

Bite Size Pieces

Learning Topic – Board Performance and Plans for Improvement – module five

1. Recommended Pre-Requisite(s) - Governance BSP Modules one, two, three and four

2. Learning Objectives

Assess Board Performance and Develop Plans for Improvement

This session is intended to help boards better understand why it is important for them to pause and reflect on their performance as a board on an annual basis. It can also be used as a teambuilding and new member orientation tool.

Note – Module five follows-on from Module four. The scores collected during Module four will be discussed during this session.

3. Content Covered

Why Assessing Board Performance is Important
Your Board's Commitment Moving Forward

Tip – If food is being served, you might consider having the board start the module while eating their lunch or dinner.

4. Learning Outline

Before the session, post the composite results of the 'scoring' exercise from Module four on a flip chart.

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Remind the participants of the ‘scoring’ exercise they engaged in at the last meeting. Remind them that this is a relatively new phenomenon but one that has incredible power to help boards govern more effectively.

Present the composite results on the flip chart and as participants if they have any questions about the results. (2 minutes)

Now ask the group what they think these results say about them as a board. Encourage them to share their reactions to the results, especially those where the board is doing well! (5 minutes)

Ask for any ideas they have for possible solutions to problem areas moving forward. If they run into trouble, suggest they ‘brainstorm’ some ideas using the attached guide. (5 minutes)

If you have new board members, ask them if they have any insights to the results as presented. For example, if you see a problem with conflict resolution, they might have seen a successful strategy on another board. (3 minutes)

Now ask the board to decide on the three most important areas for improvement. Develop an action plan for each of these. Capture these on the ‘Action Plan’ flip chart. (5 minutes)

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Note – All references to handouts and flip charts samples are covered in the “Equipment and Materials” section.

Option – You may prefer to have a sub committee of the board take the results and come back with some suggested action plans for the board to entertain at a future meeting. This might be especially useful if the results are less positive than expected and emotions are running high.

5. Equipment and Materials

Flip chart and markers

Flip Chart – Sample of “Our Board Performance Scores” (page 6)

Handout – “Effective Brainstorming” (page 7-8)

Flip Chart – Sample “Action Plan” (page 9)

Note – Flip charts are a low-cost way of focusing attention on the task at hand. Be sure to print ‘large and legible’!

6. Timeframe

20 minutes

7. Facilitator Notes

Note - Use this section to make your own notes about the session. Be sure to share anything of an evaluation nature when the session is over.

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8. Results/Evaluation

Please make enough copies of the Evaluation form (page 10-11) and have each participant complete and hand in to you at the end of the session.

Note – Evaluation is an important part of our training success! Please ask all participants to complete an evaluation form.

9. Next Steps

Consider adding another Bite Size Piece module to your next board agenda

Ask for a volunteer to lead the next session.

Encourage all board members to visit www.onboardlegalclinics.org to sign up for automatic updates on board learning and development.

Tip – why not download the ‘Bite Size Pieces Board Training Grid’ which your board can use to track what training has been covered and who has been a session leader?

Learning Topic – Board Governance – module five
Flip Chart – Sample of “Our Board’s Scores”

**Our Board Performance Scores
September 2006**

What We Do Well

Hold regular board meetings
Communicate in a straightforward manner
Consensus considered key

Where We Need To Improve

Strategic planning process in place
Fundamentals of roles clear
Current on matters affecting the organization

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Handout – Effective Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a basic form of creative problem solving. It encourages participants to feel free to think 'outside of the box' in a safe and accepting environment. Here is one approach:

1. Define and agree on the focus of the brainstorming session
For example – Lack of Role Clarity
2. Re-frame the focus by phrasing it in a “**How To**” format
For example – **How to** spell out Our Expectations of Board Members
3. Agree on a time limit and appoint someone as timekeeper.
4. Remind participants that the session time is to be spent on generating ideas.
5. All ideas are good...no judging as yet!
6. Remind participants that they will have time later to 'judge' ideas.
7. Suggest participants start each idea or suggestion with “**How About**”
For example – **How about** Writing a Job Description?
8. Brainstorm ideas and suggestions.
9. Capture essence of each idea or suggestion on flip chart(s).
10. At the end of the time period, call a halt to the brainstorming.
11. Review the ideas and suggestions listed on the flip chart(s).
12. Using coloured markers, categorize/condense/combine /refine ideas.

Learning Topic – Board Governance – module five
Handout – Effective Brainstorming

13. Pick one idea or suggestion the group sees as having good potential.
14. Ask the group to tell you three things they like about it and one concern (if any).
15. Re-frame the ‘concern’ into a “**How To**” format (see #2 above)
16. Agree on a time limit and appoint someone as timekeeper.
17. Begin brainstorming again using the “**How To**” Format (see #7 above).
18. Pick one idea or suggestion the group sees as a way of resolving the concern.
19. Poll the group to see if everyone agrees that this is a reasonable way to go.
20. Agree on an action plan and time frame.
21. Capture the action plan/time frame on a flip chart.
22. Agree to send every member of the board a copy of the action plan/time frame.
23. Celebrate! You’ve just made effective use of a brainstorming session!

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Flip Chart – Sample Action Plan

Goal:

Key Tasks:

-
-
-

Time Frame:

Start:

Finish:

Persons Responsible:

-

Resources Needed:

-

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Evaluation

Name of Clinic:

Module Name: Board Performance and Plans for Improvement

Date:

Module Number: Five

About this Module

(To be completed by all participants and the session leader)

This material contributed to a better understanding of the topic

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

The Content was relevant

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

The content was organized and easy to follow

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

The time spent on this module was worth it

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

For an introductory session, the level of the content material was:

Too Advanced Just Right Too Basic

This module could be improved by:

Bite Size Pieces

Evaluation

About Bite Size Pieces Training

(To be completed by all participants and the session leader)

This is an easy and cost-effective way to learn

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

I like making learning a board agenda topic

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

Everyone on the board should take a turn at leading a session

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

About the Bite Size Pieces Facilitation

(To be completed by the session leader)

I found the facilitation notes and material easy to follow

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

I enjoyed my role as session leader

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

Session Leader. Please provide a copy of this evaluation form to each participant and ask that it be completed and returned to you at the end of the session.

Tabulate all results on a separate sheet and fax to the BSWG at: 1-866-674-6714. You can also send an email of the results to: contact@onboardlegalclinics.org