | Recruitment |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|-------------|
| Gender mix | | | |
| Age range | | | |
| Non-English speaking background | | | |
| Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander | | | |
| Overseas born | | | |
| Other cultural background (specify): | | | |
| Geographic location (specify): | | | |

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WORKSHEET THREE: RECRUITMENT OF NEW BOARD OR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

| Question for discussion | Response | Tasks | Responsibility | Timeframe |
|--|--|-------|----------------|-----------|
| What do we need to do to make the organisation attractive to potential board or committee members? | | | | |
| What information will be needed for potential board or committee members? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> information about the organisation <input type="checkbox"/> job description <input type="checkbox"/> expectations of board or committee members (time commitment etc) <input type="checkbox"/> specific skills and experience being sought by the organisation | | | |
| How will we get this message across? What will be our recruitment method? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> advertising in local paper <input type="checkbox"/> community radio <input type="checkbox"/> other agencies <input type="checkbox"/> 'head hunting' <input type="checkbox"/> other strategies for identifying and engaging potential board or committee members | | | |



WORKSHEET FOUR: DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING AN ORIENTATION PROGRAM

Assessing needs

Begin with listing the areas of information that new board of management members need to cover. Existing board members can contribute to this list by discussing what they would have found useful when they first became involved.

| CONTENT FOR AN ORIENTATION PROGRAM | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-------|
| Item | ✓ Tick items to be included | Notes |
| Overview of role as a board of management member | | |
| Expectations and requirements of members | | |
| Brief history of the organisation | | |
| Aims and key activities of the organisation | | |
| Funding and income sources | | |
| Profile of current services and activities | | |
| Clear overview of the structure of the organisation | | |
| Outline of roles and responsibilities of board of management | | |
| Detailed duty statements | | |
| Current strategic plan | | |
| Current budget | | |
| Key policies and procedures | | |
| Other (specify): | | |

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Processes for orientation

Discuss how the members of the board of management would like orientation to be conducted. Ideally, the orientation should involve both a verbal presentation and a written orientation kit.

| ORIENTATION PROCESS | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Item | ✓ Tick processes to be used | Notes |
| Group session for the entire board of management | | Date/Time: |
| Group session for new members only | | Date/Time: |
| Single session | | Date/Time: |
| Several sessions | | Dates/Times: |
| Presenter/s needed | | List: |
| Orientation visit to service premises | | Date/Time: |
| Observe work in action | | Activity type/Date/Time |
| 'Buddy' or mentor system | | Who: |
| Other (specify): | | |

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WORKSHEET FIVE: PLANNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KIT

The collection and drafting of materials may be delegated to staff, or to longer standing individual members of the board of management. The draft should be presented to the board of management prior to it being finalised.

| DEVELOPMENT OF ORIENTATION KIT | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Item | ✓ Tick item that applies | Who will be responsible | Complete by when |
| Current kit reviewed — no changes needed | | | |
| Changes to current kit needed | | | |
| Kit needs to be developed: | | | |
| ▪ Drafting | | | |
| ▪ Consultation | | | |
| ▪ Final draft | | | |
| ▪ Approval | | | |
| ▪ Printing | | | |

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