

# Nonprofit Board Trends and Leading Practices

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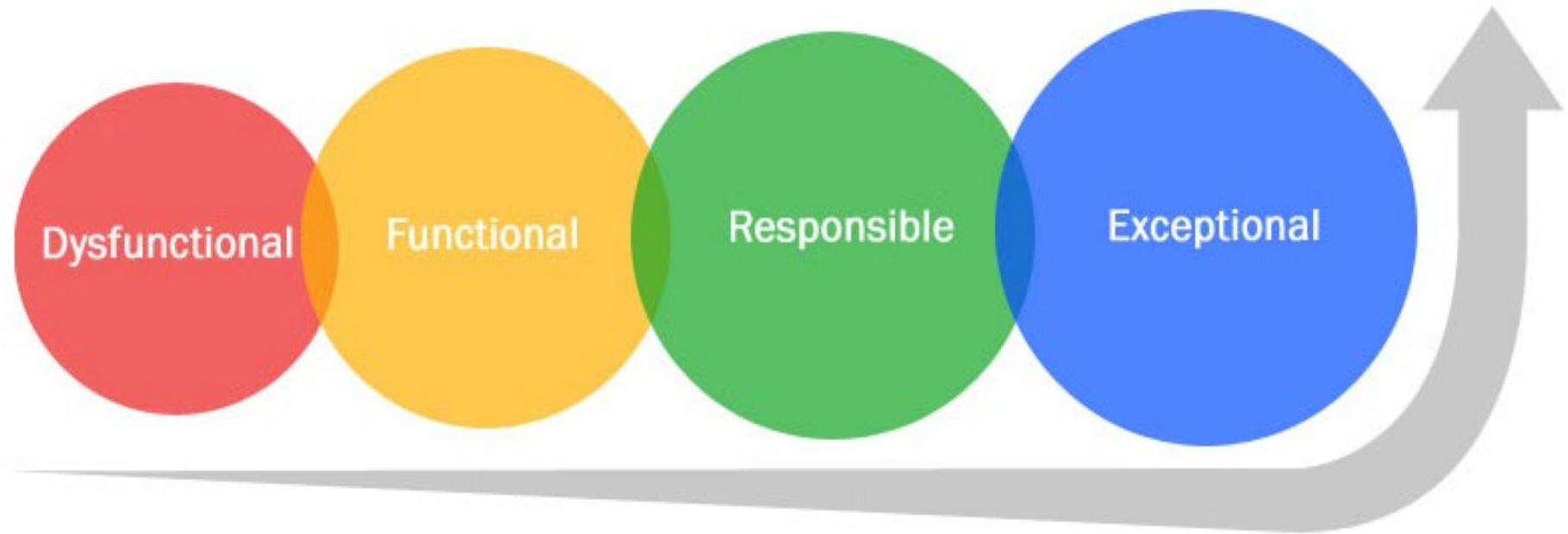


# Board Trends

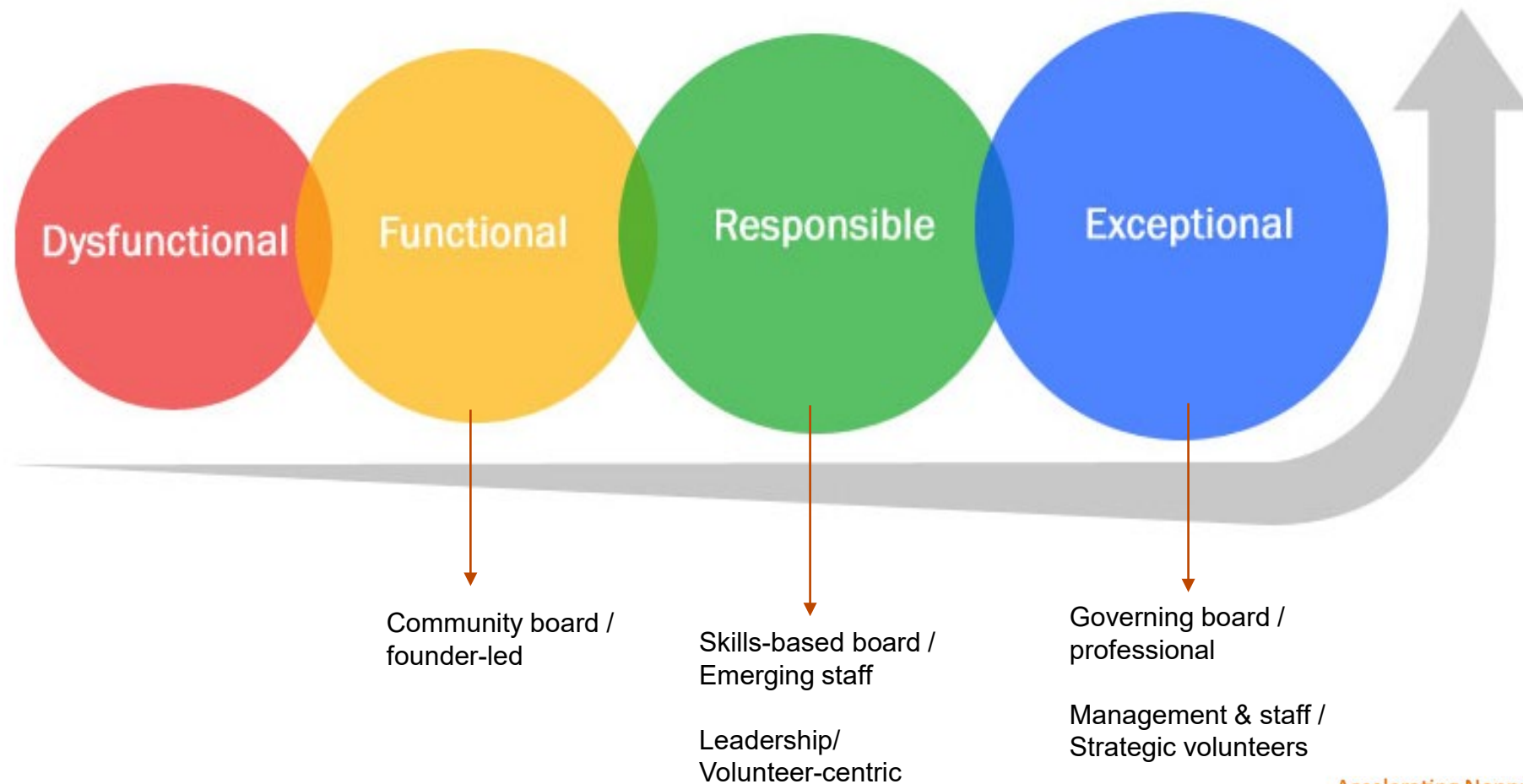


- Need to elevate board governance practices
- Focus on strategic / business planning
- Desire for more focus on board engagement
- Urgency around board recruitment with more openness to diversity
- Enhanced onboarding & continuous education for board members

# Governance Exists on a Continuum

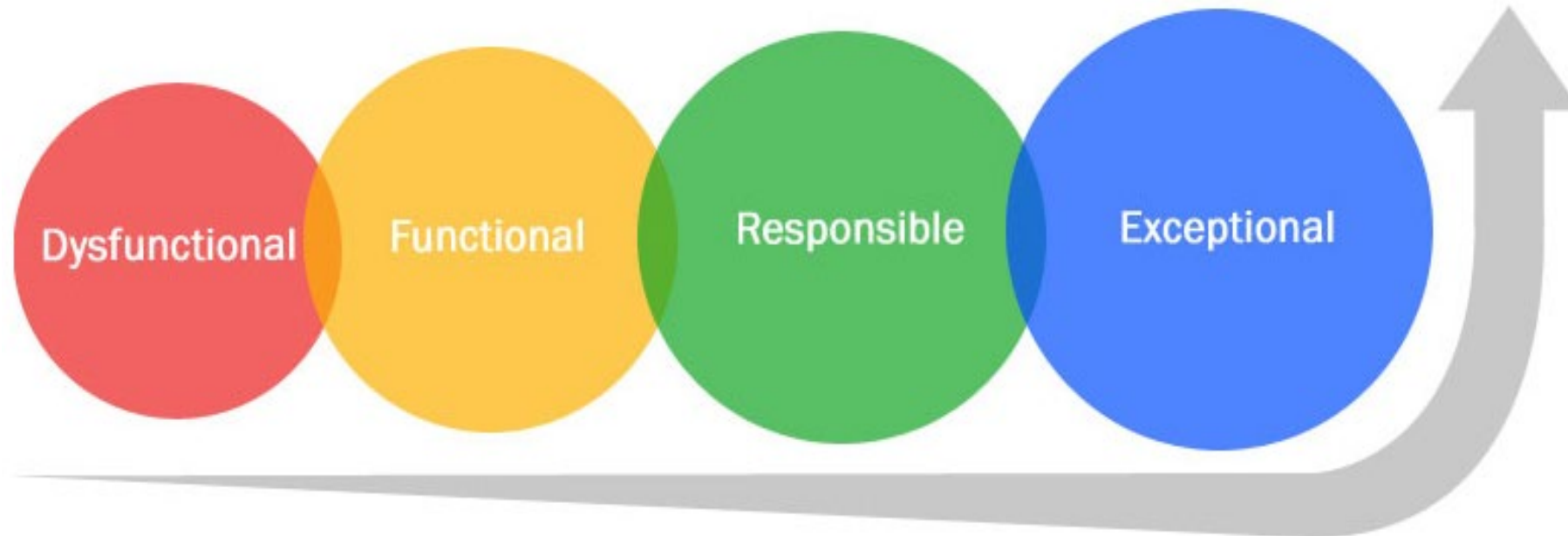


# Governance Exists on a Continuum



# Group Discussion

What stage of the continuum do you think best categorizes the Beyond Blindness Board?



# Board Roles Across the Nonprofit Lifecycle

	Founding	Developing	Mature	Institutional	
			Managing/Working/ Governance	Fundraising	Executive (Committee)
Member Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hands-on</li> <li>Founder driven</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong, dedicated hands-on management</li> <li>High burnout and turnover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on policy issues</li> <li>Priorities: finance, planning and public relations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimal involvement</li> <li>Low energy</li> <li>Slow crisis response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible</li> <li>High functioning problem solving</li> <li>Quick response</li> </ul>
Support Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little or no staff support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signs of "Core Group" burnout</li> <li>Cross-over between staff and volunteer roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong volunteer and staff systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff driven</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chairman driven</li> </ul>
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-term</li> <li>Minimal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncomplicated annual plans emerge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic</li> <li>Operating plan ties to performance evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive</li> </ul>	
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Founder</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beginning to emerge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board assumes major responsibility for financial oversight and fundraising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundraising vs. management</li> <li>Limited evaluation role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategy outcome focused</li> <li>Seeks board ratification</li> </ul>
Board Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similar backgrounds and interests</li> <li>Shared cause</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professionals and experts join the board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflects diversity of skills, demographics, client base and some high level executives and community leaders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High level executives and community leaders</li> </ul>	
Term Limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing discussion of setting term limits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terms: 2-3 years or 3-4 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dependent on giving record</li> </ul>	
Orientation of New Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited</li> <li>None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic</li> <li>Given sporadically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular</li> <li>Comprehensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular</li> <li>Comprehensive</li> </ul>	
Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5-12</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10-20</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15-35</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45-60</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5-10</li> </ul>
Structure Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal "of the whole"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified but many are "of one"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully functioning standing committees driven by strategic plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Of the whole" or chairs and committees as needed by strategy</li> </ul>	



- **Term Limits:** The board adopts term limits
- **Strategic Board Recruitment:** The board is strategic about member recruitment and define an ideal composition for itself based on the organization's priorities at any given moment.
- **Strategic Planning:** The board plays a substantive role with management in developing, approving, supporting and ensuring organizational strategy.
- **Chief Executive Evaluation:** The board evaluates the chief executive's performance annually; the evaluation should be written and involve the full board.
- **Board & Board Member Responsibilities:** The board has written documentation outlining the responsibilities of the full board and individual board members.

## Essential Board Leading Practices

- **Consent Agendas:** The board should include consent agendas in its board meeting agendas
- **Board Diversity and Inclusion:** The board should be intentional in its recruitment and engagement of diverse board members and foster a culture of inclusivity.
- **Board Evaluation:** The board should conduct a comprehensive self-assessment approximately every two years to evaluate its own performance.
- **Board Orientation & On-Boarding:** The board should formalize its new member on-boarding and orientation process.
- **Bylaws Review:** The board should review the bylaws periodically and ensure timely amendments when necessary.
- **Chief Executive Serving on the Board:** The chief executive should be an ex officio, non-voting member of the board.
- **Personal Giving:** If the organization engages in fundraising, every board member should make a meaningful personal contribution according to his or her means.
- **Board Size:** The board should determine its optimal size based on its need.

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## Recommended Board Leading Practices

Accelerating Nonprofit Success



Source: BoardSource



# Board Roles & Responsibilities



# Board of Directors' Responsibilities

Legal duties of a board member include:

- **Duty of care:** stay informed and ask questions
- **Duty of loyalty:** show undivided allegiance to organization's welfare
- **Duty of obedience:** stay faithful to the organization's mission



# Board Roles and Responsibilities: Establish Organizational Identity

- Participate in regular strategic planning
- Determine organization's mission
- Set the vision for the future
- Establish organizational values
- Set major goals and develop strategies
- Approve operational and/or annual plans



# Board Roles and Responsibilities: Ensure Necessary Resources

- Hire, oversee and support executive leadership
- Ensure adequate financial resources
- Enhance the organization's public standing and advocate for the mission
- Ensure the presence of a capable and responsible board



# Board Roles and Responsibilities:

## Provide Oversight

- Oversee financial management
- Minimize exposure to risk
- Measure progress against the strategic plan
- Monitor and evaluate programs and services
- Provide legal and moral oversight
- Formally evaluate the Chief Executive Officer (annually)
- Evaluate itself (every two to three years)



# Board Member Expectations & Commitments

## Commitment of Time:

- Serve a two-year term on the board with the option for re-election to four additional terms.
- Attend a minimum 75% of the board meetings. Meetings are held quarterly.
- Participate on a minimum of one committee during the year
- Carefully prepare for all board meetings.
- Build collaborative relationships with board members.

## Commitment of Talent:

- Commit to continually bringing forth your expertise and background to assist the organization's mission.
- Develop a wide lens, be ambitious, adaptable while connecting the dots so others understand what the organization is looking to accomplish.
- Form linkages with other community organizations. Bring strong networks through ambassadorship to the organization.

## Commitment of Treasure:

- Seek out meaningful in-kind contributions.
- Through personal and community connections, open doors to potential skills-based and pro bono volunteers.
- Engage networks into the organization for the greater good.



Large Group Activity:

Identify key board health indicators to begin measuring over the next year.

