



United Way
of Greater St. Louis

Session #10 Overview – Optimizing Board Effectiveness

March 8, 2019 | 9:00am – 12:00 noon | Larna Godwin

OPTIMIZING BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

Everyone knows that Boards play a vital role with their agencies and yet many grapple with the purpose Boards serve, their roles and responsibilities and how to build and maintain member engagement. This workshop will outline effective governance best practices through proper recruitment, fiduciary responsibility, executive director support and championing agency mission, accountability and transparency.

Special Instructions: Bring a recent board meeting agenda and agency strategic plan goals and objectives.

Target Audience: Board members, including board chairs, vice chairs and governance chairs, EDs and other organizational leaders, who provide a definitive role with the Board.

Learning Objectives for Participants:

- Improve knowledge about Board roles and responsibilities and governance best practices.
- Advance learning about effective recruitment strategies, expectation-setting and informed decision-making
- Increase understanding about proper Board structure
- Gain insight about developing (refining) and maintaining focus on improved performance and accountability.

Key Concepts:

- Board structure – roles & responsibilities, job descriptions, Committees & Board meetings
- Board member recruitment and development – Matrix and Onboarding versus Orientation
- Culture of Strategic Performance, Self-Assessment and Accountability
- Board Dashboards, metrics and other meaningful data

Concept Application/Group Exercises: Create a consent agenda and identify key governance-related dashboard indicators

Racial Equity Lens Application:

The most effective boards draw on the skills and perspectives of a diverse range of board members with various viewpoints developed from different life experiences. Cultivating an inclusive culture ensures all members bring their perspectives to board service, are equally engaged and share power and responsibility for agency mission. Awareness of how systemic inequities affect(ed) those an agency serves creates powerful opportunities to deepen impact of the public good.

Major Take-Aways by Participants: 1) Gold standard Board best practices; set expectations up front; Board Chair/ED relationship; dashboards; 2) Restructure Board meetings, consent agenda; creating opportunity for meaningful discussion; 3) Add executive session to agenda; board meeting assessment; accountability; Committee level work; and 4) Utilize formal Board recruitment practices, starting with Board matrix

Key Concepts in Common with Other Sessions: This work integrates with all other Series sessions.

To Learn More:

Richard Chait's "Governance As Leadership," Cathy Trower's "The Practitioner's Guide to Governance As Leadership," Anne Rhoades, "Built On Values: Creating an Envable Culture that Outperforms the Competition"

About the Presenter:

Larna Godwin is owner and president of Vector Communications, a 20+ year old well-respected St. Louis-based consulting firm, whose core competencies include engagement, communications planning, event planning and media relations. In addition, Larna has extensive expertise, a proven track record and passion for Board development, having served in a number of officer positions, including Chairs, on high-profile regional and national boards, including non-profit, corporate and institutions of higher learning.