



Sample Comparison of Board and Staff Roles

The following table is adapted from James M. Hardy, *Developing Dynamic Boards* (Essex Press, 1990). The nature of the extent of separation between Board and staff, if at all, depends very much on the particular Board model that members prefer. The primary responsibilities of Board and staff ultimately depend on the priorities, culture and life cycle of the nonprofit. The following suggestions might be useful to consider.

Activities	Primary Responsibility
Organizational Planning	
Drive the process of strategic and organizational planning	Board
Provide input to mission and long range goals	Joint
Approve mission and long range, strategic goals	Board
Develop action plans (who does what and when) to achieve long-range goals	Staff
Approve action plans (e.g., in an annual Operating Plan)	Board
Implement action plans to achieve long-range goals (Board via committee work plans)	Joint
Follow-up to insure achievement of major goals and objectives	Board
Board of Directors	
Select new Board members	Board
Orient, train and organize members into committees	Board
Promote attendance at Board/committee meetings	Board
Plan agenda for Board meetings (joint with Board Chair and Exec. Dir.)	Joint
Take minutes at Board meetings (Board Secretary)	Board
Programs	
Assess stakeholder (customers, community, member, etc.) needs	Joint
Suggest program clients, outcomes, goals, etc.	Joint
Approve program outcomes and goals	Board
Ensure evaluation of products, services and programs	Board
Evaluate products, services and programs	Staff
Maintain program records; prepare program reports	Staff
Financial management	
Prepare preliminary annual budget	Staff
Finalize and approve annual budget	Board
Approve major expenditures outside authorized budget	Board
Ensure annual audit of organization accounts	Board
Ensure that expenditures are within budget during the year	Joint
Fundraising	
Establish fundraising goals (amounts / goals to be raised)	Board
Solicit contributions in fundraising campaigns	Joint
Organize fundraising campaigns	Joint
Manage grants (reporting, etc.)	Staff
Personnel Activities (staff and volunteers)	
Employ and supervise Chief Executive (Exec. Dir.)	Board
Decision to add general staff roles and / or volunteer roles	Staff
Select / train general staff and / or volunteers	Staff
Direct work of the general staff and/or volunteers	Staff
Public / Community Relations Activities	
Present / describe organization to community	Joint
Write descriptions of organization (newsletters, Web, etc.)	Staff