

# LEADERSHIP RESOURCES WORKBOOK for North Country Trail Association Chapters



*Developed for North Country Trail Association  
by Amy Stork Consulting  
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### About This Workbook

This workbook was developed to support a virtual training for leaders of NCTA Chapters, held in October 2021.

The workbook and training were developed by consultant Amy Stork ([www.AmyStork.com](http://www.AmyStork.com)). Please credit Amy Stork Consulting with any reproduction of these materials.

While designed to stand alone as reference material for Chapter leaders, the order and content of the Workbook are a reflection of the content of the training rather than a comprehensive approach to leadership development.

For more information or questions about this workbook please contact NCTA staff.

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# Section 1: Recruitment, Orientation, and Leadership Succession

## 1.1 Tips for Leadership Recruitment

1. **Discuss recruitment goals before recruiting.**

Discuss who you want and need on the leadership team before individuals begin asking others to join. Never tell someone they need to “replace themselves” to leave their role.

2. **Don’t start from scratch – build a leadership funnel.**

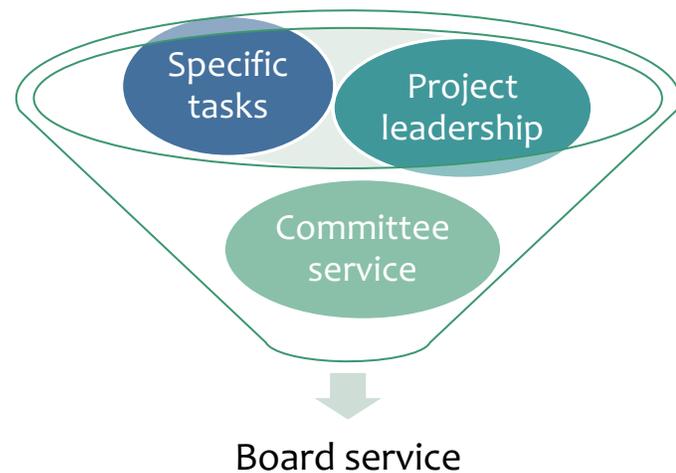
You want to avoid “cold calling” people to be on your board or leadership team. Always be thinking about building leadership in the organization, before you need someone right now in key roles. Recruit people to do tasks, take on projects, or serve on committees. Then you will know who’s going to be a great leader, and they will feel excited and committed to Chapter leadership.

3. **Don’t settle for “a warm body”.**

Even when it is hard to find leaders, commit to being strategic about who you bring on to the group. If someone is enthusiastic, but not a fit for the leadership role or can’t commit, find another way for them to serve. When you bring on leaders who aren’t consistently available to attend meetings or can’t commit to the between-meetings work, it makes it hard to form a cohesive team.

4. **Provide clarity.**

If you’re recruiting someone to a leadership role, be up front about it. Tell them you’d like to meet to discuss leadership service, and have a job description ready. If they are interested, go over it in detail so they understand what would be expected. Be clear about opportunities to observe the team before being formally nominated, or to serve in other capacities if they cannot make a leadership-level commitment. Let them know the process for joining.



**1.2 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: Leader Attributes Worksheet**

<i>Tailor the categories below to the needs of your organization. First complete the matrix for each current board / council member, then identify gaps and needs.</i>	Current member #1	Current member #2	Current member #3	Current member #4	Current member #5	Prospect #1	Prospect #2
<b>Personal qualities</b>							
Passion for the mission							
Leadership skills							
Team oriented							
Willing and available to work							
Good communicator							
Strategic							
Bridge-builder							
<b>Expertise</b>							
Administration/Management							
Finance							
Business							
Communications/Marketing							
Nonprofit board experience							
Technology							
Fundraising							
Legal							
<b>Connections/Capacity</b>							
Ability to contribute funds							
Community connections							
Access to funders/donors							
<b>Reflecting our community</b>							
Key user groups							
Geography							
Age							
Gender							
Race / ethnicity							

Adapted from BoardSource's *The Handbook of Nonprofit Governance* (2010)

### 1.3 Sample Leadership Recruitment Process

#### 1. Develop recruitment goals.

- ◆ Match leadership recruitment to big picture strategies. Use the grid on 1.1 to help:
  - What skills does the Chapter leadership group most need?
  - What parts of the community do you need to reach to meet your goals?
  - Are all the different groups of people who use the trail represented on your board / leadership council?
  - What qualities or attributes do you want from **every** Chapter leader, like enthusiasm for the mission, ability to get along with others, ability to work independently, etc.?
- ◆ Prioritize what is missing now or what will be lost when specific leaders rotate away.

#### 1. Identify potential leaders.

- ◆ Brainstorm with Chapter leaders about individuals who might be a good fit for the goals.
- ◆ If you have too many ideas, prioritize those who fill the greatest gap or hit multiple goals.
- ◆ If you can't identify many individuals, think about how you could reach new people and get them involved in "entry level" leadership roles.
- ◆ Ask members to keep the names confidential so the process can unfold.

#### 2. Contact each potential leader directly.

- ◆ Assign one individual (a member of the leadership development committee, or someone who knows the individual) to contact each of the prospects.
- ◆ Make sure each contact person has the appropriate materials.
- ◆ Set up conversations with each potential new leader. Focus discussion on the exciting things the Chapter is doing, as well as expectations of leaders. If appropriate, discuss opportunities for involvement on projects or committees as a step to becoming a Chapter leader.

#### 3. Invite potential leaders to learn more.

- ◆ Provide background materials so they can learn more—minutes of recent meetings, etc.
- ◆ Invite the prospect to attend a leadership meeting to get an idea of how the group makes decisions and delegates responsibilities. (Some groups make this a requirement before being nominated.)

#### 4. Confirm mutual interest.

- ◆ Discuss the individual with the existing group and make sure everyone is comfortable with the nomination. Confirm that the individual is interested and answer any more questions.

#### 5. Nominate and vote as required by bylaws.

- ◆ Once it's clear that this is a good fit for all, nominate the individual and vote them onto the leadership group following the steps in your bylaws. Often this can be done over email if you have email voting processes established; this allows the confirmation to happen between meetings.

**1.4 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: Leadership Entry Points Exercise**

**GOAL: Recruit volunteers already skilled at leadership/ management**

**1. Brainstorm with the board / council:**

What are some (non-trail) tasks, projects, and committees that could attract this kind of leadership?

**2. Select 2 or 3 tasks, projects or committees** that are important to the organization this year AND might provide good entry points.

- ❑ Define the desired outcomes for the task, project, etc.
- ❑ Describe the basic tasks that would be associated with the commitment you are asking for.
- ❑ Define the likely time commitment you are asking for.
- ❑ Assign or define a point person who is the lead on the task/project/committee.

**3. For each task, project, or committee selected, brainstorm individuals who might be a fit.** If more than one person is a fit for the roles, select one person

**4. Assign current leaders to reach out to each individual. Speak with the individual about:**

- ❑ Their interest in taking on a task or project
- ❑ The project you have in mind
- ❑ Why you thought they might be a good fit
- ❑ What the deadlines / time commitments are
- ❑ A timeframe for a decision by them

**5. Follow up** if there has not been a clear “yes” or “no”

**6. Report back** to the other Chapter leaders about the response

**7. Once you get to a YES, follow up with the individual a few times** during the project to find out how things are going.

**1.5 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: Exercise for Creating a Leadership Funnel**

**Time: 60 minutes**

**Instructions:**

1. Set up stations with these questions on flip chart sheets or google slides
  - ◆ Station #1. Recruit Younger and More Diverse Leadership: *What Ideas Do We Have?*
  - ◆ Station #2. Mentor New Leaders: *What Ideas Do We Have?*
  - ◆ At Station #3, for the goal of. Recruit volunteers already skilled at leadership/ management: *What are some (non-trail) tasks, projects, and committees that could attract this kind of leadership? Write in the columns.*

Tasks	Projects	Committees

2. Split your board / council into three small groups (or do the exercises one at a time all together)
3. Assign each group to one of the topics below.
4. Each group choose someone to take notes into the slides or on the flip chart paper.
5. Discuss the questions.
6. After about 10 minutes, groups rotate to the next question.
7. Repeat until each group has answered each question.
8. Debrief each question. Some sample discussion questions:
  - What's new here?
  - Which ideas make you feel excited?
  - Which ideas would be easiest to implement?
  - Which should we do first?
  - Who can take on one of these ideas?

### 1.6 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: Leadership Development Virtual Focus Group

1. **Clarify why you are having the session and what you hope to learn.** For example:

- ❑ What are members excited about when it comes to our Chapter?
- ❑ What kind of volunteer activities are most exciting / interesting to our members?
- ❑ In their opinion, what makes a successful and fulfilling volunteer experience?
- ❑ What would help them as individuals be able to / interested in moving into leadership roles in general?
  - Such as: kinds of duties, structures, times of day or week, overall time commitment, etc.
- ❑ Which leadership roles in our Chapter– tasks, project, committees, etc.– seem interesting?
- ❑ What are the barriers to participating in the leadership roles?
- ❑ What could the Chapter do to make leadership roles more accessible / remove barriers?

These are the questions you might want to ask. Try to allow about 1.5-2 minutes per person per question.

2. **What information do you need to (briefly) present?**

- ❑ Such as an overview of your Chapter structure and the kind of tasks and projects for new leaders.
- ❑ Consider writing this up as a word document or PDF that you can email in advance (and keep on your website for the future)

3. **Design the session**

- ❑ Who will facilitate (ask the questions)? Who will be the technical host on Zoom or another service? Who will take notes?
- ❑ How many people do you want to have in the focus group? 6-8 people is usually a good number.
- ❑ How many separate groups might you create?
- ❑ How long do you want the groups to be. 1.5 hours works well, or 1 hour with fewer people.
- ❑ What times of day / week will you try? Perhaps pick a variety. Lunchtime, evening, weekend.

4. **Invite people**

- ❑ Option 1: hand-pick people to attend
- ❑ Option 2: Broadcast to your mailing list
- ❑ Option 3 (best): Both! Broadcast to the list then reach out to some specific people you think will have the most insight AND represent who you want to get involved
- ❑ Seek RSVPs; finalize time with email and calendar invite, including video conference info.

- Remind a week before and remind again the day before.

### 5. Host the session(s)

- Welcome everyone
- Ask one “get to know you” question such as “Your name and your favorite trail”
- Clarify if you want people to raise hands, jump in, or if you are going to call on people. Often, particularly in the virtual world, it helps to call on people.
- Ask each of your questions in order.
- Take notes.
- End on time, even if you did not get to ask all your questions.
- If some folks talk more than others, try to call on the ones who talk less first; then let others know “we only have a few minutes per person, feel free to share more thoughts in the chat”, for example
- Close with a question that helps gauge how people experienced the session itself – one word for what they think about volunteering with the Chapter, or one thing they learned or appreciated.

### 6. Analyze

- Once you’ve hosted all the sessions, have one or more people look through the notes and the themes that have come up.
- Write up some themes as bullet points.
- Bring back to the board / council for a discussion of how you can use this information to create new volunteer opportunities.

### 1.7 Sample Leadership Development Committee Charter

#### Purpose of Committee

The Leadership Development Committee (the “Committee”) ensures that leadership recruitment is organized and ongoing, and that the board / council has the training and structures it needs.

*This is an example:  
Some items may not be suitable for Chapters*

#### Committee Membership

The Committee shall be comprised of at least three members appointed to serve one-year terms beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> and ending December 31<sup>st</sup> of that same year or until a new committee member is appointed. The President shall appoint a Committee Chair to coordinate the Committee for a term of one year. The Chair is responsible for setting the meetings of the committee, delegating duties to ensure that workplan goals are met, and reporting to the board / council.

#### Committee Authority and Responsibilities

The Committee will:

1. Establish qualifications and characteristics needed in Chapter board / council leadership roles including officers, and expectations for board / council members in areas of attendance, preparedness, candor and participation.
2. Identify, communicate with and recommend to the qualified candidates to serve as members and/or officers of the board / council.
3. Develop, update, and recommend appropriate policies and principles such as board / council size, term limits, etc.
4. Recommend and support the effectiveness of the committee structure.
5. Coordinate and oversee the annual self-evaluation of the board / council.

#### Committee Meetings

The Committee will meet at least quarterly and as often as its chair or a majority of its members deems necessary, either in person, telephonically or electronically. The chair will develop an agenda in advance of each meeting and communicate details to Committee members in a timely fashion.

#### Committee Reports

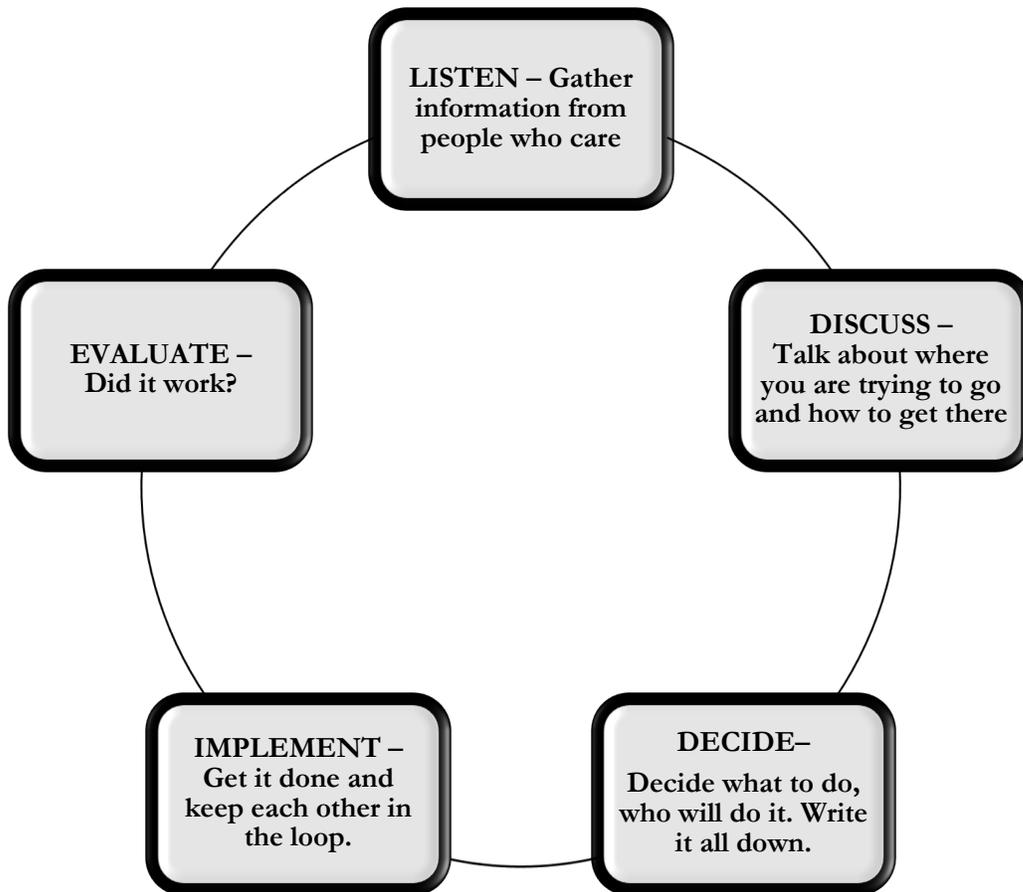
The Committee will take notes at each meeting, including meeting attendance and any decisions, and submit them to the Secretary for record keeping. The committee chair will provide a report to the board / council quarterly or at the request of the president.

#### Committee Evaluation

The Committee will check in on its performance in accordance with this charter at least once a year.

## Section 2: Planning

### 2.1 Planning Cycle



2.2 Example of Strategic Plan Framework

There are many common terms used in strategic planning. There isn't a right or a wrong vocabulary, but it is good to agree in advance on what terms you will use and what they mean.

Here is one framework you can use, modeled on the work of Solid Ground Consulting ([www.SolidGroundConsulting.org](http://www.SolidGroundConsulting.org)):



2.3 Sample Chapter Action Planning Process

Step	Description
1	Form a small committee of 3-4 people to work on steering the process
2	As a group, identify key people or groups from whom you'd like to get input. Have a series of conversations (meetings, interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc.) to understand everyone's impressions of where they want the Chapter to go. Use tools like the virtual or in person focus group (1.5) or other ideas (2.4)
3	Hold a group discussion with Chapter leaders and/or all members. Use exercises like 2.5 or 2.6 to get people talking about goals for the Chapter.
4	Drawing on what you learned in Steps 2 and 3, have the committee create a draft Action Plan focused on the work of your Chapter.
5	<p>Hold a group discussion (s) to review the draft. Questions could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Is there anything in the draft that you think is not effective, not important right now, or not achievable?</li> <li>■ What is missing that you would have expected to see here?</li> </ul> <p>(What not to do: group wordsmithing. Ask people to focus on the concepts not the wording for now. Collect detailed "wordsmith" feedback separately, usually by email.)</p>
6	Revise the draft.
7	Seek feedback from leadership volunteers, partners, or other stakeholders as needed.
8	Assign the actions in the plan to specific committees or individuals. Keep track of progress with deadlines and planned times to update each other on progress.
Note	*****There should always be a section of the Plan that is about how the board/leadership council itself needs to evolve and who will be responsible for that work.

2.4 Collecting Chapter Member Feedback

Whether you want members to become more involved or you want feedback on your plans, here are a few methods for engaging members and other stakeholders so you can learn from them:

<b>Method and description</b>	<b>When to use</b>
<p><b>Community kiosks, physical and online bulletin boards, and comment boxes.</b> The most passive way to gather input, these also have the potential to be seen by lots of people (at least, the people who frequent the online sites where digital bulletin boards are made available, or the physical locations where comment boxes or community kiosks are installed). It’s important to consider the desired constituencies and where they spend their time. In communities where multiple languages are spoken, posting information in the most common languages or using a pictorial approach may improve response rates. Use forms, index cards, etc.</p>	<p>When there is a physical location where your community will see the info</p>
<p><b>Questionnaires and surveys.</b> A survey can be printed in hard copy or sent electronically. There are off-the-shelf online survey tools. In designing survey questions, it’s important to avoid “leading” questions that are phrased in a way that suggests a particular answer. “Closed” questions, with responses such as “yes/no/maybe” or rating scales (“from 1 to 4, how important is x?”) are easy to quantify even with very large data sets. “Open-ended” questions that invite comment in response provide rich information but take longer to analyze, particularly if there are many respondents. The more respondents, the more data reflects “group wisdom” rather than the ideas of a few.</p>	<p>Surveys are good for quantitative data research and for reaching a broad constituency.</p> <p>An electronic survey is inexpensive</p>
<p><b>Town hall meetings.</b> These are large-format meetings that require a big comfortable space. They can be managed with a combination of small-group work in teams or at tables with facilitation support. Making the meeting dynamic – such as by rotating small groups to different table or flipchart or poster-paper “stations” around the room, where they can respond to various issues or questions – helps keep participants engaged.</p>	<p>Optimal when the goal is a combination of information-sharing and information-gathering.</p>
<p><b>Listening sessions or focus groups.</b> Small-group interviews (“focus groups” for short) are structured discussions with a small group (8 to 12 is ideal) of carefully selected participants. The focus group is directed by a moderator using a detailed topic guide. The moderator can be someone from your Chapter or a neutral person. Focus groups are designed to elicit qualitative information: <i>how</i> people think about things and <i>why</i> they do what they do.</p>	<p>Getting detailed feedback from more people, but they may not be as candid</p>
<p><b>Interviews.</b> Individual conversations have the potential to yield the richest information. They also require the more significant investment of resources relative to the return.</p>	<p>You want detailed, candid feedback, and you have time/resources</p>

### 2.5 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: Vision and Goals Exercise with Three Wishes

#### Materials

- Index cards or post-it notes – three per participant
- Flip chart sheets and markers in two or three colors OR a wall where you can stick post-it notes
- Pens if needed

#### Steps

6. Distribute three index cards or post-it notes and a pen if needed to each participant.
7. Provide these instructions: *“You each get three wishes for the future of your organization and the community it is trying to serve. Kind of like Aladdin’s Lamp but for your work. Think 20 years into the future and offer up your wishes – please make them relatively realistic and achievable... and simple. Write one wish on each of the three index cards / post-it notes. Aladdin’s Rules apply: You can’t wish for more wishes; you can’t wish someone would love you; and you can’t wish someone would be dead.”*
8. When everyone is done writing (usually, about five minutes), collect all the “wishes,” shuffle, and redistribute so that everyone has wishes that someone else wrote.
9. Ask for a first volunteer: “Who’d like to read a wish?”
10. Write each wish (or an abbreviated version) on a flipchart sheet (alternatively, stick the post-it notes on the wall and use that as a starting point for groups of similar post-it notes)
11. Next, ask if anyone else has wishes that seem similar. Scribe those additional, similar wishes on the same flipchart sheet or locate the post-it note(s) near the first one. You are trying to categorize the wishes. (Are they “wishes” about money, about capacity, about community standing, about programmatic impact?)
12. If there are no further “wishes” in that category, ask for a new volunteer / new category. Repeat the process for the first wish, scribing, adding and categorizing. Continue this process until every “wish” has been shared and scribed or grouped with other wishes.
13. Arrange the flipchart sheets on the wall topically or observe the post-it note groups. They should now tell a loose “story” of the group “vision” of what will be true in 20 years – the difference the group will have made, and who the group will have become. If things are moving too fast to categorize everything on the fly, you may want to take a break and have a smaller group use the time to organize the wishes by theme.

**This exercise works best when the wishes are ambitious, yet simple.**

**Yes:** There will be trails suitable for people of all abilities.

**No:** Our community will have trails suitable for everyone and we will have great tread on all the trails and the parking lots will all have toilets and everyone will be nice to each other on the trails.

## 2.6 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: Vision and Goals Exercise with Headline and Photo

### Materials

- Plain or lined paper – several sheets per participant
- Pens – one per participant
- Flip chart sheets and markers in two or three colors

### Steps

1. Here are several variations on the main exercise:
  - **Write the headline and first one or two paragraphs from a news article** describing the success of your group, from the vantage point of 20 years in the future. Include narrative details as much as possible: tell the story of the project and its impact for the people involved and the larger community.
  - **Write the press release announcing a prize given to the Chapter** for the success of the group, 20 years in the future. Include narrative details as much as possible: tell the story of the project and its impact for the people involved and the larger community.
  - **Draw a picture of the photograph that appears as part of a news story about the success of your group**, from the vantage point of 20 years in the future. What will the photograph show? What is the caption? Include pictorial details as much as possible: this picture should tell the story of the project and its impact for the people involved and the larger community.
2. After 20 to 30 minutes for personal reflection and writing, invite members of the group to share—in the full group, or in pairs / small groups if you have more than six or so people.
3. Discuss in the full group – did common themes emerge? What do participants like about one another’s ideas – what resonates most?
4. Take each of the themes. Brainstorm what it would take to make this “headline” really happen. These

## Section 3: Inclusive Culture

### 3.1 Leadership Orientation/Training Ideas

#### Initial Orientation

- New leaders attend NCTA Chapter Leader orientation.
- Schedule a meeting between the new board / council member and the President, and anyone holding a previous position that might be filled by the new member, if applicable. Go through the materials listed here, or others, and answer any questions.
  1. Chapter Bylaws and Charter
  2. NCTA's Chapter Leadership Handbook and link to online resources center
  3. NCTA's Strategic Plan
  4. Latest Chapter financial report
  5. Latest Chapter membership report
  6. Any Committee charters and job descriptions
  7. Latest committee or program reports

#### **Tips:**

- The Secretary or someone else should be assigned to maintain these orientation materials. It's easiest to keep them in one place online: Google folder, Dropbox, etc.

#### First Three Months

- Immediately assign the new member to a committee. Ask the committee chair to ensure the member gets up to speed on committee business.
- Consider assigning a "mentor" – a longer-term leader to work with the new member for the first three months. The "mentor" checks in after each meeting to answer questions and help member become acquainted.
- President also checks in regularly with new leader to see how things are going.

#### Ongoing Training

- Provide opportunities for board / council leaders to attend special workshops related to the assignments and interest of the member.
- Expand responsibilities and rotate committee assignments to help satisfy the interests and needs of the leader. This has the added advantage of providing continuous development of volunteer leaders.

### 3.2 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: Preparing to Welcome New Leaders

**Time: 30-60 minutes**

#### **Preparation:**

1. Have someone serve as facilitator / timer and someone else manage the notes.

#### **Round One: about 20 minutes**

2. Have each board / council member write on their own for about 3 minutes:
  - a. What are your **hopes for our Chapter** into the future?
  - b. When you are ready to leave, **who do you hope is next to you waving goodbye?**
3. Share in groups of three, with each person just listening to the others read their answers. This should take about 5 minutes.
4. Discuss in the full group for 15 minutes:
  - o What themes came up in your conversations?

#### **Round Two: About 30 minutes**

5. Have each board member write on their own for about 3 minutes:
  - o Think of a time when you felt welcome and included in something even though you were new. **What specifically did other folks do, or what happened?**
6. Share in groups of three for about 7 minutes. Have someone in each group write down the answers (or if you are online, type them into a shared document that everyone can see)
7. Discuss in the full group for 20 minutes:
  - o What themes are you seeing from all the stories?
  - o Which of these ideas does your Chapter do now?
  - o Which of these ideas match the needs of the people you described in Round One?
  - o **Which ideas would you like to do going forward?**

#### **Wrap up**

8. Review the things folks said they'd like to do going forward. Assign one point person to think about **HOW** to do each of the ideas you wanted to move forward (from Step 8).

#### **Follow up**

9. At the next meeting, review the **HOW** ideas. Select several to try, and assign tasks clearly.
10. Revisit each month for at least three months to see if the new “welcoming ways” are becoming habits.

### 3.3 Tips for Optimal Board / Leadership Council Operations

#### Clear expectations

- Establish the duties of the board / council.
- Evaluate the board / council every year.
- Have board / council member and officer job descriptions and follow them.

#### Meetings that work

- Don't leave things to chance. Build an agenda that includes reasonable timeframes for both regular business and special discussions.
- The role of the President really matters, particularly when it comes to:
  - ◆ Putting together the agenda
  - ◆ Keeping discussions on track
  - ◆ Ensuring everyone gets a chance to speak
  - ◆ Dealing with problems on the board / council

#### Effective committees

- Understand the role of committees. They are there to help the board / council get the work done.
- Every committee should have a charter that says what it is trying to accomplish.
- Committees don't make decisions for the board / council, unless the board / council *delegates* operational authority to a committee in a specific realm.
- Establish standing committees of the board / council, particularly:
  - ◆ Finance committee / budget committee
  - ◆ Leadership development committee
- Assign Ad-Hoc committees of the board / council as needed, for example:
  - ◆ Strategic planning committee (when needed)
  - ◆ Event or special project committees
- Develop other committees as needed – it can be a great way to build leadership.
- Honor the work of the committee. If the board / council delegates work so that it can be done efficiently, the full board / council should concentrate on goals and results – not the methods by which the committee achieves the goals.

### 3.4 Tips for supporting a Healthy Board Culture

Adapted from Solid Ground Consulting [www.SolidGroundConsulting.org](http://www.SolidGroundConsulting.org)

The following best practices are based on many collective years of experience with Boards of Directors, Councils, Commissions, and other governing bodies. Of course, every group is unique, and each should discuss and adopt its own guidelines. Other than legal matters, most questions have no “right” or “wrong” answers, but it is important that board / council members have the same expectations. It is helpful to review and revise guidelines at least annually.

#### Expectations and Courtesies

- Make every effort to attend every meeting, to arrive on time, and to be prepared.
- Do not criticize any board / council member, staff member, partner, etc. in public.
- No surprises: Whenever possible, inform others before they learn important news.
- Speak only when recognized by the chair / president, unless as a group you have decided that meetings should be run in another manner.
- Don't interrupt or engage in side conversations when another person is speaking.
- Be brief and to the point. Limit speeches; don't posture or grandstand.
- Clearly explain how you got to your position and how it serves the organizational interest. This is especially important when you disagree with someone else.
- Share credit generously. Spread opportunities to get positive recognition.
- Support the legitimacy of group decisions, even those you didn't vote for.
- Once a decision is made, move on.

#### Support Effective Relationships

- Respect the different styles of fellow board / council members.
- Be open to changing your mind based on new information.
- Maintain your independence. Do not allow yourself to be seen as a member of a bloc.
- Take personal responsibility for encouraging respectful behavior among group members.
- Strive for consensus, but don't settle for the lowest common denominator. When you have exhausted all avenues of agreement, accept that divided votes are simply part of the process.
- If you have a concern with another member, speak directly to that person.
- Be open with sharing information. Give others information you would want them to give you.
- Pick your battles. Let others win on matters important to them and less important to you.
- Everyone does not have to weigh in on every question. Sometimes it's OK to just vote.
- When a discussion grinds, you might suggest taking a break.

## Leadership Resources Workbook for NCTA Chapters

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- In general, praise people in public and criticize in private.
- Avoid using written communications to express anger, serious disagreement, or other difficult emotions. Whenever you put anything in writing, keep in mind that someone other than your intended recipient may someday read the communication; choose your words accordingly.
- Spend some casual time together to have fun and build trust.

### 3.5 Sample Strategic Agenda

- 5:00 Call to Order
  - Approval of the Agenda
  - Welcome any guests
  
- 5:05 Consent Agenda *[items that are grouped for approval all at once]*
  - ◆ Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
  - ◆ Financial reports
  
- 5:10 Reports
  - ◆ Finance committee report
  - ◆ Leadership Development committee report
  
- 5:30 Old Business *[items that have been discussed before and now are back for a decision]*
  - ◆ E.g. Contract with XYZ for bookkeeping services **ACTION**
  - ◆ E.g. Application for funds **ACTION**
  
- 6:00 New Business
  - ◆ E.g. Review the draft budget for 2021 **DISCUSSION**
  
- 6:30 Strategic Discussion
  - ◆ Strategic initiative #1 Potential partnership with another groups **DISCUSSION**
  
- 6:55 Announcements
  
- 7:00 Adjourn

#### Upcoming Discussion Topics

	December	January	February
<b>Finance Committee</b>	Approve 2021 budget		3-year business plan
<b>Leadership Development Committee</b>		Fill out leadership grid	Share Board / council orientation plan with full group

### 3.6 Ideas for the President / Chair on Managing Meetings

Roberts Rules of Order is the classic parliamentary resource for nonprofit boards. Even if your organization does not fully adhere to Robert's Rules, many appreciate the clarity it offers on the roles of the President / Chair:

- ◆ “Protect the assembly from annoyance from evidently frivolous or dilatory motions”
- ◆ “Expedite business in every way compatible with the rights of the members”
- ◆ “Restrain the members when engaged in debate, within the rules of order”
- ◆ “Enforce on all occasions the observance of order and decorum among the members”

While some of this language is outdated, all of these point to the important role of the President in managing the conversation at meetings to ensure it is productive, inclusive, and efficient (to the extent all of these can be achieved at once.)

Some of the ways Robert's Rules can help the President achieve these goals:

- ◆ **Calling for a motion.** Calling for a motion does not imply shutting down conversation. Rather, it is an invitation to clarify just what is being decided, then invite conversation that directly pertains to that decision.
- ◆ **Requiring recognition by chair to speak.** When discussion is getting hot or some people are participating more than others, it can be helpful to move towards formal recognition by the President—with members raising their hands and the President calling on the members.
- ◆ Slowing things down gives the President some **options for managing the discussion**, e.g.:
  - *Having a few “go-rounds” to give everyone a chance to talk*, rather than having only the more vocal members express themselves (sometimes it is helpful to limit to two go-rounds before voting on a matter.)
  - *Inviting back and forth between pros/cons on a topic.* “I’ve heard two comments against this decision. Would anyone like to speak in support of it?”
  - *Inviting new comments.* “I’ve heard a few people talk about why this is important for fundraising. Does anyone want to talk about other reasons to support this decision?”
  - *Harvesting objections.* Inviting people to first say what they don’t like about an idea, so those objections can be dealt with or addressed by proponents in the subsequent discussion, makes it easier to avoid “social pressure” to just go along.
  - *Calling for a straw vote.* Think about calling for a straw vote when one or more of the following is true. You might begin with “if the motion were called now, how would you vote?”
    - Everyone has spoken twice but it’s still not clear where the group is headed.
    - You want to avoid a split vote that will sour feelings.
    - You want to invite people to address specific objections.

And some tips for common situations:

- **Rambling board / council member:** Ask for main point, “park” digressions to be dealt with in later conversations.
- **Dominating or argumentative board / council member:** Ask for main point, limit everyone to two rounds of comments before voting. Have a private conversation with the member later.
- **Discouraging board / council member:** Harvest objections. Listen to understand. Honor the validity of doubts. Ask the member and the group to think of possible solutions.
- **Argument between two board / council members:** Reinforce established norms, require President’s recognition to speak.
- **Revisiting decisions:** Remind everyone of their commitment to support decisions that have already been made. If needed, have a private conversation with the board / council member to find out if they can in good faith live with the decision and move on.
  - ◆ If the decision was made some time ago, and a board / council member makes the case that new circumstances warrant reconsideration, consider calling for a vote on whether to revisit the decision.
- **Distractions** such as side conversations, cell phone use, etc.: Speak to the board / council member in private after the meeting and ask them to help you facilitate by minimizing distractions.

### 3.7 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: Exercise for Building Group Norms

This exercise will help your team develop a set of guiding principles or norms for working together.

#### Time:

The whole exercise should take 60-75 minutes depending on the size of your group.

#### Materials

- Flip chart pad
- Blue tape (if flip chart pad is not sticky-backed)
- Sticky dots (two colors)

#### Step 1: Tell a story about an effective team

(~20-30 minutes depending on size of groups)

- In the full group (up to 6 people) or small groups of 3-5 people each, each person tells a story about a time when she or he was part of a team that functioned really well – this could be in personal or professional life, at school, at church, etc.
- There should be a note taker for the full group and if smaller groups are formed, a note taker should be chosen in each group.
- Go beyond just naming the team.
  - ◆ Who was part of the team?
  - ◆ How did it feel to be on that team?
  - ◆ What exactly made the team stand out from other teams?

#### Step 2: Find your guiding principles

(~20-30 minutes)

- In the full group or small groups, list all the elements that made the teams great. Look for themes and commonalities that can be grouped together.
- If using small groups, bring everyone back to the full group and write down all the themes from the small groups – there will probably be a lot of overlap.
- You should end up with a list of about 8-10 elements of success that made the teams great.
- Ask the group “if our team did things this way, do you think we could be really successful?”
- Discuss any differences of opinion
- These are the headlines of your guiding principles.

### Step 3: Make it real

(~20-30 minutes)

- Have each small group take one or two guiding principles and brainstorm the behaviors that would support that guiding principle and write them on a flip chart.
- Then have the teams rotate around the room to each team's flip chart and add to the lists.
- Finally, give everyone a set of sticky dots. Have them go around to each flip chart again, placing on color sticky dots on the behaviors that they believe are **most** important to living this theme. (2-3 dots per sheet).
  - ◆ You may also want to give people a different color dot they can use to indicate any behaviors that WON'T work for them. This can be particularly helpful in more diverse / multicultural groups.
- Rotate in the full group and talk about the top "vote getters." Ask if they feel satisfying to people.
  - ◆ If it seems like there is a contradiction between top vote getters and the "no" dots, discuss it in the group. Discussion ideas:
    - Ask the group to think about why the stated behavior might not work (*Note - Do not specifically call out those who said something would not work, ask the whole group*).
    - Ask the group if highlighting the other listed behaviors for that norm might work better for everyone. If so, focus on those.
    - If not, ask for new ideas for this norm and keep going until you find some that work.
- Now we have our guiding principles and supporting behaviors to add to our charter (see sample attached).

### Step 4: Create accountability

- Brainstorm how you will create accountability. How often will you review the guiding principles? How will you evaluate your own behaviors? Some ideas:
  - ◆ Ask people to sign the finished list of guiding principles and behaviors and post the signed document.
  - ◆ Read the norms aloud at the beginning of the meetings of this team.
  - ◆ Schedule a few times a year when a discussion of "how well are we living our norms" will be on the agenda.

### 3.8 Sample of Group Norms

Courtesy of Learning Forward [www.learningforward.org](http://www.learningforward.org)



*This is an example:  
Some items may not be suitable for Chapters*

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#### **I will base my decisions on the Learning Forward vision and mission.**

- I will maintain commitment to our common vision.

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#### **I will listen, engage, and hold myself responsible for examining all points of view.**

- I will feel free to ask questions.
- I will have respect for operations and maintain openness.
- I will remain open to outcomes.

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#### **I will use humor, as appropriate.**

- I will be flexible as the process unfolds.

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#### **I will air all disagreements during the meeting.**

- I will adhere to transparency and confidentiality of the process.
- I will be inclusive of all opinions/thoughts/multiple perspectives.
- I have an obligation to express concerns, dissent when I feel it necessary, and challenge the ideas but not the person voicing them.

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#### **I will work in community to seek consensus.**

- I will trust in the process and be patient.
- I will commit to the diligent execution of the plan.
- I will agree to consensus through commitment, enthusiasm and unification to the decisions made.

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#### **I will be fully present during the meetings.**

- I commit to measure progress.
- I will sustain regular board norms throughout the process.
- I will participate in and support substantive conversations

**3.9 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: RACI Charts for Building Accountability**

When confusion arises over who is responsible for what and who gets to make what decisions, it can be helpful to use a model such as an RACI chart to eliminate confusion and answer the age-old project questions, **Who’s doing what?** and **Who decides what?**

**RACI definitions**

A RACI chart is a simple matrix used to assign roles and responsibilities for each task, milestone, or decision on a project. RACI stands for **Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed**. Each letter in the acronym represents a level of task responsibility.

- **Responsible:** This person does the work to complete the task. Every task needs at least one Responsible party, but it’s okay to assign more.
- **Accountable:** This person gets to make the final decision or approval of the work. On some tasks, the Responsible party may also serve as the Accountable one. Just be sure you only have one Accountable person assigned to each task. On nonprofit boards, the Chair of a committee can often serve as the Accountable person, since they are the one to report to the board.
- **Consulted:** Every product or project is strengthened by review and consultation from more than one person. Consulted parties are typically the people who provide input based on either how it will impact their own work or their expertise.
- **Informed:** These people simply need to be kept in the loop on project progress, rather than roped into the details.

Here is a sample chart:

<b>Project:</b> Develop a new brochure		R	Responsible		
<b>Date:</b> November 2020		A	Accountable		
		C	Consulted		
		I	Informed		
	<b>Jim*</b> (Outreach Committee Chair, project lead)	<b>Tina</b> (Outreach Committee Member)	<b>Maria</b> (President)	<b>Cammy</b> (Treasurer)	<b>All other board/ council members</b>
Draft text	A, R	C	C	C	C
Choose photos	A	R	I	I	I
Get quotes, select a printer	A, R	I	I	C	
Work with graphic designer	A	R			
Finalize and print brochure	A	R	I	I	I

Jim is **Accountable** to the board as the Chair, so he makes sure everything gets done. Others are **Responsible** for different parts of the work. When money is involved, Cammy is **Consulted** as the Treasurer and Maria is **Informed**.

# Section 4: Tools for Evaluating Leadership

## 4.1 Sample Board / Council Assessment Worksheet



THE NONPROFIT  
ASSOCIATION OF  
OREGON

*This is an example: Some items may not be suitable for Chapters*

### BOARD ASSESSMENT

*For Board members to assess their performance as a Board of Directors as a whole.*

**How would you rate the Board as a whole, on the following roles and responsibilities?**

	Excellent	Average	Needs Work
1. Attending Board meetings, including retreats, training sessions and committee meetings.			
2. Completing assignments and coming prepared to meetings.			
3. Behaving in accordance with the organization’s mission, vision, values, and governing documents.			
4. Appropriate attention is paid to finance, HR and legal compliance.			
5. A consent agenda is used for staff and committee reports.			
6. Board meetings support organization goals, are well-planned, and have clear agendas.			
7. Board discussion is welcoming of different points of view, allows for deep discourse on important topics, and allows for adequate time talking about the future.			
8. Board Chair and Executive Director meet regularly, work as a team, and communicate well with the rest of the Board.			
9. Trust and relationship building is tended to regularly.			
10. Board members review performance of Executive Director annually and have a succession plan in place.			
11. Board member recruitment is an active ongoing process.			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

## 4.2 Sample Board/Council Member Self-Appraisal

Each board / council member receives a copy of this sheet, then places a number next to the statements below:

1= Never a problem / 2 = Sometimes a problem / 3 = Increasingly a problem / 4 = A true hindrance

\_\_\_ I have a high level of commitment to and interest in our Chapter.

\_\_\_ I am able to attend scheduled meetings.

\_\_\_ I arrive on time for meetings.

\_\_\_ I review background material before meetings.

\_\_\_ I participate actively outside of board / council meetings.

\_\_\_ I work easily with other members of the board / council.

\_\_\_ I work easily with NCTA staff when needed.

\_\_\_ I am able to follow all the board / council norms.

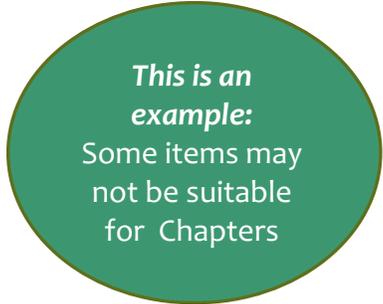
\_\_\_ I make at least one positive contribution to each meeting.

\_\_\_ I keep an open mind on issues.

\_\_\_ I am able to discuss differences of opinions effectively.

\_\_\_ I speak positively about the Chapter in public.

\_\_\_ I make an effort to promote the Chapter.



*This is an example:*  
Some items may not be suitable for Chapters

**4.3 LEADERSHIP RESOURCE: General Evaluation and Overview of Responsibilities**

**Time: At least 30 minutes, preferably at least one hour**

**Instructions:**

1. Have each person complete the evaluation forms in the next two sections
2. If you wrote multiple 3's and 4's on your individual evaluation sheet, think about solutions. Is it time to fix some issues on the board / council, personally recommit, or find other ways to serve?
3. Discuss the results as a group. You don't need to "hand in" the sheets, just talk with each other about what you learned and how you would like to grow in the next year.
  - What's going well?
  - What's not going as well?
  - Where do you think your board / council needs most attention or development?
  - Which Leadership Development tasks are the highest priority for your Chapter?
  - Which committee or individuals should help the board / council focus on that development or those needs?