

**SAMPLE ONLY** - not prescriptive for your organization

# Engagement: Inspiring Board Members

**to Focus on the Future vs.  
Micro-managing the Present**

*Adapted from the 2012 ECFA Nonprofit Forum Series*



*A resource to supplement the materials in the*  
**ECFA Governance Toolbox Series No. 1: Recruiting Board Members**  
*Leveraging the 4 Phases of Board Recruitment*  
*Cultivation ► Recruitment ► Orientation ► Engagement*  
[www.ecfa.org/Content/Governance-Toolbox-Series-1](http://www.ecfa.org/Content/Governance-Toolbox-Series-1)

## How to use this document:

Review the seven-question reality check on page 17 in the “Engagement” section of *Recruiting Board Members – Board Member Read-and-Engage Viewing Guide*. How would your board members respond to this statement?

**Strongly Disagree (1).....Strongly Agree (5)**

“We can point, with delight, to numerous examples of how God-honoring board members—fully engaged—have leveraged their giftedness to help us make strategic, fork-in-the-road, spiritually discerning decisions to the glory of God!”

**The whole point of board member recruitment is engagement!** Engagement involves at least three critical factors:

- ☐ **1.** The ministry’s mission, vision, core values and strategic planning process are crystal clear—and the board owns the strategy, without micro-managing.
- ☐ **2.** Board members view their governance roles as stewards (not owners) of the ministry—and spiritual discernment pervades the entire governance process.
- ☐ **3.** The 3 Powerful S’s: Spiritual Gifts, Strengths and Styles of board members are known and leveraged by everyone.

➔**Next Steps:** Use the principles and ideas on the following pages to keep board member engagement on the front burner. Think of this resource as a toolbox with a variety of tools available to you, as the need arises.

## Engagement: Inspiring Board Members to Focus on the Future vs. Micro-managing the Present

*How do we inspire the board to focus on its two most critical jobs: hiring and encouraging the CEO and owning (but not micro-managing) the organization's strategy (based on spiritual discernment)?*

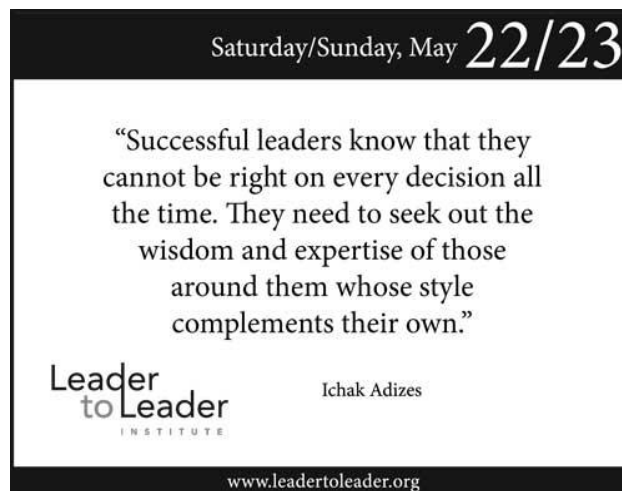
<p>RAM CHARAN Owning Up: The 14 Questions Every Board Member Needs to Ask</p>	<p>"THERE IS NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT FOR A CEO ➔ THAN HAVING THE RIGHT STRATEGY AND RIGHT CHOICE OF GOALS,  AND FOR THE BOARD, ➔ THE RIGHT STRATEGY IS SECOND ONLY TO HAVING THE RIGHT CEO."</p>
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## 4 Principles

### ❑ 1. The Garbage In—Garbage Out Principle

*Inspiration Versus Indigestion*

- Inspire the Board! In the absence of inspiring the board with substantive decision-making and spiritual discernment work on strategic issues, some board chairs and CEOs fill time and paper with mundane minutiae and meaningless meanderings down wasteful rabbit trails and bottomless black holes.
  - Some manipulate the board with low-level agendas.
  - Some misuse the board by keeping them in the dark.
  - Some mesmerize the board with anecdotes and activity.
  - Some maximize the board by focusing on strategy and results.
- What are you investing into your board and what are you getting out of your board?



## ❑ 2. The Hearing From God Principle

*Substance Versus Insignificance:*

Board Members Who Tilt Towards Micro-Management May Be Missing God's Best for the Organization

- Micro-management happens when:
  - There is no Board Policies Manual (BPM) or Strategic Plan.
  - The CEO and senior team are not clear on the BPM boundaries.
  - The Board rarely references the BPM.
  - The Chair, the CEO and other board members allow it to happen.
  - The mission and vision is not compelling; but "maintenance" is.
- Ways to address board members who tilt toward micro-management:
  - The Chair must graciously steer the CEO and board members away from staff issues and staff work.
  - Conduct a brief evaluation at the end of every board meeting.
  - The Chair meets with a board micro-manager one-on-one.
  - When board members make inappropriate requests for reports and information, the CEO graciously says "this is staff work, not board work."
  - The board uses term limits so micro-managers are not re-elected for another term.
  - The Chair reminds board members at each meeting:

**"THE BOARD SPEAKS WITH ONE VOICE  
OR NOT AT ALL."**

*Boards That Make a Difference, by John Carver*

## ❑ 3. The "Support Your CEO" Principle

*Affirmation Versus Inspection*

As Long As Your CEO Is the CEO God Led You to Select,  
Then Support and Encourage Your CEO.

- Select God's person as your CEO:
  - Read: *Stewards of a Sacred Trust: CEO Selection, Transition and Development for Boards of Christ-centered Organizations*, by David L. McKenna - [www.stewardsofasacredtrust.com](http://www.stewardsofasacredtrust.com)
  - Understand the distinctives of Christ-centered governance and visit ECFA's governance blog - <http://ecfagovernance.blogspot.com>
- Support your CEO—in the less obvious ways:
  - Pray faithfully (build in a reminder system)
  - Respond to your CEO's emails and phone calls within 24 hours
  - Prepare for board meetings with thoughtful preparation and model that, humbly, to other board members
  - Walk, with integrity, the delicate line of knowing and blessing the staff, yet always being loyal to your CEO

- **Encourage your CEO:**
  - Leverage your CEO's **3 Powerful S's**:
    - **S**piritual Gifts
    - **S**trengths
    - **S**ocial Style

**Our CEO's Spiritual Gifts**

1	
2	
3	

**Resources:**

- **Free Online Assessment:** [www.churchgrowth.org/analysis/index.html](http://www.churchgrowth.org/analysis/index.html)
- **Book:** *What You Do Best in the Body of Christ: Discover Your Spiritual Gifts, Personal Style and God-Given Passion*, by Bruce Bugbee

**Our CEO's Top-5 Strengths** (from StrengthsFinder.com)

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

**Resources:**

- **Book:** *StrengthsFinder 2.0*, by Tom Rath
- **Book:** *Living Your Strengths: Discover Your God-given Talents and Inspire Your Community*, by Albert L. Winseman, D. Min., Donald O. Clifton, Ph.D., and Curt Liesveld, M.Div., M.A.

**Our CEO's "Social Style"** (similar to Myers-Briggs, etc.)

✓	<b>THE 4 SOCIAL STYLES:</b>
	Analytical
	Driver
	Amiable
	Expressive

**Resources:**

- **Social Styles Website:** [www.tracomcorp.com](http://www.tracomcorp.com) - Tracom Group "The Creator of Social Style®" Note: All four social styles are represented on most boards. This website provides helpful resources on social styles—and how to help you and your board colleagues understand these very diverse styles!
- **Book:** *How to Deal with Annoying People: What to Do When You Can't Avoid Them*, by Bob Phillips and Kimberly Alyn. Note: This is the most recent book on social styles, written from an evangelical Christian perspective by best-selling author Bob Phillips, director-at-large at Hume Lake Christian Camps, an ECFA accredited organization. (The book is also humorous—per the title!)

- Encourage your CEO (continued):

- Know your CEO (family, hobbies, vacation preferences, interests, prayer concerns, etc.)
  - Read: *The Talent Masters: Why Smart Leaders Put People Before Numbers*, by Bill Conaty and Ram Charan.
- Recognize when results are achieved—and celebrate!
- Affirm great decisions

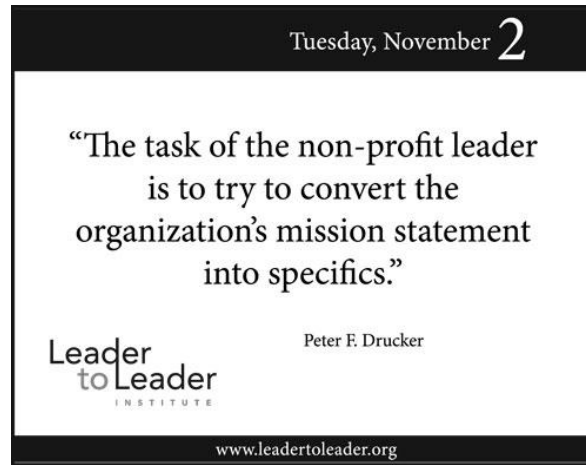
NOEL M. TICHY AND WARREN BENNIS, <i>Judgment</i>	<b>“Great leaders have a high percentage of good judgment calls; they are good only if the execution is successful. The second most important role you play is to develop other leaders who can make good judgment calls.”</b>
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- My CEO's birthday is: \_\_\_\_\_.
  - My CEO's hire date/year was: \_\_\_\_\_.
  - My CEO's next employment anniversary date is: \_\_\_\_\_.
- Assess your CEO:
    - Establish an annual best practice for CEO assessment
    - Assessment resources: [www.boardsource.org](http://www.boardsource.org)

## ❑ 4. The Own the Strategy Principle

Owning Versus Micro-managing

The Board Must Hear From God During Those Fork-in-the-Road Decisions That Will Impact Eternity



- Ensure that the following building blocks are in writing and reviewed every year as part of our Strategic Planning Process:
  - **Mission**  
*The 5 Most Important Questions You Will Ever Ask About Your Organization*, by Peter Drucker ([www.LeaderToLeader.org](http://www.LeaderToLeader.org))
    1. What is our mission?
    2. Who is our customer?
    3. What does our customer value?
    4. What have been our results?
    5. What is our plan?
  - **B.H.A.G.** (Big *HOLY* Audacious Goal)
    - What is a specific and measurable B.H.A.G. for our organization, 3 to 5 years from now, that can only be accomplished with God’s blessing?
  - **Core Values**
    - Book: *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business*, by Patrick Lencioni
    - Book: *The Speed of Trust*, Stephen M.R. Covey
    - Book: *Delivering Happiness*, by Tony Hsieh

○ **Strategy and Strategic Planning Elements**

Elements could include:

- Spiritual Discernment Process (this should flow through all of it)
- 3-Year Rolling Strategic Plan document
- Peter Drucker: Focus on Opportunities versus Problems
- Drucker: Focus on Outside Results, Not Inside Results
- Drucker: “Slough Off Yesterday” (planned abandonment)
  - “When the horse is dead, dismount.”
- S.W.O.T. Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- Environmental Scan
- Tool: Strategic Plan Placemat (a 11” x 17” one-page snapshot of the next 12 months or the next 3 years)
- Tool: G.N.O.M.E. Chart (below)

The “**G.N.O.M.E.**” Chart

The Board Must Own the Strategy			The Staff Must Own This	
Goals	Needs	Objectives	Methods	Evaluation
GOAL #1:				
GOAL #2:				
GOAL #3:				
GOAL #4:				

Drucker: “If you have more than five goals you have none.”

- Build in Accountability:
  - Board Annual S.M.A.R.T. Goals
  - CEO Annual S.M.A.R.T. Goals
  - CEO Monthly Dashboard Reports (progress on Annual S.M.A.R.T. Goals)

**For more resources and a discussion of many of these engagement tools:**

☐ **Book:** *Mastering the Management Buckets: 20 Critical Competencies for Leading Your Business or Nonprofit*, by John Pearson

☐ **Free Worksheets and Downloads:** Visit [www.ManagementBuckets.com](http://www.ManagementBuckets.com) and click on “The Buckets” (worksheets in each of the 20 buckets/core competencies)



**To order many of the books listed in this document, visit:**

<http://www.ecfa.org/Content/Governance-Toolbox-Series-1>

**Engagement:** *Inspiring Board Members to Focus on the Future  
Versus Micro-managing the Present*

**To Do:**

POINT PERSON	TASK	DEADLINE DATE	DONE DATE

“THERE IS IN THE ACT OF PREPARING,  
THE MOMENT YOU START CARING.”  
--Winston Churchill



**Notes:**

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**Engage Your Board at Every Meeting  
With More Governance Help and Resources!**

Visit [ECFA.org](http://ECFA.org) to order additional titles in the ECFA Governance Toolbox Series

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***This material was originally presented by John Pearson at these ECFA events:***  
ECFA 2011 Forums: Board Governance Essentials for Ministries (Dallas & Colorado Springs)  
ECFA 2012 Forums: ECFA Nonprofit Forum Series (Dallas)

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