

# Building an Effective Board of Directors: Selected Annotated Bibliography

This document provides a selected list of sources and materials to help nonprofit organizations build effective boards of directors. Resources are arranged under : 1) organizations and Web sites, 2) newsletters, and 3) print materials. Within each category, entries are listed in alphabetical order by organization or author. All the print materials can be ordered from your local bookstore or via Advocates' Web site at <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/frtp/board.htm>.

## Organizations and Web Sites

### Alliance for Nonprofit Management—

This professional association assists nonprofits to improve their management and capacity for governance. Visit [www.allianceonline.org](http://www.allianceonline.org).

### BoardSource—

BoardSource offers online information, print materials, and consulting to assist nonprofit boards. The BoardSource Web site also offers topic papers, summaries of board essentials, a Q and A forum, research, governance in the news, and links. Visit [www.boardsource.org](http://www.boardsource.org).

### Management Help—

This organization offers an excellent library, including an entire section on boards of directors. Visit [www.managementhelp.org](http://www.managementhelp.org) and click on “Boards of Directors.”

### Nonprofit Risk Management Center—

The Center's mission is to increase the quality of and access to information on risk management and insurance for nonprofits; strengthen their risk management practices and insurance arrangements; and improve legal liability and insurance rules that affect nonprofits and volunteers. Visit [www.nonprofitrisk.org](http://www.nonprofitrisk.org).

## Newsletters—Online and Off

### Board Café—

This online newsletter is short enough to read over a cup of coffee and offers ideas, information, opinions, news, and resources to help board members give and get the most out of board services. To sign up, visit [www.boardcafe.org](http://www.boardcafe.org).

### Board Leadership: Policy Governance in Action—

(ISSN: 1061-4249) Published six times a year, this journal offers the insights of some of America's most innovative board consultants. To subscribe, visit [www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com).

### Chronicle of Philanthropy—

(ISSN: 1040-676X) This bi-weekly newspaper is an essential standard for nonprofits, offering the latest news from the philanthropic world, recent grant listings, profiles of foundations, and information on recent board trends. Visit [www.philanthropy.com](http://www.philanthropy.com).

## Print Materials

BoardSource. *Governance Series*. Washington, DC: BoardSource, nine booklets, 2003.

This series of booklets provides the basics for nonprofit boards of directors. The series includes: 1) *Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*; 2) *Financial Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*; 3) *Structures and Practices of Nonprofit Boards*; 4) *Fundraising Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*; 5) *Legal Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*; 6) *The Nonprofit Board's Role in Setting and Advancing the Mission*; 7) *The Nonprofit Board's Role in Planning and Evaluation*; 8) *How to Help Your Board Govern More and Manage Less*; 9) *Leadership Roles in Nonprofit Governance*.

Bryson J. *Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995; ISBN: 0787901415

This book shows leaders and managers how and why to use strategic planning to improve the organization's performance. Chapters address implementation, strategy evaluation, and key leadership roles in effective strategic planning.

Carver J. *Boards that Make a Difference: A New Design for Leadership in Nonprofit and Public Organizations*. [Policy Governance Series] San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997; ISBN: 0787908118

Carver's groundbreaking policy governance model influences the way many nonprofit boards operate. Now, as experience with the model accumulates, Carver enriches his model with updated policy examples and a new chapter on developing policy, offering a board model designed to produce: policies that make a difference; missions that are clearly articulated; standards that are ethical and prudent; meetings, officers, and committees that work; and leadership that supports fulfilling long-term goals.

Chait RP, Ryan WP, Taylor BE. *Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Boards*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, 2004; ISBN: 0471684201

Written by noted consultants and researchers, this book redefines nonprofit governance, providing a powerful framework for a new relationship between trustees and executives—more governance, less management.

Eadie DC. *Extraordinary Board Leadership: The Seven Keys to High Impact Governance*. Boston: Jones & Bartlett, 2000; ISBN: 0834217953

A high impact governing model can be put to practical use to strengthen board performance. Examples capture the boredom and frustration of an under-performing board. The seven keys are: understanding what governing is all about; getting the right people on the board; building strong board-CEO relationships; structuring the board to manage its own performance; generating innovation; taking a strong role in operational planning, oversight, and budget preparation; and taking a creative role in external relations and financial resource development.

Grobman GM. *The Nonprofit Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Start and Run Your Nonprofit Organization*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. [Philadelphia]: Online Nonprofit Information Center, 1999; ISBN: 0965365328

A complete reference manual for starting and running a nonprofit, this book shows how to incorporate, register to lobby, apply for tax exemptions, and comply with laws regarding charitable solicitations for every state and the District of Columbia. The book includes current federal laws, regulations, and court decisions, hiring, firing and personnel issues, and running coalitions.

Letts CW, Ryan WP, Grossman A. *High Performance Nonprofit Organizations*. Philadelphia: Wiley, John, and Sons, 1998; ISBN: 0471174572

This outlines useful approaches for: building capacities for learning; innovating; ensuring quality; and motivating staff. Case studies and examples illustrate how to achieve these goals in this essential review of best practices.

McNamara C. *Complete Toolkit for Boards*, 2003; available at [www.managementhelp.org](http://www.managementhelp.org).

This free, online toolkit provides clear information on topics related to developing and maintaining effective boards of innovative, effective organizations.

Radtke JM. *Strategic Communications for Nonprofit Organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998; ISBN: 0471174645

Successful communications are absolutely vital to nonprofits. This nuts-and-bolts guide helps nonprofits streamline and coordinate their communications, using an easy-to-follow process that ensures that complementary messages go out to the organization's different audiences.

Ross B, Segal C. *Breakthrough Thinking for Nonprofit Organizations: Creative Strategies for Extraordinary Results*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003; ISBN: 0787955698

Ross and Segal show managers and board members how to transform thinking and improve performance to meet the needs of the people and causes they serve and how to tap into creativity and transform it into innovation. It is organized so that readers can choose the specific tools or techniques that will work best for their own situation, with a wide range of case studies.

*Written by Sue Alford, January 2005*



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2000 M Street, NW, Suite 750 • Washington, DC 20036 USA • Phone: 202.419.3420 • Fax: 202.419.1448 • [www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)