**Transforming Governance Resources**

The following document provides a series of resources for participants of the Transforming Governance Programme.

# **Making the most of your board and oversight group**

This module provides an overview of how to make the most of your board and oversight group to drive good governance and positive change.

## **Arts Council England: The importance of good governance**

Arts Council England provide robust guidance on the board requirements of its funded organisations.

For Arts Council England, one of the characteristics of a ‘well run’ organisation is that it has a board or oversight group that is independent of the executive and can take responsibility for ensuring the efficient and effective delivery.

For organisations without a traditional governance structure, ACE requires that some form of ‘Oversight Group’ is formed – this could be a small advisory group; steering committee, or sub-committee. This guidance outlines best practice for Nationall funded organisations.

Full guidance [here](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Importance%20of%20Good%20Governance%20information%20sheet%20-%202023-26%20Investment%20Programme_.pdf).

## **Board Excellence: Board best practice for a CEO and Executive Team**

## Board Excellence outlines examples of best practice in terms of the relationship between the Board and the CEO / Executive team. The guidance is focused on the following areas:

* **Respect for and accountability to the board**
* **Performance culture – setting the bar high for execs and non-execs**
* **A partnership model between execs and non-execs – balancing oversight and value add embracing the highest levels of challenge and debate**
* **High quality information model and information flow to the board**
* **Inspiring diverse high-calibre NEDs to bring their independence and A-game ( and replacing them if they are not !)**
* **Partnering with the board on strategy**
* **Crisis management and asking for help**
* **Setting the example in terms of culture, ethics and behaviours**

Full guidance [here](https://board-excellence.com/blog/2019/04/14/board-best-practices-ceo-executive-team/).

## **NCVO: Building a positive team culture**

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) is a membership organisation for charities, voluntary organisations, and community groups in England. This page provides information and guidance on building a positive team culture, including a focus on collaboration, cooperation, building trust, and minimising conflict. Key points include:

* **Establishing a supportive environment:** integral to creating this environment isthe development of shared team values, encouraging open communication, promoting socialising, and celebrating team achievement.
* **Understanding team dynamics:** to ensure effective understanding of team dynamics it is necessary to observe team communication, conduct one-to-one meetings, and gather feedback from individuals working in teams.
* **Building Trust:** to ensure trust in your organisation it is important to initiate team discussions, delegate leadership roles, encourage feedback, and employ team-building activities.
* **Cooperation:** it is important to leverage team members' strengths and weaknesses, facilitate collaborative work, clarify roles, and encourage sharing of experiences and skills.

Full article [here](https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/running-a-charity/employing-managing-staff/managing-developing-staff/developing-effective-teams/positive-team-culture/#build-trust).

## **ACEVO: Leading with values: creating a safe organisational culture**

ACEVO is a membership body for the leaders of third sector organisations in England and Wales. This resource provides advice on creating strong and safe organisational culture. Key points include:

* Values must be authentic, relevant to the work of the charity and resonate with the staff team. Organisational values must run through all work and processes undertaken by the organisation.
* Culture should be modelled from the top and created through positive action. Members of the team will decide that based on what they see the leader do and by what happens within the charity.
* Leaders should encourage open, honest, constructive conversations about areas of disagreement which will enable each staff member to feel that their voice is valued and listened to. This will create a culture in which staff and volunteers are not afraid to challenge the status quo.

Full resource [here](https://www.acevo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Leading-with-values.pdf).

## **Charity Excellence Framework: Creating a Code of Conduct**

Charity Excellence Framework outlines the importance of developing a Code of Conduct for all board types. It states that a Code of Conduct can be developed to apply to board members, staff, volunteers and partners. Some of the key elemnts within the Code of Conduct include:

* Act with integrity and honesty.
* Ensure that you are aware of and comply with the organisation’s policies.
* Undertake any necessary training for your role.
* Listen to and respect others.
* Promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect.
* Treat everyone fairly and without prejudice or discrimination.
* Ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory.
* Ensure any equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose.
* Challenge any unacceptable behaviour and report any breaches of the Code of Conduct.
* Report any allegations/suspicions of abuse or fraud.
* Respect everyone’s right to personal privacy and ensure any personal information is kept secure.

Full resource [here](https://www.charityexcellence.co.uk/charity-code-of-conduct-template/).

## **Charity Village: Building the Culture You Want**

Charity Village is a Canadian organisation that provides news, non-profit jobs, information on non-profit funding, and range of resources and articles. This article by Denise Lloyd focuses on organisational culture. Key points include:

* Effective culture building involves revisiting and aligning with core values, communicating them clearly, and seeking input from all levels of the organization.
* Management plays a crucial role in shaping culture; leaders must embody and promote desired behaviours.
* Identifying and discouraging negative patterns and behaviours is essential to prevent cultural stagnation and promote positive change within the organization.
* Recruitment strategies should align with culture building, emphasizing hiring for fit based on shared values and behaviours, promoting diversity, and communicating culture throughout the process.
* Building the desired culture requires continuous focus, clarity, and the commitment of the entire team.

Full article [here](https://charityvillage.com/building-the-culture-you-want/).

## **Bond: 10 challenges of creating an effective trustee board**

Bond is the UK network for organisations working in international development. Founded in 1993, Bond works to connect, strengthen, and champion a dynamic network of diverse civil society organisations to help eradicate global poverty, inequality and injustice. This article by Joe Saxton discusses methods to create an effective trustee board. Key points include:

* Selecting the Right People. Boards need a blend of skills and personalities for an effective board.
* Boards should encourage active contribution from trustees and respect their voluntary role.
* A focus on impact, not just legalities is important, alongside finding the right balance when scrutinising operations to avoid fatigue.
* It is important to clarify boundaries between trustee governance and staff operations but also break the meeting-orientated nature of trusteeship to involve trustees in various activities.
* Look beyond finances and monitor success indicators like volunteer satisfaction.
* Arrange regular management activities, like reviews and appraisals, to ensure effective CEO direction.

Full article [here](https://www.bond.org.uk/news/2017/07/10-challenges-of-creating-an-effective-trustee-board/#:~:text=Getting%20the%20right%20balance%20between%20scrutiny%20and%20irritation&text=However%20too%20much%20scrutiny%20as,the%20balance%20right%20is%20key).

## **NCVO: Dealing with problems and disputes between trustees**

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) provides information and guidance dealing with problems and disputes between trustees. Key points include:

* Conflict can arise due to differences in opinion, approach, and behaviour. It is important to analyse board dynamics and relations to mitigate the risk on conflict.
* Clear roles, policies, and processes are crucial for effective board management and dispute prevention.
* An agreed code of conduct for meetings helps guide behaviour and foster a conducive atmosphere. Using a code of conduct can also encourage behaviour change.
* Informal resolution involves early discussion with the individual causing issues, understanding the underlying causes.
* Removing a trustee should be a last resort and is usually done through a vote of no confidence, except in cases of misconduct that warrant formal investigation.

Full article [here](https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/governance/managing-board-relationships/approaching-board-relationship-challenges/dealing-with-problems-and-disputes-between-trustees/).

## **Directory of Social Change: 10 Things Terrible Trustees Do and Brilliant Trustees Don’t**

The Directory of Social is a UK-based organisation that provide training courses, publications, online funding databases, research, conferences, a bookshop, and free resources for charities. They offer best-practice articles and seek to influence relating to the charity sector. This article on best practice for trustees contains the following key points:

* Good trustees make sure to read all paperwork before the meeting and reflect on the outcomes of the previous meeting.
* Good trustees don’t ask for unnecessary additional paperwork, concentrate on the present and future, and don’t seek to apportion blame.
* Good trustees respond promptly to communications and look to support and advise the charity outside of regular meetings.
* Good trustees assume that the executive is working hard and seeks to form good working relationships with all board and executive members.
* The article remind trustees that meetings take a long time to prepare for, often involve the executive working outside of their normal hours, and can be intimidating and demoralising if trustees do not seek to foster and collaborative environment.

Full article [here](https://www.dsc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Trustees-10-things.pdf).