The Board Builder

Inspiring and informing better Boards
Exclusively for members of not-for-profit
Committees and Boards.

Where are the women?: Gender imbalance remains in Australian power centres.

Preparing the perfect agenda: The art and science of agenda building.

We welcome your input
We welcome your article ideas, input and feedback.

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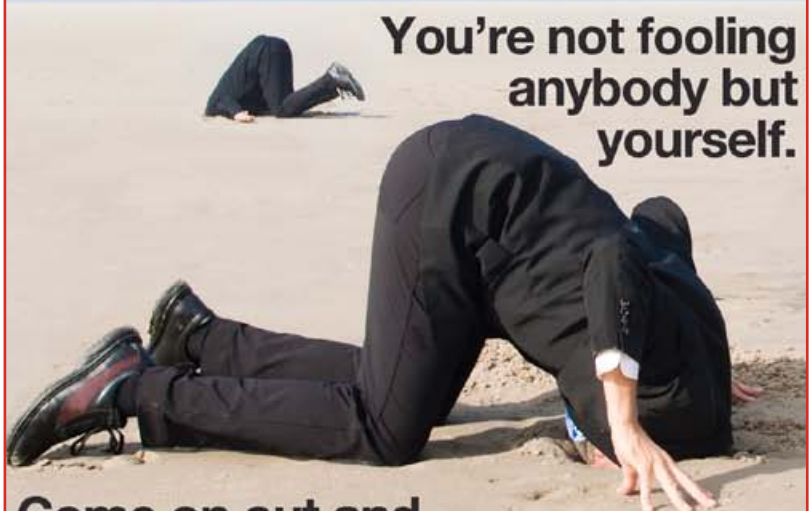
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Where are the women?

CHRIS BORTHWICK takes a quick look at building better board equality.

As we all know, women are underrepresented in Australian power centres.

While they are very slightly in the majority overall (Australia had 50.6% females compared to 49.44% males in the 2011 Census) they make up:

- Only 29% of federal parliamentarians;
- Only 5% of Abbott Government cabinet members;
- Only 30% of Australian award recipients;
- Only 16% of the directors of Australia's top 200 companies.

Things are getting better, slowly, in some areas.

The proportion of women on company boards has been increasing by 2% a year for the past four years, so we should reach equality by about the year 2229.

If you were an optimist you'd say that the rate for company boards has doubled in four years, and that if it kept going at that rate we'd reach equality by 2019; if you're a pessimist, you may look on this as a case of always jam tomorrow, never jam today.

Mind you, that 16% figure for women on boards is for commercial for-profits, not community-focused not-for-profits. Not-for-profits are doing better; much better. According to a 2012 ACOSS/Women on Boards/ YWCA report, in the not-for-profit sector, 51.4% of board members are women – better than equal!

Mind you, in the not-for-profit sector, only 15% of workers are men, so a 48.6% board ratio actually means they're over-represented by 224%.

Even worse, if you counted just those not-for-profit groups that had 85% or fewer women on staff then women would still be a minority on boards. It's only those groups that have more than 95% of female staff that push the total figure over the midline to that 51.4%.

Another problem, in all sectors, is that even when women do get into the top tier they generally don't get the plum positions. In the private sector women have 16% of board memberships, but only 3% are chairs and only 3.5% become CEOs.

As you can see from the graph below, they get 35% of the lower-status Australian honours and only 20% of the more prestigious gongs.

Meanwhile, in the not-for-profit sector, women have 51% of board memberships but only 44% are chairs or presidents, just 31% ▶

Recipients of the Order of Australia: % women

Federal parliamentarians: % women
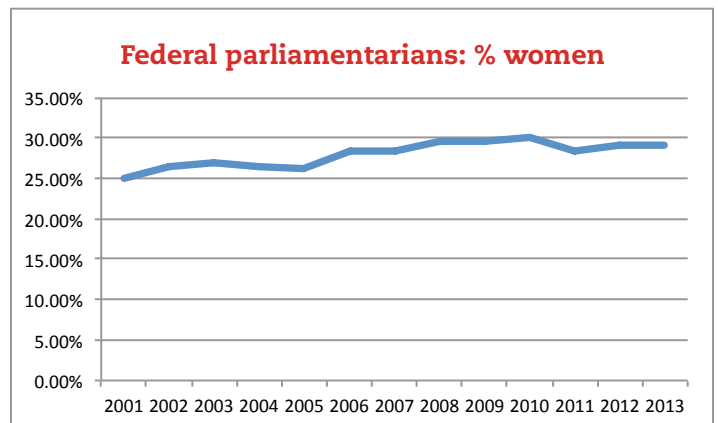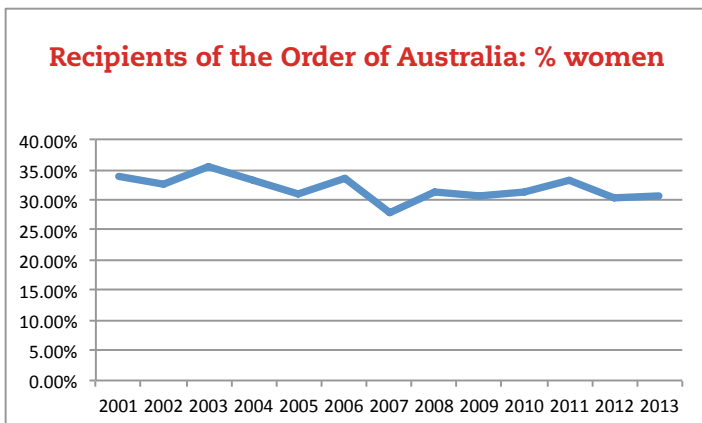
are treasurers, while 35% are secretaries. Even community organisations are apparently reluctant to trust women with too much authority.

A further issue is that the proportion of women on not-for-profit boards goes down as you go up the scale. Not-for-profits that run on less than a million dollars have more women on the board than men; for organisations with a turnover of more than a million, there are more men than women.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

There's hard evidence that greater diversity is good for boards. In the private sector, the Reibey Institute report on *ASX 500 – Women Leaders* found that the companies with female directors delivered an average return on investment that was 10.7% higher than those without women.

The same applies in not-for-profits, presumably; the chance to get a different perspective is a clear gain.

So how can we fix this imbalance?

Well, we've said before that the problem with Australian awards can be fixed by having every reader of *Board Builder* nominate one woman for a gong. The more women who are nominated, the more will get an award – see www.ourcommunity.com.au/honours for more on this.

In the commercial sector there may be a case for mandatory quotas. For not-for-profit groups, though, how do we go about lifting the number of women on boards, and in leadership positions on boards? ▶

There's no shortage of qualified women, particularly in the not-for-profit sector.

One worrying article, mind you, suggests that women should be cautious about coming on to not-for-profit boards.

"You need to look after your brand," says Fusion Retail Brands chair Susan Oliver. "Look at who else sits on the board, and be careful not to accept too many. You don't want to be known as the not-for-profit board expert."

After we deal with male prejudice against women, we can move on to business people's contempt for the not-for-profit sector.

In general, though, you get more women on boards the same way you fill any other gaps; you have a specific procedure for identifying the kind of board you want to develop, and you work towards that.

Have a look at Our Community's Recruitment Policy and then get started. ■

BOARD SHORTS

Female diversity advocate rebuked for male-centric language

A woman has been rebuked for constantly using the term 'chairman' during a speech advocating for increased gender equality on boards.

Newton Investment Management chief executive Helena Morrissey had been presenting at the National Council for Voluntary Organisations Trustee Conference in London.

Ms Morrissey spoke of her experience of founding the 30 Percent Club, an initiative which aims to get more women onto corporate boards. She also outlined the importance of board diversity and recent successes in improving gender equality in a male-dominated domain.

However, her continual references to 'chairmen' led one CEO to claim in question time that the term was "insulting". He said Ms Morrissey was part of the problem rather than the solution if she continued to use it.

Ms Morrissey responded by promising to change her language.

"It's a good point, I accept that, from now on we'll just call everybody 'chair'," she said.

Our Community has long argued for the use of gender neutral language in board titles. The term 'chair' is nowadays generally considered more appropriate than 'chairman' and is believed to be in wider use. Some boards use the gender-neutral term 'president' instead.

For more information, see the Diversity on Boards section of the Our Community Boards, Committees and Governance Centre.

Money: Clean or dirty?

CHRIS BORTHWICK explains how an effective due diligence process could save your organisation from making headlines for all the wrong reasons.

In England and America, just about all banknotes apparently have traces of cocaine on them. Worse, they're reputed to be a vector for Hepatitis C and some other diseases. Not in Australia, though – we have plastic money that doesn't trap particles. Our money is clean.

Up until the point where people try to donate it to a charity, at least. Then its past associations raise all sorts of questions. Most recently, Oxfam Australia knocked back a donation from the makers of Summit rugby balls, because they'd been caught out arranging for the balls to be stitched by children under the age of 14 in India for as little as $1 per day.

Why refuse money that could have done good work among the world's poor? There is, of course, a moral consideration, but there are also straightforward practical reasons. Oxfam doesn't want to be associated with scandal, and if it took the money it would be. Australians are fairly flexible about their own financial morality, but

they want their causes to be above suspicion.

After refusing the Summit donation, Oxfam released a statement explaining it had a due diligence process for every potential new corporate partnership. "Because of its admitted use of child labour, Summit would not pass Oxfam's internal checking process," the organisation said. Oxfam said it would be happy to give companies advice on how to avoid human rights violations in their supply chains, but this would not constitute endorsement of their products.

Oxfam has a due diligence process: does your group? And if you do, what's in it?

- Do you accept money from companies that invest in poker machines, or armaments, or tobacco, or the sex industry?

- How much checking do you do?

- Would you take money from

what the press describe as 'colourful identities'?

- How about an anonymous donor?

- Do your members and supporters know about and support your policy?

Our Community offers a draft ethical fundraising policy, but we can't prescribe what actual content should be included.

Different groups have different lines in the sand. Women's refuges might be taking a reputational risk taking money from winemakers, but football clubs might have another view.

One group we know of turned down grants from equipment companies that were entirely ethical and doing vital work, simply because it felt it couldn't be seen to have a reason to recommend one device over another.

Every organisation has to decide for itself what will choke them, and what might hang them. ▪

Self improvement: Becoming a better chair

An effective chair will pave the way for effective board meetings, and better board meetings will ultimately lead to a group that is better able to reach its goals. Follow these top 10 tips to become a better chair.

1 KNOW WHAT YOU'RE IN FOR

If you are approached to become a chair you will need to know what you're in for:

- **Ask what the mission of the organisation is:**

  An organisation without a mission might as well not exist.

- **Think about your reputation:**

  As chair, whether you like it or not, you will be seen as the embodiment of your group's mission. You will align your reputation with this organisation, so don't risk it all on a group that you don't believe in or trust.

- **Leadership is not a popularity contest:**

  There will be days when you wish you'd never taken the job and could just walk away, but that's part and parcel of the responsibility you take on. Think carefully before you jump on board, and remember, you won't always be able to please everybody.

2 COMMIT TO THE TIME DEMANDS

Being an effective chair is no easy feat – it will involve plenty of time and effort to be done properly.

Ask how much time it is expected the role will consume, but don't hold too much faith in the figure you're given. As a rule of thumb, the role will take two to three times the amount of time you are told it will take.

3 EARN YOUR AUTHORITY

One of the most critical things a chair needs to do is gain the respect and confidence of other board members.

Your authority as chair comes from the rest of the board – this means that you will only have as much power and authority as they give to you.

For this reason it is a good idea to have a detailed – and agreed-upon – role description. This will lead to no doubts about what your role entails, and will allow you to get on with the job. ▶
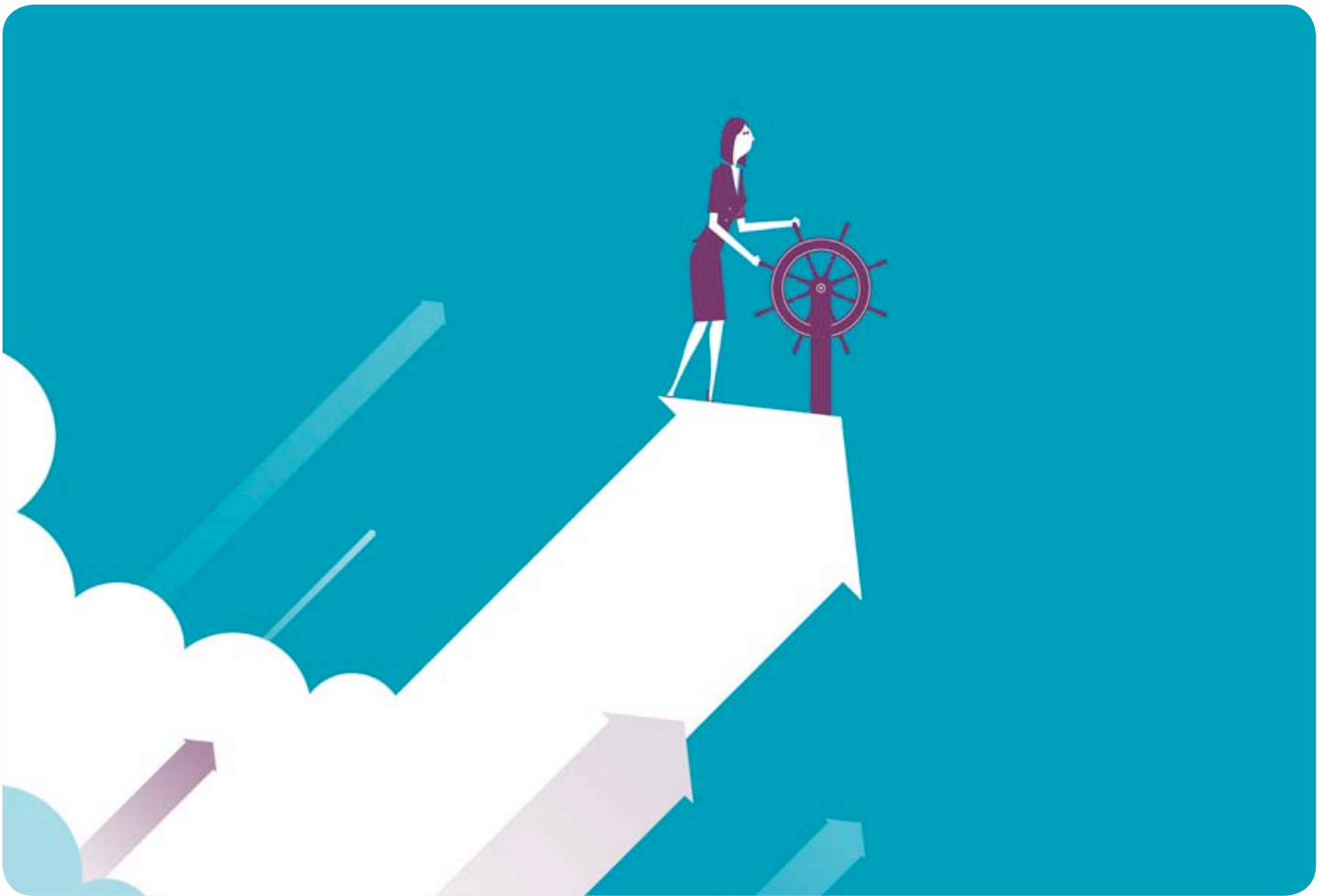
4 KEEP AN EYE ON THE ROAD

You don't need to be a prophet, but one of the roles of a chair is to ask: "Where to from here? In what direction are we heading? Is it the right direction?"

During your strategic planning cycle, be sure to write down your mission and create a series of steps you will need to take to achieve that mission.

Being able to look ahead with a clear understanding of where a board is leading its organisation is a priceless talent for a chair to possess.

5 KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF AGENDAS AND MEETINGS

A good chair will set timely and clear agendas – a great chair will also do an imaginary walkthrough of the meetings to ensure they will be effective.

When planning a meeting try to ensure that these key areas will be appropriately covered:

- Don't waste time – ensure everything will be covered in a timely manner. Know when to wrap things up and put an item to a vote.

- Plan ahead – have a running sheet with timing and proposed outcomes.

- Have purpose – work to goals, strategy, budget and performance.

- Reflect – critically evaluate meetings to see what was done well and what could have been improved.

6 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Cliché or not, leading by example is a truism worth thinking about. As chair your actions will influence those of the entire board. Remember to do these ▶

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things and the rest of the board will follow:

- Be present, punctual and prepared.
- Encourage contributions from everyone.
- Stick to the time limits allocated for discussion.
- Ensure constructive discussion.
- Try to communicate in person – email shouldn't be your only point of contact.

Leading by example can often include relationship management between board members. Here are some points to consider:

- While being a board member is a serious role, it is important to retain your sense of humour and try to have some fun on the board. Keep in mind that there is a social dimension to every board.
- Ensure that the board can cope with internal disputes without falling to pieces – this includes making sure final decisions are accepted by all.
- Allow for constructive criticism, but be wary of humiliating anybody – some conversations are better held one-on-one.

7 **COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE**

The chair acts as the link between the board and an organisation.

For this reason the relationship between the chair and CEO is vitally important. A good way to develop a positive relationship with your group's CEO is to set aside regular time to meet and have a casual discussion about organisational issues.

Look at how you are going, what challenges are coming up and if there are things bubbling below the surface that need to be dealt with.

It's also important to decide who will communicate with the media and the public, whether it will be you (the chair) or the CEO. Once it is decided, be sure to understand that there are some things that you do not shout to the media.

Things that are discussed at the board table are confidential unless there is implied or expressed permission to talk about them elsewhere.

8 **REPUTATION IS KEY**

Like it or not, the chair is often considered the embodiment of the organisation.

Be sure to act as a representative of the board in public settings – your behaviour will often reflect on your board and organisation.

It is useful to have an agreement with the CEO on what your public role will be – as mentioned before, this includes ▶

> **"** *In many ways the ideal chair acts like a football coach."*

whether you will be a spokesperson for the organisation when the media comes calling.

Also, as an ambassador, your reputation will stick to the organisation and the organisation's reputation will stick to you. Be aware that being chair means you firmly link yourself to the organisation.

9 EVALUATION AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

Part of your role will include ensuring there is a process for the evaluation of board members, and, eventually, their succession.

Ensure there is a clear succession plan for your board members, CEO, senior staff, committees and even (especially!) yourself as chair. It's an important job. You don't want it to fall to whoever happens to turn up on the day.

10 COACH THE TEAM

In many ways the ideal chair acts like a football coach.

Sounds like a questionable link?

Think about the following similarities. It is your job to:

- Set expectations and motivate people to meet them.

- Ensure everyone is given a voice.

- Ensure everyone is in the right positions, according to their individual strengths and abilities.

- Be a leader – a strong and confident leadership style can transform and inspire a football team or board.

- Promote teamwork and encourage consensus – but keep your eye on the ball and be strong enough to vote when needed.

- Mentor and motivate, but don't tolerate poor performance.

- Encourage good behaviour and discourage bad behaviour.

- And stick by your captain on the field – the CEO. Encourage them and show your confidence in their abilities – but be ready for a change when they're no longer the best person to lead your team. ■

THEY SAID IT

"A man can do only what he can do. But if he does that each day he can sleep at night and do it again the next day."

— *Albert Schweitzer*

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Sector celeb: Jacquie Thomson

The Sector Celebs series brings you insights from some of the social sector's leading lights

JACQUIE THOMSON

General Manager, Grants & Community Development, Lotterywest

Where did your career in the social sector begin?

Like many of my colleagues who work in this area, I grew up in a family where volunteering and community involvement was the norm. Just as it is now, this approach to life was fundamental to how country towns functioned. With this as my background, a career with a focus on community support and development was a natural progression.

What has been your greatest achievement so far?

Every year that I have worked at Lotterywest has provided a great sense of achievement for me, especially when I reflect back on the scale of activity across the whole organisation, all in support of the end goal of a better Western Australia.

We have again this year achieved a record return of $274.5 million to support the WA community. For me, being a part of that team is extremely rewarding.

On a personal front, my greatest achievement would be the fabulous daughters my husband and I have produced – two young women who are making their contributions towards a better world.

What/who are your major influences?

I am strongly influenced and inspired by the diversity of our not-for-profit sector.

This includes the huge range of organisations that the Lotterywest Grants and Community Development team get to work alongside on a daily basis. These organisations, both large and small, work very hard to make a real difference to the wellbeing of each and every Western Australian.

I am also particularly influenced by the inspirational individuals who work in the not-for-profit sector. I have a very ▶

high regard for their motivation in working towards goals that they believe in, as they address challenges faced by our community.

I am also inspired by the legacy that we at Lotterywest carry. Lotterywest today strives towards the same purpose it was established for in 1933 – to support the WA community. I feel honoured to be a custodian of this history as I work with my team, grounded in the ideals the organisation was founded on.

What can't you live without?

My executive assistant Alice would be very grumpy if I didn't acknowledge her here!

What's the best part of working in the social sector?

The best part about working in the sector is that no two days are the same.

We have such a broad approach to our business and our grant support at Lotterywest that we see a whole range of worthwhile and interesting

> *It's messy, complicated, frustrating, rewarding and fun – and rarely goes to plan."*

projects. Even the relatively small grants for office equipment or a new photocopier can make a huge difference to an organisation and the way in which they operate.

The more complex projects that we work on can take many years to come to fruition. It's incredibly rewarding to work alongside an organisation and provide support for these larger projects. It's also great to be a part of their journey while sharing in the benefits they bring to the community.

And at the end of the day it's all about people – so it's messy, complicated, frustrating, rewarding and fun – and rarely goes to plan. Why would you do anything else?

What's your favourite quote?

"We live in a community, not an economy."

What tips do you have for others in the social sector?

- Create the community you want to live in.

- Remember to celebrate the successes and achievements along the way.

- A blend of passion, pragmatism and a sense of humour always go far. These qualities have been a part of Lotterywest's DNA since it was founded in the 1930s during the depression. To this day, they still filter through our organisation's culture. ◼

THEY SAID IT

"If you can't explain what you're doing in simple English, you're probably doing something wrong."

— Alfred Kazin

THE BOARD DOCTORS

There is nothing like experience to breed good judgement. In each edition of Board Builder we extract the know-how of experienced "Board Doctors," finding a remedy for some of the common problems that threaten the health and vitality of not-for-profit boards and committees.

"I am on the board of a medium-sized community group and have been given the task of recruiting new board members – but I have no idea where to start. I assume members and supporters of the group are the best prospects – but which ones?"

KATE DEMPSEY

Kate is an organisational consultant who has successfully operated her own business, Kate Dempsey & Associates, for 23 years.

She assists businesses and not-for-profits with change management and organisational review. Kate is also an academic, teaching at Monash and Swinburne universities in Melbourne.

First Glance – how bad is the problem?

Finding board members for community groups is often difficult. But it is not impossible, and takes just a bit of canny thinking and some careful planning to find the right people.

In all my time working with community boards I have never known a situation where a board was knocking back scores of people who wanted to participate and had the right skills. Let's face it, this is a perennial problem – not a bad problem as such, just very common.

First Step – what is the most burning issue? What needs to be done?

Firstly, are new board members needed right now because you will be in breach of your constitution without them? Do you have an AGM coming up making timing critical? Is there currently conflict on the board? Perhaps you are tasked with outlining a board succession plan – to put forward the best way to attract new members as needed in future for the board to consider? These are all very different scenarios.

If you have at least some board members and you are not in breach of your constitution or having difficulties getting a quorum at board meetings, then I suggest not rushing to fill vacancies with members or supporters, but rather take the time to make a plan for filling vacancies. You could start by considering the skills and experience you currently have on the board and matching that against the tasks, focus and plans of the organisation. In other words, consider creating a skills matrix.

There are plenty of examples online for you to follow. Essentially you consider the skills, experience ▶

and knowledge you currently have on the board in key areas that relate to your organisation's goals and plans. You might include areas like finances and accounting, legal issues, strategic planning, risk management, IT, research, grant writing, human resources, marketing and public relations or whatever else is important for your board and organisational aims. Do you have all these skill areas covered by current board members? Are there gaps in your skill areas?

Next Steps – what other steps should be taken?

Next, consider what key skills you will need in the next one-to-three years. For example, perhaps you discover that no-one on the board currently has significant finance or accounting experience, then you will need to recruit board members with these skills and experience.

For example, in the future you may be considering fundraising but have never done it before, so you will need someone with those skills and with relevant business connections.

The next issue is advertising for and selecting a new board member. By all means advertise amongst members, volunteers, donors and supporters, once you know the skill-set you are looking for. But also advertise in places where people in your field may be looking for opportunities. For example, if you are in the medical field advertise in medical magazines.

Use your networks to get the word out – advertise in your own newsletter, place an ad in a local government newsletter, a not-for-profit publication or a government website. A targeted advertisement is usually free (or cheap) and more likely to get results. [Try Our Community's Board Matching Service – www.ourcommunity.com.au/boardmatch. It's free! - ed]

Red Flags – how can we stop this happening again?

Strategic planning, skills matrices, succession planning and matching board positions with organisational goals and projects are key steps to ensuring good governance. But they are not the end of the story.

I find in my work that often the board skills matrix is used without consideration of how the board will work as a team. Boards may fill gaps in board membership with supporters or experts (and oddly often in a panic and without strategic thought) and then wonder why they can't seem to work well together. A common example is to fill a skill gap with a board member who has business acumen or fundraising experience and then argue with this person at every board meeting because they don't seem to understand the ethos of the organisation or its history or connection with the local community it serves.

So, finally, I suggest taking your time and thinking about what skills are missing on the board and considering where you are heading. Advertise in niche areas but do not forget the importance of leadership and board cohesion or underestimate the importance of being able to work together as a team.

MURRAY BAIRD

Murray is Assistant Commissioner General Counsel at the Australian Charities and Not for profits Commission (ACNC). He has extensive experience as a writer, adviser and speaker on governance issues and as a member of numerous community sector and public company boards.

First Glance – how bad is the problem?

The board is thinking about recruitment of its successors. That is a good start. The board should keep board continuity and renewal on their radar. Succession is part of the sustainability of an organisation.

Board recruitment is not a task to be delegated to one person. It is a shared responsibility of the board and ultimately the members. A considered and agreed process is needed.

A nominations sub-committee of the board can share the load, focus on the task and diversify perspectives on board recruitment. ▶

It should have a clear charter, approved by the board, setting out the extent of its powers and what information needs to come back to the board and to the members.

First Step – what is the most burning issue? What needs to be done?

The ACNC publishes two helpful resources on its website:

- Governance for good: The ACNC's guide for charity board members; and

- Quick tips: Choosing a new board member.

But here are some basic tips that might form the action plan for your nominations sub-committee:

- Check your rules and any legislation that applies to your organisation to find out the process for appointing a new board member. There is probably a process you have to follow, possibly rules about who is eligible and whether you have to hold an election or if the existing board members can appoint someone to fill the vacancy.

- Consider your current members and the skills and experience they have. Think about any gaps that exist and what a new member could bring to help your organisation achieve its purpose.

- Look at your volunteers, your networks or consider placing a public advertisement. There are websites where you can post free notices for board vacancies such as Our Community's Board Matching Service.

- Agree on the approach to prospects. Is there a particular person who knows them and can smooth the way? Don't commit the organisation before all the appropriate processes are followed.

Next Steps – what other steps should be taken?

- Make sure candidates are aware of the expectations of the role, including any legal obligations. Some organisations interview candidates so they can explain what they are expecting and answer questions from the candidate. Once they accept the role, it

is a good idea to give them a letter of appointment. This letter should outline the meeting times, expectations (including key duties and responsibilities) and any other relevant information.

- Have a plan for inducting new members. They may need training and support to be successful in their roles and a strong induction processes can help them contribute more quickly. Consider preparing an induction pack including information such as a copy of your organisation's rules, current and previous financial statements, minutes, reports… and ACNC factsheets. A 'buddy' system may help them settle in quickly.

Red Flags – how can we stop this happening again?

An agreed (and written) policy for board appointments will guard against ad hoc, hurried and non-strategic appointments or unwanted vacancies. A nominations committee can help the board to focus on the task. It should not be left to one person. It is too important. ◾

THEY SAID IT

"Any participation, even in the smallest public function, is useful."

— *John Stuart Mill*

Navigating ACNC reporting requirements

The establishment of the new charities regulator brought with it a new set of reporting requirements. A simple guide has been released to help lighten the reporting load for organisations affected.

When the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) was introduced in 2012 it brought with it a set of new reporting requirements – designed to help cut red-tape in the sector.

Certified Practicing Accountants (CPA) Australia has since released a guide to assist not-for-profit groups in understanding and meeting these latest requirements.

CPA Australia chief executive Alex Malley said *Charities – A guide to financial reporting and assurance requirements* would act as a simple and comprehensive resource for groups to use when preparing their ▶

reporting requirements.

"The new arrangements mean some new requirements when it comes to financial reporting, and in some cases this will be the first time that charities have to compile this kind of data," Mr Malley said.

"Through this guide, we've attempted to lighten the load by spelling out, in plain English, what the reporting requirements are and by giving charities some easy to use, comprehensive checklists and other helpful resources to make the task easier."

The guide is divided into two sections, one including information for not-for-profit groups, the other providing information for CPA Australia members to use when offering their services to not-for-profit groups.

Mr Malley said the second section – assisting CPA members – would be useful for those involved in the preparation or conduct of audits and reviews of not-for-profit financial reports.

Reporting requirements

The basic reporting requirements for a not-for-profit group depend on the size of the group:

SMALL NOT-FOR-PROFIT

GROUP SIZE: SMALL (ANNUAL REVENUE OF LESS THAN $250,000)

REPORTING REQUIRMENTS: ANNUAL INFORMATION STATEMENT*

AUDIT/REVIEW REQUIREMENTS: NONE*

MEDIUM NOT-FOR-PROFIT

GROUP SIZE: MEDIUM (ANNUAL REVENUE BETWEEN $250,000 AND $1 MILLION)

REPORTING REQUIRMENTS: ANNUAL INFORMATION STATEMENT AND ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT*

AUDIT/REVIEW REQUIREMENTS: REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REPORTS*

LARGE NOT-FOR-PROFIT

GROUP SIZE: LARGE (ANNUAL REVENUE OF $1 MILLION AND HIGHER)

REPORTING REQUIRMENTS: ANNUAL INFORMATION STATEMENT AND ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT*

AUDIT/REVIEW REQUIREMENTS: AUDIT OF FINANCIAL REPORTS*

*This information may not be accurate for all groups. For more information on your group's reporting requirements consult the ACNC or *Charities – A guide to financial reporting and assurance requirements*

The ACNC has released its inaugural annual report. Read more on page 28. ▪

How can a board increase a group's membership?

HEATH MCDONALD is a Professor of Marketing at Swinburne University in Melbourne. His research has been published in leading journals throughout Europe, North America and Australia. Heath has a background in consumer research and product management and has also worked with a number of not-for-profit organisations to increase donor engagement.

BB: What can a board do to increase the membership of its not-for-profit group?

HM: First, it's got to understand the size of its market and be realistic about what membership base is reasonable from that.

The reason I say that is, across the industry, the best conversion rates of casual users to members might sit around the 20-25% mark.

Professional sports clubs, for example, convert roughly 20% of their fan base from casual fans to seasonal ticket holders.

If a group is not also making an effort to grow its market, build general brand awareness and increase knowledge in the community that it exists, it is going to find it difficult to radically increase the size of its membership base. ▶

So a group can't really expect to convert everyone who's ever heard of it into a member, but if it works to increase its market it will help with membership conversion.

BB: Where would a board begin? What initial steps would they need to take?

HM: The first thing to do is have a critical look at what it offers in the way of a membership product.

For me that's all about asking yourself, 'What is the difference between someone signing on to be a member of this organisation, and them just having some casual interactions with us?' What additional benefits or reasons could there possibly be for them wanting to do that?

Then you need to really sit back and ask objectively, 'Are we providing those extra benefits? Are we providing the right things? And, are we providing them in the right way?' Otherwise it's simply unrealistic to expect people to convert across.

When we look at membership benefits, there are essentially three areas they can fall under.

1. **Functional benefits**

    This includes things like shorter waiting times, shorter queues, price discounts, and extra merchandise. It includes the things a group could offer to its members which are easy for most people to assess as being worth the money or not.

    The other two levels of benefit get a bit less tangible.

2. **Emotional benefits**

    What is the value of connecting to this organisation as a member? Does it provide me with a greater sense of community? Does it make me feel more connected or involved with the organisation? Do I feel valued more by being a member?

    This often means that the organisation has to be very careful in the way it goes about communicating with members to help reinforce that value, and to make sure that they're connected.

Simple things – like informing members of any major changes to the organisation before the public finds out – are really important for establishing an emotional connection.

3. **Social benefits**

    Does the organisation allow people to connect with other members?

    A 'brand community' is where there aren't just interactions between an organisation and the members, there are interactions occurring between members themselves.

    In that way, the organisation is able to provide a social benefit.

BB: What are the major difficulties for a board when trying to attract more members to an organisation?

HM: I find that most organisations, initially, are failing on the functional aspect of managing membership. They have poor databases, which don't allow them to personalise any communications, and they fail to respond to members quickly enough when contacted.

Both of these amount to a failure at a basic service function, which is a barrier to forming a deeper connection and providing emotional and social benefits. It also erodes the trust members have in the organisation and damages the belief that the organisation is capable of achieving its goals.

Better functional service delivery often requires a relatively sizeable investment, which is why I'm sympathetic to smaller organisations who are trying to improve on it.

Better functional service delivery does require some staff training and access to decent databases and database management tools, but improving that aspect of functional service delivery is really where you're going to get the biggest return on your investment.

And as I say, it's very hard to do anything in the way of connecting with people emotionally or socially when nobody answers their calls, or, if they do answer, gets their name wrong. ▶

BB: If you could boil it down to just a few steps, what should a board do to increase the membership of its not-for-profit group?

HM:

1. Define a potential customer base and try to get some idea of its size. Without a defined number a group can't really set effective membership targets. The group wouldn't know what's possible in terms of membership size, or wouldn't know whether it's converting a reasonable number of people to members.

   So until a group really knows what its potential customer size is, it will be really difficult to assess whether or not it's doing well.

2. Ask 'What do we offer members?' What are people getting in the way of functional, social and emotional benefits? Most importantly, a group needs to think about what members are

actually getting, and ask, 'Is there a substantial difference to what they would be able to access casually?'

3. Ask 'How well are we delivering the things that we think are most important to our members?' And really sit down and have a look at the processes and say, 'Are we truly a member-centric organisation?'

   Try to ensure members are at the heart of the organisation, and that everyone within the group understands the importance of having this membership base and does everything to ensure it is serviced well, kept well-informed and made to feel like part of the organisation.

For more information, read twelve tips to boost your membership **at The Funding Centre, an Our Community enterprise.** ◾

The Board Builder | www.ourcommunity.com.au/boardbuilder
The membership newsletter of the Australian Institute of Community Practice and Governance

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Bligh takes new top job

YWCA NSW welcomes former Queensland Premier, Anna Bligh, as new CEO.

Photo by David Jackmanson available at http://www.flickr.com/photos/djackmanson/489393921/ under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.0. Full terms at http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0

Former Queensland Premier Anna Bligh is taking her leadership skills from Parliament to the boardroom – joining community services organisation YWCA New South Wales as CEO.

Founded in 1880 as YWCA Sydney, the group is one of Australia's oldest charitable organisations, working with more than 30,000 vulnerable people each year.

YWCA NSW co-president Josephine Sukkar said the group was excited to welcome Ms Bligh in 2014 and looked forward to using her broad leadership experience to further improve the organisation.

"We are thrilled that Anna has accepted this position," Ms Sukkar said.

"Anna brings a wealth of experience and leadership to the role and the sector more broadly. With her at the helm, we know we will be well-positioned to support even more individuals and families into the future."

Ms Bligh worked in a number of significant portfolios during her political career in Queensland, including treasury, finance, infrastructure, education, arts and social welfare.

She was Deputy Premier before becoming Australia's first popularly elected female Premier when she won the 2009 state election.

After receiving recent treatment for cancer, Ms Bligh said she had received a medical "all-clear" and was excited to join YWCA NSW and help the disadvantaged.

"All my life I've been driven to make a difference and YWCA NSW makes a difference every day in some of the state's most disadvantaged communities," Ms Bligh said.

"There's so much more to be done and I'm passionate about leading the organisation in its next phase of growth.

"YWCA NSW is an organisation with enduring ideals and a great heart and I'm excited to be jumping on board."

During 2012/13 YWCA NSW reported helping:

- More than 3500 children participate in programs designed to support their readiness for school.

- More than 14,000 children aged 6 to 12 years participate in programs designed to improve their literacy and numeracy.

- 7,600 parents and carers develop the skills and networks to build stronger families.

- More than 18,000 young people participate in programs to build skills and confidence and stay engaged in education and learning.

- More than 9,500 workers develop the skills and qualifications needed to enjoy active and productive working lives.

- Provide 9,000 women and children with specialist support to enable them to build the skills, confidence and networks to keep them safe from abuse and harm. ■

Steps to success

A UK Governance commission has released a series of recommendations on good governance for the not-for-profit sector.

Good governance is crucial to improving standards for the not-for-profit sector, according to a UK commission.

The Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) Governance Commission released the *Realising the Potential of Governance* report in September.

The Commission was established in 2012 to review the state of governance in the UK not-for-profit sector, and to make recommendations on how it could be improved.

The report made a series of recommendations – separated into three key areas – for how not-for-profit groups could improve their governance.

Appraisal and accountability

The report recommends that all groups establish "regular formal appraisal procedures" for the chief executive (or equivalent), board members and the chair.

It also suggests discussion and consideration of the benefits of creating a subcommittee or designated trustee responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the group's governance.

Understanding roles and responsibilities

The report recommends that groups have up-to-date written guidance ready to give to board members on induction, including:

- Accurate, written role profiles or position descriptions which are discussed and agreed upon on appointment and are subject to regular review.

- Written schemes of delegation, detailing all areas where the board has delegated functions or responsibilities – including to sub-committees, working groups, individual trustees, the CEO, staff or specified volunteers.

- A copy of the business plan's section on governance and organisational terms of reference.

It also recommends a regular review of the written guidance, along with inclusion of opportunities for training and professional development.

Board management

Recommendations include that:

- All not-for-profit groups use an open, public process to advertise board vacancies. ▶

- All groups create a comprehensive induction checklist for incoming board members.

- Board members are encouraged to review and decide how to ensure their governance training and support needs are adequately met and budgeted for.

- Board members discuss and implement an agreed process for addressing and resolving conflicts between key personnel at an early stage.

- Board members consider implementing defined term limits, staggered to ensure an appropriate rate of turnover.

- Board members ensure that their group maintains a formal, written risk register, kept under regular review by the board.

The recommendations were made using information gained from five ACEVO Governance Commission consultation meetings across the UK, and from an online survey which was completed by more than 200 respondents.

ACEVO Governance Commission chair Derek Twine said the practical recommendations made in the report would help to support the improvement and development of not-for-profit governance.

"Charities operate in a fast-changing environment and are under more pressure than ever to deliver improved outcomes with limited resources," he said.

"I hope the recommendations made in this report will help charities to ensure that their governance is ready for future challenges." ◻

BOARD SHORTS

Royal Commission warning on weak policies

Damning evidence at the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has provided a timely reminder of the dangers of having complex or inaccessible policies.

While examining a case involving a former employee of the YMCA, the Commission heard that child care workers spent just minutes reading two child protection policies before being asked to sign them.

One staff member said while they may have read a policy before, they "wouldn't have understood it completely because the policies to me are too complex". Two staff members said they could recall nothing from either policy.

Our Community has established the following tips to ensure your organisational policies do not just "tick the boxes" but are living and breathing, useful documents:

- Policies are unlikely to be supported and adhered to unless people feel they have ownership of them. Consult widely on each policy with everyone who will be affected.

- Board members must be aware of all governance and operational policies. Develop a policy manual and ensure a copy is given to each new board member, staff member and volunteer.

- Policies should never be set in stone. Set aside some time to carry out a review. This will also help to ensure people are reminded they exist.

- Alternatively, appoint a committee to undertake a rolling review of all organisational policies and make recommendations for changes. Circulate draft changes before decisions are made final.

- Policies must be easily accessible. Ensure printed copies are available in an appropriate spot for staff and are on hand at every board meeting.

- Policies should be very easy to understand. Ensure they are written in clear language that is free of jargon and acronyms. Keep them as short as possible.

- Weak or inconsistent policies are worse than having no policies at all. Fix flaws immediately.

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Doing good? Doing well?

An industry survey has encouraged not-for-profit organisations to work more closely together.

A not-for-profit sector survey has found groups on both sides of the Tasman need to consider collaboration with similar groups to ensure their continued existence.

The **Doing good and doing it well: Australia and New Zealand Not for Profit sector survey 2013/2014** was released by Grant Thornton, an organisation of independent assurance, tax and advisory firms.

The survey found that funding was the most significant challenge facing the not-for-profit sector.

Grant Thornton Australia's head of not-for-profit Simon Hancox said like-minded organisations with similar visions and beneficiaries would need to consider mergers, amalgamations or at least increased collaboration to ensure their survival.

"Funding continues to be the most significant challenge facing not-for-profits, and unless there is some form of rationalisation casualties will be inevitable," Mr Hancox said.

"Sixteen per cent of Australian not-for-profits could not plan for more than 12 months ahead based on their current funding, and it was clear that many would not survive for more than six months if their current funding was not renewed."

Some of the survey's key findings included:

- Funding was the major issue for not-for-profits in Australia and New Zealand, with a significant number of groups unable to plan more than 12 months ahead.

- One of the greatest pressures on funding was the sheer number of not-for-profit organisations in Australasia competing for a limited pool of money.

- The recent introduction of the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) was welcomed by 83% of Australia respondents, who felt the sector needed a regulator.

- Smaller not-for-profits were more likely to struggle with governance. The survey report expected to see the average size of not-for-profits increase in 2013/14, with a trend towards more boards run by suitably qualified professionals.

- Many not-for-profits were engaging with the community in new and innovative ways. Social media is reshaping the way organisations market themselves and communicate with members, donors, potential funders and the communities they service.

The survey was completed by more than 400 not-for-profit organisations in Australia and New Zealand. ■

> " *Unless there is some form of rationalisation casualties will be inevitable.*"

Grant Thornton
An instinct for growth™

Doing good and doing it well?
A look at Not for Profits on both sides of the Tasman.

FUNDING

Funding is the major issue for **76%** of NFPs in New Zealand and **68%** in Australia

40% are unable to plan for *the future*

NFPS NEED TO LOOK TO A DIVERSE RANGE OF FUNDING OPTIONS TO MEET THEIR GROWING NEEDS.

GOVERNANCE

BOARDS NEED TO BE BETTER EDUCATED and conduct risk assessments on a more regular basis.

35% of Australian boards & almost **60%** of New Zealand boards don't fully understand their responsibilities

But it's not all *doom and gloom*

83% believe the sector needs a national regulator. **75%** are ready to meet their ACNC obligations.

SOCIAL MEDIA

expect an increased focus

86 PERCENT in the use of SOCIAL MEDIA within the next 2 years

MANY NFPs ARE ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY *in new and innovative ways*

f **62%** t **51%** You Tube **39%**

www For a full copy of the Grant Thornton Australia and New Zealand Not for Profit sector survey 2013/2014 visit
http://www.grantthornton.com.au/Industry-specialisation/not_for_profit.asp.

ACNC releases inaugural report

Charity regulators' first annual report reveals thirst for online information.

Australia's not-for-profits regulator, The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), has highlighted its online success in its first **annual report**.

The inaugural annual report, which was released in October, covered the seven-month period from the regulator's establishment on December 3, 2012 to the end of the last financial year.

ACNC commissioner Susan Pascoe said the regulator's online success was a highlight of its first seven months, with its register of not-for-profit groups receiving more than 85,000 views.

"These numbers show that the public is hungry for online information about charities," Ms Pascoe said.

The report includes a collection of highlights from the first seven months of the ACNC:

The ACNC Register

- 700 new charities were registered by the ACNC during the reporting period, joining roughly 56,000 groups which were transferred automatically by the Australian Taxation Office when the ACNC was launched.

- Of the 700 charities, 78% were small groups, 12% were medium and 10% were large.

- Children and youth were amongst the most popular beneficiaries of the 700 not-for-profit groups.

- The online register had more than 85,000 page views. ▶

> " *The public is hungry for online information about charities.* "

57,672 charities listed on the ACNC Register at 30 June 2013

700 newly registered charities in 2012–13

Newly registered charities by location

WA 9%
NT 2%
SA 5%
QLD 18%
NSW 32%
VIC 28%
ACT 4%
TAS 2%

Newly registered charities by size

Small 78%
Medium 12%
Large 10%
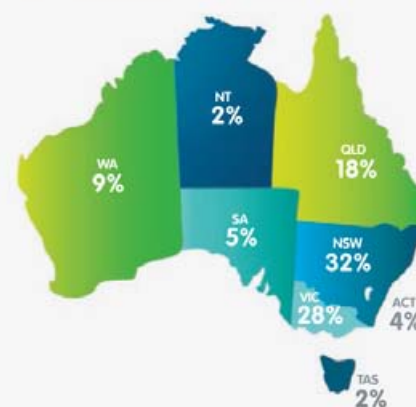
Public trust and confidence in not-for-profit groups

- ACNC-commissioned research into community confidence in the not-for-profit sector provided an insight into its public perception, as well as a baseline confidence level for future research.

- Respondents signalled a high level of trust in not-for-profit groups, ranking them the third most trusted group, behind doctors (first) and police (second).

- 80% of respondents believed a public register of not-for-profit groups was "very important".

Guiding and educating not-for-profits

- The ACNC spent the first two months of 2013 delivering **national community presentations** in many state capitals and major cities, with more than 2000 people attending.

- These presentations were followed by a series of **information and education sessions** across the country,

which attracted more than 1500 attendees.

- The ACNC also supported the sector by providing guidance products and a dedicated advice line.

Reducing regulatory duplication for not-for-profits

- The ACNC adopted a "report once, use often" framework, and developed the charity passport – a collection of information on registered not-for-profit groups which government agencies recognise as accurate.

- The regulator also met with all state and territory governments to discuss harmonising or unifying reporting requirements.

- The ACNC signed memoranda of understanding with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations to streamline regulation and reporting for not-for-profits.

Our Community Poll – page 33. ▪

> **" 80% of respondents believed a public register of not-for-profit groups was 'very important'."**

2 **3** Public trust and confidence

charities ranked 3rd after doctors and police

245 Complaints about charities

57,672 Registered charities

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The membership newsletter of the Australian Institute of Community Practice and Governance

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Meeting madness

Our Community's director of training PATRICK MORIARTY examines a far from ideal board meeting and shares his tips to help ensure your board's precious time isn't wasted.

At a recent conference I attended in Adelaide, Inventium's Dr Shelley Logan presented on "how innovation can help not-for-profits gain a share of heart, head and wallet".

One of the issues Shelley highlighted was the impact of decision fatigue on innovation – her main argument being that the more decisions you make over a day, the worse the quality of the decision.

For me, that contention resonated very strongly. While Shelley was largely talking about the work environment, I think the same is true of the way we have historically managed not-for-profit meetings. ▶

Perhaps this might sound familiar:

The meeting is scheduled to start at 7pm on Thursday evening. The chair is running five minutes late so everyone grabs a cup of tea.

7:05

The chair arrives five minutes late. Everyone says hello to each other.

7:10

As the meeting starts, the chair asks if there are any apologies. Peter says he ran into Barry at the supermarket and he said he probably wouldn't be able to make it tonight. Sharon says that she saw Betty at school and one of the kids is crook so she won't be there either. The secretary notes the apologies. The chair notes (silently) that it's the third meeting in a row that Barry has missed.

7:20

The secretary passes around the minutes of the last meeting and apologises that he couldn't get them to everyone sooner. The chair asks Sharon to move that the minutes be accepted and for Harold to second. Sharon moves, Harold seconds acceptance. The minutes are accepted.

7:21

The treasurer apologises as he couldn't get the financials off the bookkeeper but assures everyone that things are OK and the bills can be paid. He mentions he is keen to get a new laptop so that he can get the reports more effectively and provide them to everyone sooner, but is not sure whether to stick with a PC or move to a Mac. A discussion around the value of

a Mac versus PC occurs. Someone knows someone who has a Mac and says it's the best thing, it's really light and has really good battery life. Someone else knows someone else who hates their Mac and couldn't wait to go back to Windows. Harold loves the Mac TV ad but can't recall the punchline. Sharon can't remember that ad but really loves the new VW ad. Despite the discussion, no one actually approves the purchase.

7:51

The chair details what he has done and who he met with over the last month. He had a very interesting meeting with the local member, who thought there were a number of ways she could help the group. The chair also read in the local paper that there is potential for a new social enterprise to open in the area that will be dealing with a similar client base. He suggests a meeting with the new group be set up. The chair also met with a local councillor who said she was very supportive of the organisation and thought they did a great job. The chair was also at a party with a number of quite "famous" people and when he told them about the organisation they all thought that a fundraising dinner and auction would be great way to raise funds. Discussion about who these people were, and who they were with, ensued. Ideas for auction items – including a car, a night for two at a luxury hotel and a holiday – were also discussed.

8:30

After almost an hour-and-a-half, the chair notes that it is starting to get late. The secretary quickly details the correspondence that has been received over the last

month. There was a letter from the department highlighting that they hadn't acquitted the grant that was completed; a request to attend a fundraising golf day for another local organisation; and an email from a member who was interested in nominating for the committee and wanted to get an idea of the process. The secretary says he has advised the member there are no current vacancies and that they should keep an eye on the website for nominations to be called.

8:45

The chair suggests that as time is drawing on the meeting should move to the matter of redeveloping the office and approve the budget of $740,000. Harold moves the motion and Sharon seconds. The motion is carried.

8:48

The meeting closes after an hour and 43 minutes. ▶

"

Meetings should be a place for making decisions."

This presents a sad picture. Meetings should be a place for making decisions.

The information you need to make decisions should be provided (and read) prior to you even getting there.

An agenda should be prepared with the bulk of time available allocated at the top of the meeting for decision making. The more mundane or procedural matters items should follow only after the most important items have been dealt with.

One of the major barriers to recruiting people to boards and committees is time pressure. If our meetings go on forever or don't actually achieve anything, we will continue to struggle to attract and retain the right people.

If we have important decisions structured towards the latter part of the agenda, we may have already lost focus and attention. This seriously compromises our ability to fulfil our duties as directors. Where was the measured consideration of a huge financial outlay in the example above?

Yes, there is a role for meetings in allowing people to get together to catch up, but board meetings must first, and always, be about decision-making.

And if there are no decisions to be made, why meet at all every month? Think about using email or board portals to help facilitate better communication and decision making.

Prevent your board meetings turning into a snore-fest with our sample meeting agenda.

PATRICK MORIARTY

PATRICK MORIARTY is director of training and development at the Australian Institute for Community Practice and Governance.

Sector throws its weight behind ACNC

The new Abbott Government has signaled its intention to dismantle the newly formed Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), in line with its policy position outlined before the September election. What do you think about the Federal Government's plans to cut the Australian Charities & Not-for-profits Commission?

- 15.2 %
- 74.4 %
- 8.1 %
- 2.2 %

Legend:
- Bad idea
- Good idea
- What's the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission?
- Don't care
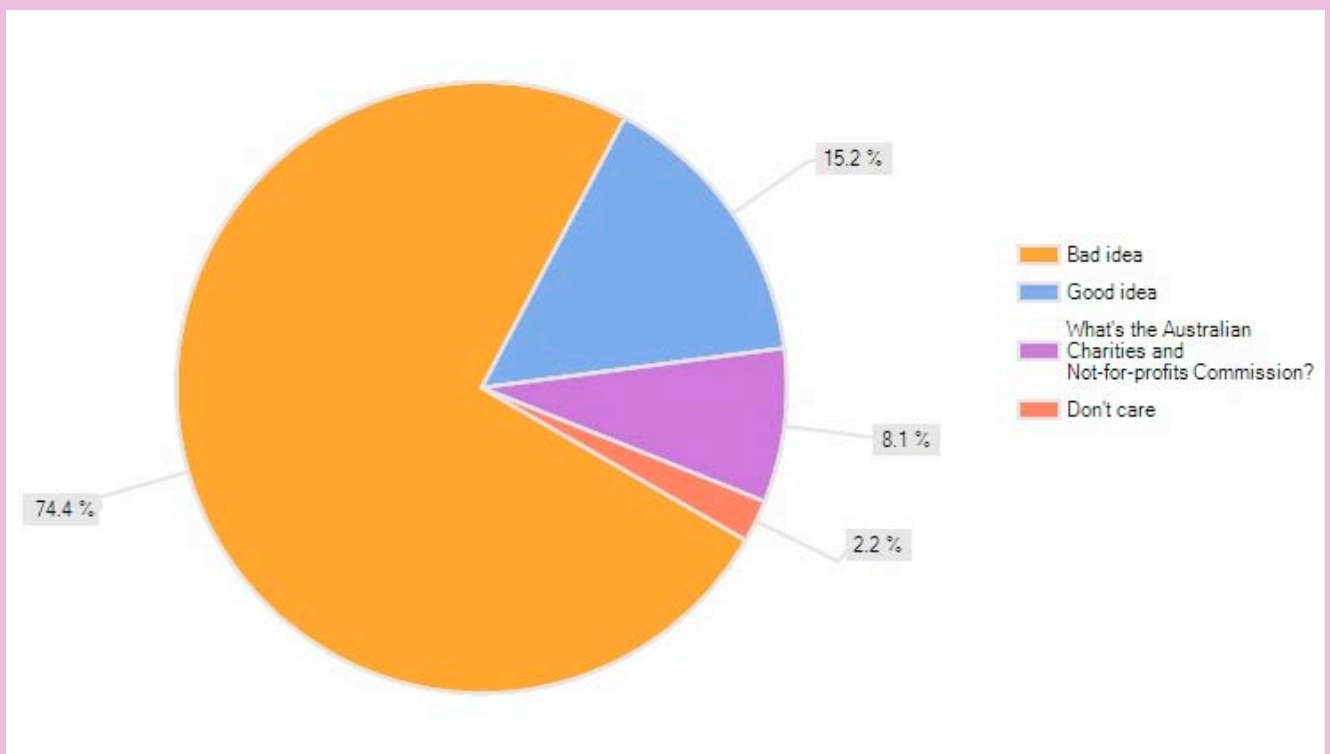
The overwhelming majority of respondents to the latest Our Community poll would be disappointed if the Abbott Government scrapped Australia's newly-formed charity regulator.

The government has signalled its intention to dismantle the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) in a policy released before the September election. It would be ▶

replaced by an information agency.

Almost three quarters of respondents to the Our Community poll – 74.4% – labelled the plan a "bad idea".

Just over 15% supported the move.

However, in an interesting result for a survey targeted at the not-for-profit sector, 8.1% signalled they had never heard of the ACNC.

As the ACNC was created by an Act of Parliament in December 2012, the charity regulator will continue to operate until the Act is either amended or repealed.

For more information about Our Community polls, go to **www.ourcommunity.com.au/poll**.

Have your say…

The 2013 Grants in Australia Survey is now open and is seeking feedback on how grantmakers can make the process of applying for funding easier for you.

The annual survey of Australian grantmaking is run by The Australian Institute of Grants Management (AIGM) – an enterprise of Our Community – and is now in its eighth year.

The survey aims to chart the experiences of grantseekers when dealing with a range of grantmakers – local, state and federal governments, as well as corporate, philanthropic and foundation bodies.

It seeks to find out what grantseekers believe grants and program managers are doing well, and where there is room for improvement.

Survey findings will help inform the efforts of the AIGM to improve and professionalise grantmaking in Australia.

The survey runs until December 15, so be quick. To take part, **click here**. ◼

> *"Survey findings will help inform the efforts of the AIGM to improve and professionalise grantmaking in Australia."*

TAKE THE GRANTS SURVEY

Preparing the perfect agenda

Proper preparation can prevent your board meeting from descending into chaos. Follow this advice from CHRIS BORTHWICK and put success on your agenda.

Every meeting needs to have an agenda that sets out what is to be discussed and what needs to be decided.

It is the responsibility of the secretary to prepare the agenda. The secretary needs to discuss the agenda with the chair to identify agenda items – matters that must be decided by the board.

It's not just a mechanical process of repeating all last meeting's general headings. The agenda should be a fluid document that drives the meeting, allowing the chair to shape debate and development in the way they think will give most impetus to the organisation.

Firstly, the agenda must include some formal provisions:

1.   Apologies

This item records the names of members who have sought permission to be absent from the meeting. If the apologies are accepted then provisions, if any, that remove members from the board following their absence from meetings without authorisation will not be triggered.

2.   Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting must be accepted by the current meeting. They should be circulated well before the meeting, and members should be encouraged to read them when they are circulated rather than reading them in the meeting.

The agenda normally then includes:

3.   Matters arising from the minutes

This provides an opportunity for members to follow the progress of continuing matters that are not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

4.   Treasurer's report

A report on the progress of the finances, giving the board an overview of the position of the organisation.

The meeting should receive a report from the treasurer, accompanied by documentation, such as:

- Statement of financial performance
- Statement of financial position
- Comparison of budget vs. actual
- Forecast to the end of the financial year
- Commentary on variances and other assumptions
- Cash flow statement
- An up-to-date download of current bank account balances.

All this, again, should be circulated well in advance of the meeting. ▶

If there are any other reports, they will appear below.

5. CEO's report

An update, as required, on relevant operational matters and developments.

6. Finance committee report

The meeting receives reports from sub-committees on committee matters, including any decisions that need to be approved.

These items will be standard and appear on every agenda.

Now we come to the affairs that have justified calling the meeting. These will be different for every organisation and every meeting. There is no point having an item for 'general business' or 'correspondence'; this is only a sign that you have given insufficient thought to what the board actually needs to consider. Concentrate your attention on what needs to be done.

7. Proposed new project

Should this go ahead?

Any major decision should be accompanied by supporting documentation, which should, again, be circulated well in advance.

8. Projected budget shortfall

What steps need to be taken?

9. Annual review of CEO performance

To be considered from a report prepared by an ad hoc sub-committee.

The agenda will normally finish with:

10. Date of the next meeting

Ideally, meeting dates should be decided at the beginning of the year, but it never hurts to remind people. ◼

TIPS FOR A WELL-DESIGNED AGENDA:

- The structure of the agenda is designed to reflect the particular aims of this meeting, rather than being identical to all previous agendas.

- Each item requiring a separate decision is listed individually, with a brief one-paragraph summary provided to ensure everyone attending the meeting is briefed about what's going to be discussed.

- The layout of the agenda is well-spaced and easy to read and navigate. The text is big enough for people with weak eyesight to read.

- The agenda is concise, with enough information given about each item to give an overview of the issue without providing irrelevant details.

- Items requiring energy and fresh ideas are placed towards the top of the agenda, so less important items can be deferred if time runs out. Complicated issues that require more detailed attention than an ordinary meeting can allow should be saved for an extraordinary meeting.

- There's a suggested time next to each item, with more time for issues of higher importance. This will help you to stay on track.

- A recommendation is provided for each agenda item that requires a decision.

- A "consent agenda" may be included to ensure routine motions (to accept committee reports, for example) are listed on the agenda but are moved and carried as a package to avoid clogging up the meeting with routine items.

- Supporting materials such as budgets and reports are clearly marked (attachment one, etc), with the number noted next to the agenda item.

- The agenda and supporting documents (reports, minutes of previous meeting, etc) are distributed at least a week before the meeting.

Record • Body • Date & Time • Place	**The Board of Management, [Name of Group] Agenda, Meeting [No/Yr]** to be held on [Date] at [Time] at [Address]	**Time allocated** *Keep the whole meeting well under two hours*	**Starred items** *To be adopted without debate*
Formalities	Apologies		
Attached or separately circulated; clearly numbered	**Minutes of the previous meeting** Minutes of meeting held on 11 May 2014 at 7.30 PM at the Centre, 74 Chamberlain St, Fitzroy 3016.		
	Matters arising from the minutes		
Reports	*If a report contains an item requiring a decision by the board, that should be separately listed in the agenda.*		
	Treasurer's report *An accurate account of the financial position; with attached or circulated statements in writing.*		
	CEO's report *Any developments that the board should know about.*		
	Sub-committee reports *Sub-committee reports may contain recommendations to the board. These should be moved as motions.*		
	Finance/marketing/recruitment/risk management committee report		
Motion/s	That		
	Proposed new projects		
	Problems		
	Performance reviews (Board, CEO, organisation, risk, previous projects, etc) and recommendations		
Formalities II	Date of next meeting		

Starred items will be accepted without debate unless any member requires that they be placed on the regular agenda.

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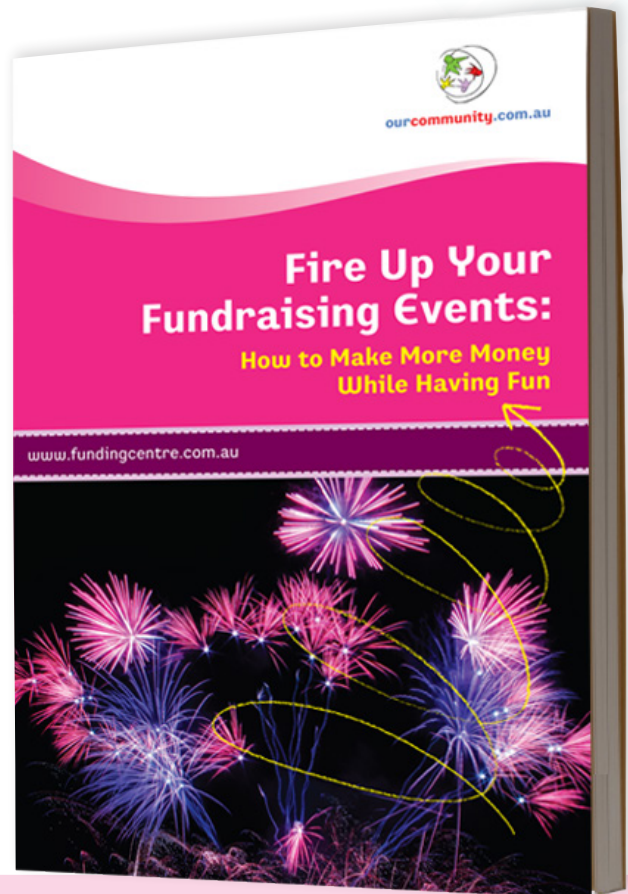
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Books for Better Boards

Improve Your Board

Tick your required option:

The Board Doctor – Expert Diagnosis for Board & Committee Ills

☐ $36

If you're on a board or committee there will be times when you need advice from somebody who has experience in dealing with the wide range of issues that may arise.

The Board Doctor provides tips, ideas and solutions from a range of experts who have contributed to the Board Builder Newsletter and the annual Board Builder Conference. Our Community have brought together these experts to provide answers to a range of easy to follow exercises. They know the law, they know what has worked in practice, and they trust their judgement, because they've been in the trenches.

Transforming Community Committees and Boards - From Hell to Heaven

☐ $36

Don't be content to sit on a Board that is not working. Make a difference by working to transform your Board into an effective, energetic and productive team that sets the example for the entire organisation.

In this guide you will learn how to improve your Board through targeting, recruiting, knowing your responsibilities and capacities and knowing when it's time to act. This is a vital and practical tool for any Board or committee member.

The Board Builder Newsletter

☐ $65 Individual Subscripiton

☐ $165 Board Subscripiton

The leading resource for not-for-profit Boards and Committees

Navigating the maze of financial and legal responsibilities can be bewildering for novice and experienced board members alike. But being a not-for-profit board member means more than just being safe – it also means being effective.

The Board Builder brings a new voice and a comprehensive, practical approach to all issues faced by not-for-profit board and committee members. It advances the conversation from merely identifying a problem or issue to offering options for solving the problem or addressing it practically.

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About The Australian Institute of Community Practice and Governance (AICPG)

The **Australian Institute of Community Practice and Governance (AICPG)** is Australia's peak professional training organisation for staff and board/committee members and volunteers of community organisations. The AICPG provides accredited training; free information and resources through its Community Practice Knowledge Bank; and as part of its membership service, the quarterly Board Builder newsletter.

There are four key components of the AICPG:

1. **Seminars, Workshops and Conference Programs.**
2. **Certificate IV in Business (Governance)** – a qualification for all Australian not-for-profit and community committee members.
3. **Training services in the eight areas of non-profit curricula**, including tailored training to meet specific organisational, peak body or council needs, linked to the Community Practice Knowledge Bank.
4. **The quarterly Board Builder newsletter**, the AICPG's membership publication.

Explore the benefits of membership at **www.ourcommunity.com.au/aicpg**.

The **Boards, Committees and Governance Centre** has a wealth of great resources, tools, links and other information to help your board fulfil its role to the best of its abilities. These include:

Resource Centre Help Sheets
The Resource Centre at the Boards, Committees & Governance Centre is where you can obtain a wealth of free information to help you build a better board and be a better board member.

How-To Board Books
Great low-cost resources for every board, group or committee. The books include: The Board Doctor, Making Meetings Work, Surviving and Thriving as a Safe, Effective Board Member, Finding the Best People, Ethical Solutions and Transforming Community Committees and Boards, as well as the Westpac Guide for Community Treasurers.

Policy Bank
The Policy Bank is where you can find a great range of free policies and procedures relevant to all aspects of running a community group. This resources is constantly being expanded and refreshed.

Boards Training
The Australian Institute of Community Practice and Governance has developed a suite of affordable, practical training to help community sector staff, volunteers and supporters keep abreast of their responsibilities and learn how to lift their organisation from ordinary to extraordinary.

Board Matching Service
The Board Matching Service helps individuals make a deeper, longer lasting connection with their community by joining a board, and allows community groups to access a new pool of skilled and willing helpers.

Diversity on Boards
The Diversity on Boards section of the Centre provides resources, tips and links to help your Board or Committee become more inclusive.

Governance Code
The development of the Code of Governance for the Community Sector was based on the principle of community organisations having a commitment to the public good, a preference for fair dealing and open conduct and a consciousness of the need to embrace diversity. The Code sketches out the rules that follow on from these principles while taking into account the valuable input and insights offered to us by groups across the sector.

Consultants Register
Consult this listing to find a consultant to assist you in developing or improving your community group board or committee.

Certificate IV in Business Governance
The Certificate IV in Business Governance is a practical, accredited training course for the members and supporters of the boards, management committees and councils of Australian community groups and schools.

Explore the centre here: **www.ourcommunity.com.au/boards.**