

BOARD MEETING CHECKLIST

PURPOSE

To encourage good planning for board meetings, and thoughtful reflection on the quality of the meetings.

Preliminary questions to assist collaborative consideration of how purposeful your board meetings currently are:

- > Does the Chair approve the agenda? Do we receive agenda and papers a week ahead of the meeting?
- > Are the minutes of the last meeting available for signing? Are spare copies of agenda and papers available, if needed?
- > Is there a good balance between monitoring and conformance on the one side, and visioning and future planning on the other?
- > Are papers clear and well-structured?
- > Does the CEO provide a written report in a form agreed by the board, to minimise verbal reporting and maximise board discussion time?
- > Are we familiar with our Constitution or Rules? Do we have a copy of the Constitution available for reference if needed?
- > Are we clear what decisions are required from the board at each meeting?
- > Do we receive appropriate input from staff, from external experts or consultants to arrive at decisions on complex issues?
- > Do we make well-considered decisions, and would they stand up to scrutiny? Are we clear about the rules of confidentiality, and joint responsibility for decisions taken?
- > Do we record our decisions, and monitor implementation?
- > Where resolutions are required do we draft them in advance to save time?
- > Do we use task forces and sub-committees to address issues which are more effectively explored outside the boardroom?
- > Is the meeting room comfortable and free of distractions? Is any necessary equipment (for example, audio-visual) available?
- > Is there a high level of attendance? Does the whole board participate in debate? Does the Chair encourage, manage, control individual contributions?
- > Are potential conflicts of interest declared, and dealt with?
- > Do we use retreats and strategy sessions to encourage blue-sky thinking?
- > Have we prepared an action list, or are the minutes annotated to highlight actions and responsibility for them? Have we discussed the format of the minutes recently? Are they issued promptly after the meeting?
- > Have we discussed recently the frequency and direction of our board meetings?
- > Do we finish on time?
- > Are future meetings scheduled well in advance?

SOURCE

- > Fishel, D., The Book of the Board, Federation Press, Sydney, NSW (2003; 3rd edn. 2014)

ABOUT POSITIVE SOLUTIONS

[Positive Solutions](#) offers a range of services to non-profit boards throughout Australia. [Board development workshops](#) and detailed board reviews can be tailored to the needs of each organisation. To find out more about how Positive Solutions can help you, contact: info@positive-solutions.com.au or call 07 3891 3872.

THE BOOK OF THE BOARD

[The Book of the Board](#) is Australia's standard reference book for board and committee members of non-profit organisations. Authored by Positive Solutions Director, David Fishel, and currently in its third edition, The Book of the Board provides clear guidance on the role of the non-profit board, formal and legal responsibilities, and the ways in which the board can maximise its effectiveness for the organisation.

- > RRP \$59.95
- > Positive Solutions Price \$55 Inc. GST

