

Synthesis of Discussion Topic 2: Assessing governance of not-for-profit organizations

Topic discussed from Monday April 27 to Friday May 29, 2009

Introduction to topic:

Weaknesses in governance emerge as a factor that affects the organization's work. This area is quite sensitive as governors are often volunteers most of whom spend relatively little time on matters pertaining to the not-for-profit. Yet some governors spend too much time and micromanage the affairs of the organization.

Topic Question:

As an evaluator, board member, donor or NFP leader, *how should one assess the governance of a not-for-profit organization?*

Comments received:

Submitted by Anonymous on Tue, 05/26/2009 - 18:01:

Not for profit organizations are difficult to evaluate. It is critical that evaluators understand the most important outcomes that the organization is seeking and try to develop some metrics around these outcomes. Without clear measures evaluation becomes a matter of different stakeholder perceptions.

Submitted by Anonymous on Wed, 05/27/2009 - 21:55:

The focus on outcomes is indeed a crucial component in evaluating an organization. One of the things that I would expect from the governing body is a demand for this kind of metrics around outcomes. The Board should have its own list of key indicators to track how the organization is doing, and should call for periodic evaluations that would help to assess outcomes.

Conclusion:

This was the 2nd topic of our website. We are looking forward to get even more comments from visitors next time. The discussions topics 1 and 2 do relate and have been kept open on our website, so that you can continue contributing to them. Do not hesitate to invite your friends and colleagues to participate to the discussions.

Reflect & Learn

You can also participate to our 3rd discussion topic, which will be online from Monday June 1st to Friday July 3rd: *What structures should be put in place to assess networks or partnerships?*