

Integrating Committees

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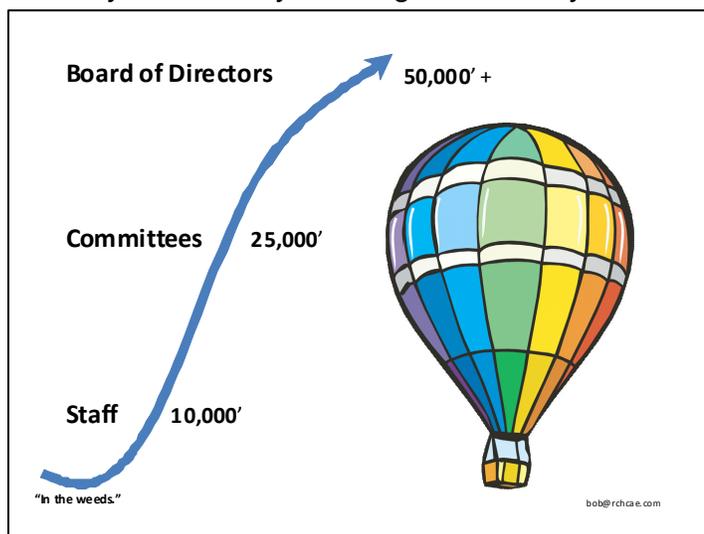
Consider committees as business development units in the organization. They supplement the work of the board by producing results that advance the strategic plan.

If a committee asks, “What should we do this year?” it may be a signal that they don’t understand their relation to the plan.

When conducting committee orientation try these three 20-minute roundtable exercises.

Committee Mission – Every committee should have a purpose or mission statement to frame its work. Ask the committee or its chair to review or write a mission statement of 1 to 3 sentences that will be clear to internal and external audiences.

Have committees read their mission statements and indicate how they improved it or why they left it the same.



Ground Rules –Committee meetings should have ground rules. For example, “meetings start and end on time; an agenda is distributed two weeks in advance; the committee works to advance the organization’s mission; new ideas and people are respected.” Ask each committee to develop 5 to 10 bulleted guidelines that will make meetings more effective. Share with the whole group.

Ownership of the Strategic Plan – The third exercise increases understanding of the plan and aligns committee projects with goals. Committees work to advance the mission and plan. The board maintains a 50,000 foot perspective while committees work at the 25,000 to 40,000 foot level. (Staff works below 25,000 to manage and implement.) Have committees read the plan and align their efforts. Ask them to discuss elements of the plan for which they *accept responsibility*. Share with the whole group to understand where committees may overlap. (Overlap is all right since committees should collaborate.)

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