Building Effective Nonprofit Boards

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Advancement Consulting

Not For Profit Roundtable

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Building Effective Nonprofit Boards

- Your Experience
- Review of Key Responsibilities
- Characteristics of Effective Boards
- Ways to Increase Effectiveness

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From: www.boardsource.org

Characteristics of an Effective Nonprofit Board

Source: Chait, Holland and Taylor. The Effective Board of Trustees. 1993.

- Contextual Dimension
- Educational Dimension
- Interpersonal Dimension
- Analytical Dimension
- Political Dimension
- Strategic Dimension

Effective Boards: The Contextual Dimension

- Appreciate and adapt to the distinctive characteristics of the organization they govern.

- Actions guided by organizational mission, tradition and history.

- Decisions and actions reflect and reinforce organizational values.

Ways to Increase Contextual Effectiveness

Effective Boards: The Educational Dimension

- Create frequent opportunities for trustee education.
- Periodically engage in self-reflection and seek feedback on performance.
- Recognize and learn from mistakes.

Ways to Increase Educational Effectiveness

Effective Boards: The Interpersonal Dimension

- Create a sense of inclusiveness among trustees.
- Set goals for themselves.
- Groom members for leadership positions on the board.

Ways to Increase Interpersonal Effectiveness

Effective Boards: The Analytical Dimension

- View issues through several different lenses.
- Perceive subtlety and nuance.
- Tolerate ambiguity, pursue information and encourage debate.

Ways to Increase Analytical Effectiveness

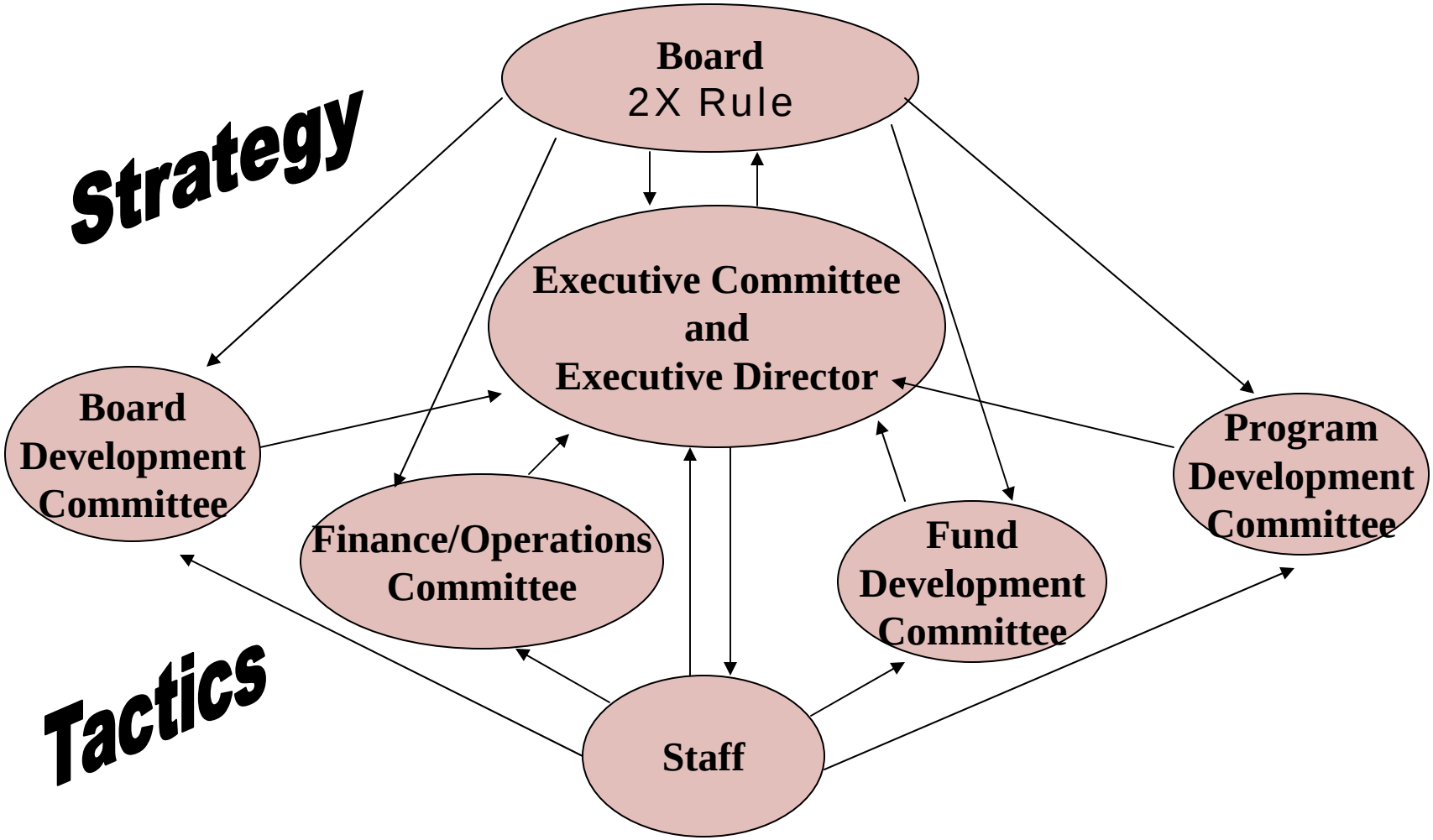
Effective Boards: The Political Dimension

- Respect the integrity of the governance process.
- Consult often and communicate directly with key constituencies.
- Attempt to minimize conflict and avoid win-lose situations.

Ways to Increase Political Effectiveness

Effective Boards: The Strategic Dimension

- Attend to strategy
- Establish priorities.
- Anticipate problems and act before issues become urgent.

Ways to Increase Strategic Effectiveness

Board Decision-Making Model