



Research, "Chainsaw Planning"® & Training

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TEN BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARDS

* Determine the Organization's Mission and Purpose - Review it periodically for accuracy and validity. Each individual board member should fully understand and support it.

* Select the Executive - Reach consensus on the chief executive's job description and undertake a careful search process to find the most qualified individual for the position.

* Support the Executive and Review His or Her Performance - ensure that the chief executive has the moral and professional support he or she needs.

* Ensure Effective Organizational Planning - boards must actively participate with the staff in an overall planning process and assist in implementing the plan's goals.

* Ensure Adequate Resources - one of the foremost responsibilities is to provide adequate resources for the organization to fulfill its mission.

* Manage Resources Effectively - must assist in developing the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place.

* Determine and Monitor the Organization's Programs and Services - which programs are the most consistent with an organization's mission, and to monitor their effectiveness.

* Enhance the Organization's Public Image - an organization's primary link to the community is the board.

* Serve as a Court of Appeal - Solid personnel policies, grievance procedures, and a clear delegation to the chief executive of hiring and managing employees will reduce the risk of conflict.

* Assess Its Own Performance - recognize its achievements and reach consensus on which areas need to be improved.

From the National Center for Nonprofit Boards "Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards", 1988.



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THE 7 TRAITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEAMS

1. Strong Leadership - Leaders are fundamental to highly effective teams because they set the vision and they bring the team together.
2. Trust - There should never be a reason to doubt the motives of a team member.
3. Respect - In a highly effective team, team members respect each other and their leader.
4. Unity - In a highly effective team there is a sense of family, a sense of connectedness, a sense of belonging.
5. Complementary Skills - Everyone brings something to the table that makes the whole bigger than the sum of the parts.
6. Open Communication - Communication is direct. Words do not need to be carefully chosen.
7. Lack of Selfishness - Team members are not out seeking credit. Credit will be given where credit is due.

Worldwide Success. "The 7 Traits of Highly Effective Teams". Retrieved January 3, 2009, from <http://ww-success.com/blog/index.php/2007/01/17/the-seven-traits-of-highly-effective-teams/>



Why Do Some Boards Micromanage?

Micromanagement Test

- Do board members spend time showing employees how to do a job right, telling them exactly what to do?
- Do board members devote a lot of time to overseeing school projects?
- Are board members irritated when administrators make decisions without consulting them first?
- Are board member spending more time "in the trenches" instead of considering policy implications?
- Do board members prefer directing staff members rather than empowering them?

Why Boards Micromanage

- 1) The board trustee's role & responsibilities are unclear.
- 2) Board members have no policies delineating their appropriate role.
- 3) Management of day-to-day work is what board members know from real life.
- 4) Board members are invited onto the board to perform a task, not to lead.
- 5) Micromanagement is a response to a crisis.
- 6) Board members are afraid.



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Effective School Boards (#1 of 3)

"What is the primary function of a School Board and what are some of the powers and duties of the Board?"

"The School Board's primary function is to provide each student with an education of the highest quality in keeping with his/her capacity to learn. The Board is ultimately responsible for school district operations, but the Board does not get involved with the day-to-day operations of the school. Rather, the Board sets the direction and goals and the administration decides how to get there."

Clear Understanding

- Members clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- There is a definition for each member
- The board itself has a clear and focused mission
- Hold themselves and the superintendent accountable
- Set policy and establishing goals for the school district
- Set direction through goals and policies

Avoid Micromanaging

- Let superintendents and staff make day-to-day decisions that affect the school and determine how to accomplish the goals



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Effective School Boards (#2 of 3)

Keys to School Board Excellence

Effective School Board focus their work on these priority areas:

- **Focus on Student Achievement**
- **Allocate Resources to Needs**
- **Monitor Returns on Investments**
- **Use Data**
- **Engage Communities**

Black, S. (2008). The keys to board excellence. American School Board Journal. February, pages 34-35.



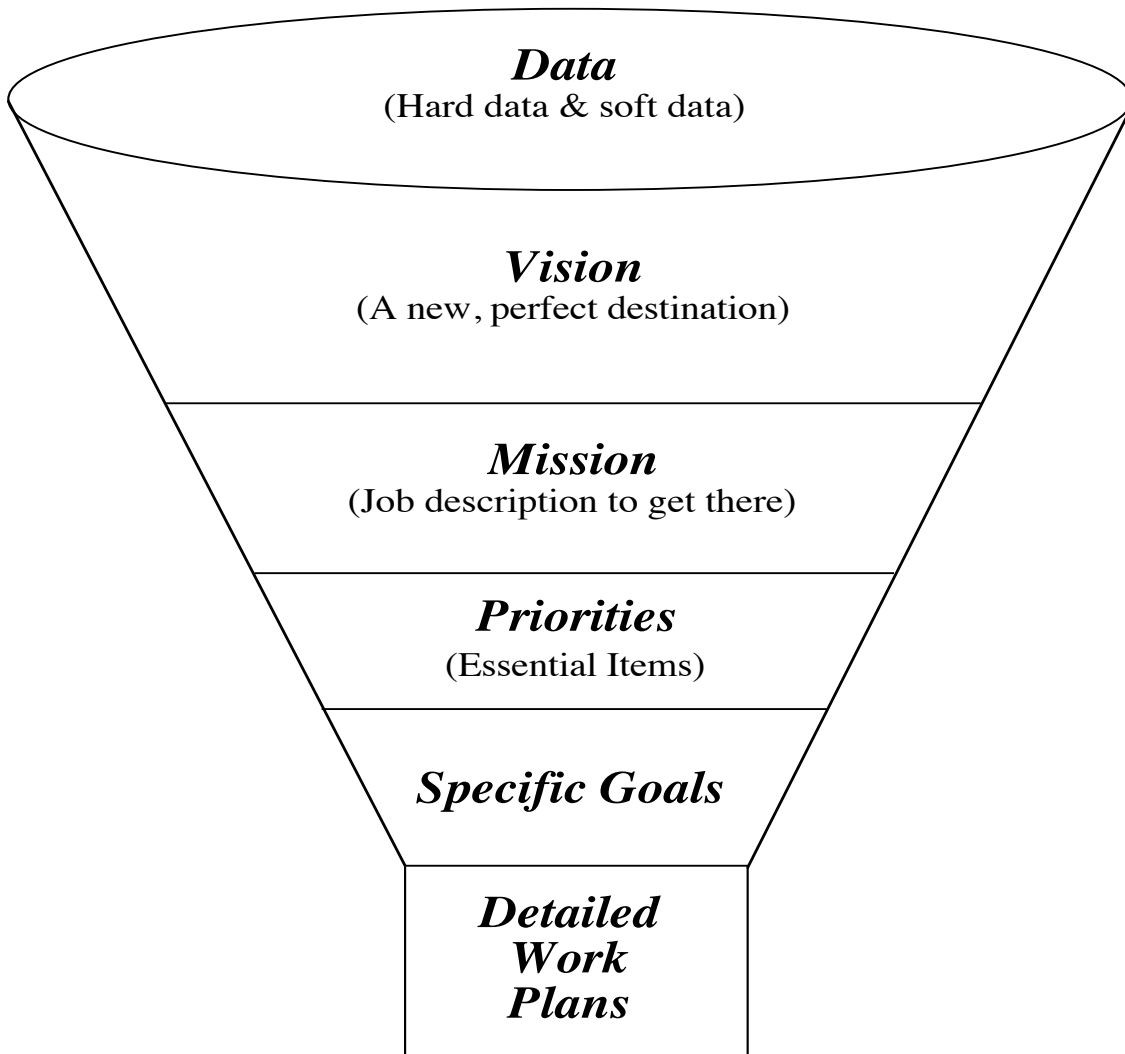
Effective School Boards (#3 of 3)

Periodic Board Reviews

- The board must take time on a regular basis (at least annually) to self-evaluate
- Build in periodic checkpoints to review the status of working relationships & progress toward goals
- Well-functioning boards have found ways to maintain open communication, which in turn leads to greater respect for fellow members
- Institute a simple survey on a quarterly basis dealing with topics such as communication, decision making, trust and other group-related dynamics
- In addition, the instrument should include a review of progress toward goals
- This forced choice process helps to resolve matters that might be a basis for conflict if not brought into the open and discussed



Chainsaw Planning® • **System Overview**





Chainsaw Planning® **Worksheet #1: Outcome Diagnosis**

	Positive	Less Than Positive
Intended	1)	1)
	2)	2)
	3)	3)
	4)	4)
	5)	5)
Unintended	1)	1)
	2)	2)
	3)	3)
	4)	4)
	5)	5)



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Sample Vision & Mission Statements: School Districts

Sample Vision Statements (New Destinations)

Columbia Heights (MN) Public Schools

Achieve academic & co-curricular excellence, high student & staff morale, in partnership with our diverse community.

Sun Prairie (WI) Public Schools

We will work together with our community to maximize all students' learning by providing a community of learners an adaptable system that provides equitable opportunities for a diverse population.

Scotland (SD) Public Schools

We will provide excellent academics & co-curriculars that develop lifelong learning, high academic achievement, & productive citizens that are prepared to move on to the next level of education.

Sample Mission Statements (Job Descriptions)

Breckenridge (MN) Public Schools

We will prepare our students for academic and community success.

Columbia Heights (MN) Public Schools

Provide a positive educational experience that allows all stakeholders to achieve their potential through:

- Communication
- High standards & expectations
- Planning & evaluation
- Acknowledging the value of community.

Scotland (SD) Public Schools

We will work together as staff, students & community to provide quality education & co-curriculars that result in high individual achievement in all areas of life and students that desire lifelong learning.



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Worksheet #3: Priorities

Step #1: Write your organization's new Vision here.

Step #2: Identify between 4 & 6 Priorities.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5) *(Optional)*

6) *(Optional)*



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Chainsaw Planning[®] **Worksheet 4B**
Goal Actions & Benchmarks

1) What do we want to accomplish? (*New Goal*)

2) What should we do to begin? (*Data Needed or Action Steps*)

3) What should we see happening as we improve? (*Benchmarks*)



***Chainsaw Planning*® Worksheet 4A: Goal Workplan**

Admiration of the Problem (ID all sub-issues & hurdles; 5 minutes)

SMART Goal (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely)
(in 20 words or less; 5 minutes)

Objectives / Action Steps (≤4; 10 minutes)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Timeline (desired per objective)	Resources (needed per objective)	Responsibility (name per objective)
1)	1)	1)
2)	2)	2)
3)	3)	3)
4)	4)	4)

Evaluation Plan (Quantitative and/or Qualitative; 5 minutes)

Quantitative:

Qualitative:



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Successful Team Leadership: *Built on Trust*

Team Leaders' Actions That Build Trust:

- **Reduce uncertainty in the organizational context**
- **Clarify formal and informal rules**
- **Craft and communicate shared values**
- **Limit vulnerability in the situation**
- **Limit the risk of failure; celebrate and learn from well-intentioned mistakes**
- **Disaggregate problems into small, discrete elements**
- **Believe in the individual**

<i>(Organization)</i>	<i>Organizational Leaders or Departments</i>					
<i>(Today's Date)</i> <i>(Start & End Dates)</i>	1)	2)	3)	4)	5)	6) Other
Priority 1:						
Goal 1:						
Priority 2:						
Goal 2:						
Priority 3:						
Goal 3:						
Priority 4:						
Goal 4:						
Priority 5:						
Goal 5:						
Priority 6:						
Goal 6:						
Project Notes:						
1)						
2)						
3)						
4)						
5)						



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Elements of an Effective Superintendent Evaluation

- **Leadership and school district culture** (Develops a professional learning community through continuous improvement, team identity and high expectations)
- **Policy implementation and governance as part of the leadership team** (Implements board policies while dealing with means issues)
- **Communication and community relations** (Proactively engages and learns the community's expectations for the public schools)
- **Organization management** (Manages the day-to-day district operations)
- **Financial management** (Stewards the district's finances)
- **Curriculum planning and development** (Systematically develops and implements curriculum to improve student learning)
- **Instructional leadership** (Demonstrates role as the district's instructional leader)
- **Human resource leadership** (Develops and efficiently uses the district's human resources)
- **Values and ethical leadership** (Demonstrates ethical behavior in leading the school district)
- **District goals** (Evaluates and implements the global, board and district-operational goals)

Namit, Chuck (11/2008) Turning the Tables on Assessment. District Administration