

Igniting leadership for power, purpose and impact

The recent BoardSource Leadership Conference explored strategies for healthy governance.



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OnBoard is holding a seminar on **Governing for impact on 20 March 2018**. Please see here for details <https://www.bwbllp.com/events/2018/03/20/governing-for-impact-governance-diversity-engagement-and-inclusion>

Tesse Akpeki shares eight lessons from the conference

1. Mission and Vision

Develop an external as well as an internal focus. Working in strategic partnerships with the senior staff and CEO and collaboratively with external networks and other organisations is critical for impact. Dialogue and robust conversations are vital, as are making, taking and implementing tough decisions and choices. Explore ways of giving a voice to the voiceless.

2. Explore greater impact through strategic partnerships

Recognise the power in possibility. The right person in the right place can change the world. Treat board members as individuals: pool their collective motivations and inspirations to strengthen the board. Going beyond organisational boundaries, you can achieve together what you may not be able to do alone.

3. Stand for your mission

Keep governance players close to 'why I am here'. Live your values and beliefs. Be practical and realistic in developing a behavioural framework. Codes of conduct linked to values, beliefs, decision-making and risks create a firm and consistent platform to strengthen governance. Reshape the board culture by making use of mission moments and quick talks. These do not have to be more than five minutes, but the practice is amazingly impactful.

4. Lead with intent

Get the recruitment and support profile right. Leadership matters – recruit trustees in the right roles at the right time and use them appropriately. Chair and vice chair support makes a difference. The governance perspective is critical. A healthy board is one that offers constructive challenge within a supportive and nurturing environment. This board recognises, respects and welcomes diverse, different and sometimes conflicting trustee views. It also creates the conditions for staff and board to succeed and thrive. Trust and confidence grow in this more honest and open environment.

5. Meetings matter – make them smarter

Make better use of board meetings so that they are engaging, informative, focused on strategy and energising. Use consent agendas to maximise the meeting time. Reimagine the agenda. Board and team dynamics matter. Structure board work so authentic relationships and connections can develop. How does the board use its time in board meetings and between board meetings? Utilise audio, web, video conferencing and board portals for meetings, training, ideas sharing and development. Use applications that enhance what your organisation offers.

6. Diversity, Inclusion, Equity

Value and address the challenges and opportunities of diversity, equality, inclusion, engagement and connections. Generational differences create plenty of opportunities for robust leadership. Diversity impacts success – socially, economically and morally. Encouraging two-way communication and engagement with members and supporters is key.

7. Strategy – future proof governance

Pay attention to the digital agenda. Consider the organisational and board approach to disruption. Consider the option of working with uncertainty to shape the future in the face of current global trends, cyber security and the impact of social media.

8. Innovate and scale

Innovation and creativity generate energy and meet changing needs. A board culture of reflection boosts performance. Charities that are too risk averse are unlikely to thrive. Co-create and co-design services, products and governance. Invest in innovation. Carve out the time to do it well. Recognise the moment, the possibility, the opportunity and the results. Never waste a good crisis – every organisation can learn from what does not work, as well as from what works.

Find out more

For video clips and resources linked to the Board Leadership Forum visit www.boardsource.org.