



Board Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

A Tool for Improving Governance Practice

For period from January to November

Original content developed by:
Non-Profit Sector Leadership Program
College of Continuing Education



Customized for Strathcona County Library Board
Revised: December 14, 2009

Board Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

Guidelines on How Best to Use This Tool

- This tool is designed to be used annually for board self-evaluation. It seeks to help the board answer the question: *what are we as a board now doing well and what can be do better?*
- The rating scale at the bottom of each page (“My Overall Rating”) asks that board members add up the total of the numbers circled on the page. This number is intended as a rough interpretation of the results of each section. The range of numbers will change with the number of questions asked and answered in the section.
- Remember that this tool is best used to stimulate reflection and discussion; it is not a scientific survey instrument.
- Section C on the **Board’s Relationship with the Director** is **not** intended as an evaluation of the Director but rather an evaluation of the quality of the board’s relationship with the Director as judged both by the board and by the Director. The items evaluated here should focus on matters that the board can change about its performance.
- Please complete this questionnaire, then place it in the envelope provided, and hand the envelope in to the Secretary to the Board who will compile the results. The compiled results will be available for discussion at the December board meeting.
- Please also jot down your questions or comments about this evaluation tool. If the board likes the concept, this tool can be further customized for next year’s evaluation.

Ideas for the Future

- Questions could be developed to assess the relationship between the Executive Committee and the board (to be answered by everyone), its relationship to the Director and the conduct of Executive Committee meetings. Questions for such a section could be drawn from the other sections. Another area to consider for future years is to evaluate the effectiveness of board committees and to evaluate board “follow-through.”

Instructions:

*Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: (1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither Agree or Disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly Agree.*

A. Mission and Strategic Planning

1.	The board understands and embraces the library's mission	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The board uses the mission as a standard against which decisions are made.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The board makes strategic decisions and is responsive to trends and other changes in the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The board devotes time to strategic planning.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The board ensures it has the information it needs to create long-term plans.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The library has a three to five-year strategic plan or a set of clear long-range goals and priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	The board's meeting agenda clearly reflects the organization's strategic plan or priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The board has ensured that the library also has a one-year operational or business plan.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	The board gives direction to the Director on how to achieve the goals primarily by setting or referring to policies.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	The board ensures that the organization's accomplishments, challenges, and use of resources are communicated to stakeholders and the general public.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	The board has an annual advocacy strategy for the library drafted by the Advocacy Committee.	1	2	3	4	5

My overall rating (add together the total of the numbers circled):

- Excellent (50+)
 Very Good (40-49)
 Good (30-39)
 Satisfactory (20-29)
 Poor (11-19)

B. How Well Has the Board Conducted Itself?

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is:
 (1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither Agree or Disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly Agree.

1.	Board members are aware of their fiduciary and legislated responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The meeting agenda of board meetings is well planned so that we get through all necessary board business.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The board package is relevant, useful and comprehensive.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Board members come to meetings prepared.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The board ensures that there is a mechanism in place to keep board members informed about board activities.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	All board members participate in board discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	The board is an effective governing body.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The board represents the broader community interests	1	2	3	4	5
9.	The board provides opportunity to individual members to pursue further education and board development.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	The board commits time to review its vision, direction and purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Board members are encouraged to enhance their understanding of the role of libraries and their socio-cultural environment.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	The board encourages and acknowledges different points of view.	1	2	3	4	5

(Section B is continued on next page.)

(Continuation of Section B from previous page)

13.	All Board members publicly support board decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	The structure of the board contributes to its ability to function effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Each committee sets annual goals and is accountable for meeting them.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Board meetings are interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Board meetings are frequently fun.	1	2	3	4	5

My overall rating:

- Excellent (75+)
 Very Good (60-74)
 Good (45-59)
 Satisfactory (30-44)
 Poor (15-29)

C. Board's Relationship with Executive Director

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is:

(1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither Agree or Disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly Agree.

1.	There is a clear understanding of where the board's role ends and the director's begins.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	There is good two-way communication between the board and the director.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The board ensures a climate of mutual trust and respect exists between the board and the director.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The board provides direction to the director by setting new policies or clarifying existing ones.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The board has discussed and communicated the kinds of information and level of detail it requires from their director.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The board has developed formal criteria and a process for evaluating the director.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	The board, or a committee of the board, has formally evaluated the director within the past 12 months.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The board evaluates the director on the competency areas in the director's performance appraisal tool.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	The board provides feedback and shows its appreciation to the director on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	The board ensures that the director takes advantage of professional development opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5

My overall rating:

- Excellent (45+)
 Very Good (39-44)
 Good (29-38)
 Satisfactory (20-28)
 Poor (10-19)

D. Feedback to the Chair of the Board (The Chair is not required to complete this section).

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is:
 (1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither Agree or Disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly Agree.

1.	The board has discussed and understands the role and responsibilities of the Chair.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The Chair is well prepared for board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The Chair helps the board to stick to the agenda.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The Chair ensures that every board member has an opportunity to be heard	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The Chair is skilled at managing different points of view.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The Chair brings the group back on track when it gets out-of-line.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	The Chair is direct with an individual board member when their behavior interferes with the board's ability to function effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The Chair helps the board work well together.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	The Chair demonstrates good listening skills.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	The board supports the Chair.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	The Chair is effective in delegating responsibility amongst board members.	1	2	3	4	5

My overall rating:

- Excellent (45+)
 Very Good (35-44)
 Good (25-34)
 Satisfactory (20-33)
 Poor (11-19)

E. Performance of Individual Board Members

Circle the response that **best** reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is:
(1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither Agree or Disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly Agree.

1.	I am aware of what is expected of me as a board member.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I have a good record of meeting attendance.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I read the meeting package in advance of our board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I am familiar with what is in the organization's by-laws, provincial legislation, and governing policies.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I frequently encourage other board members to express their opinions at board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I am encouraged by other board members to express my opinions at board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I am a good listener at board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I follow through on things I have said I would do.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I maintain confidentiality of board decisions and discussions when required.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	When I have a different opinion than the majority, I raise it.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I support board decisions once they are made even if I do not agree with them.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I promote the work of our organization in the community whenever I have a chance to do so.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I stay informed about issues relevant to our mission and bring information to the attention of the board.	1	2	3	4	5

My overall rating:

- Excellent (55+)
 Very Good (45-54)
 Good (32-44)
 Satisfactory (20-31)
 Poor (13-19)

F. General Assessment

1. What issues require the board's special attention during the next 12 to 24 months?

2. How can the board's organization or performance be improved in the next 12 to 24 months?

3. What other comments or suggestions would you like to offer related to the board's performance?

4. What policy change would you make to the library to bring immediate value to patrons?

5. Other comments.
