

15 Characteristics of a Great Board

1. All board members are engaged and actively participate in board functions.
2. Staff brings up challenges and problems to the board for advice and support.
3. Board members feel comfortable challenging and disagreeing with each other.
4. The work of the board is focused on issues that surface, not just the routine procedure for meetings.
5. Results and positive social impact are the focus of any discussion on the agency's operations.
6. Each board member has been to a program site and has seen the organization's work take place first hand.
7. The board includes representatives, or at least solicits input, from populations served by the organization as well as those with outside perspectives.
8. Board members take advantage of down time to look for areas of improvement.
9. Each board member understands what each dollar the organization collects is used for and what it ultimately accomplishes.
10. The board discusses ideas for what would be the best use of *the next* dollar the organization collects.
11. Board members are familiar with performance measures collected by the organization to monitor social impact in both quantity and quality achieved.
12. The board routinely (and non-routinely) discusses and sets performance targets that are higher than current levels of performance.
13. When the board assesses its performance relative to targets, it delves deeply into why targets were met or not, and what can change in the future.
14. The board's recommendations to staff are translatable into real action and are implemented.
15. The board continuously examines the market that it serves for changes and reframes its mission and strategy to address these changes.