



# Best Practices for Board Effectiveness

Increased connectivity, visibility, and scrutiny have made nonprofit boards more accountable than ever for the success of their organizations. With board effectiveness recognized among the organizational priorities that lead to mission achievement, it is important to consider indicators of high board performance in the changing nonprofit environment. The following practices are indicative of high board effectiveness:

## 1. EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY

A critical first step in building board effectiveness today is helping boards overcome cyber anxiety. The topic of IT is intimidating to some, so approaching the tenets of good governance from a digital perspective can be reassuring — and even enticing. BoardEffect, as a modern governance solution, enables boards to both manage and fully leverage the digital transformation of the boardroom.

## 2. BE INTENTIONAL (ABOUT HOW THE BOARD WORKS)

Research by Bridgespan shows a clear connection between board effectiveness and clarity about how the board does its work. They include factors such as the people involved, board culture, decision-making processes, and board structure. Various elements of effective board process include strong communication, efficiency and engagement.

## 3. RECRUIT STRATEGICALLY

Having the right people around the table is paramount in good governance. Board composition must reflect the organization's diversity needs in terms of skill sets, perspective, experience, and demographics (including ethnicity, race, level of experience, gender, geography, and more). Board composition also should represent constituent voices and align with strategic goals.

## 4. PRACTICE GOVERNANCE

While it might seem self-evident for boards to engage in governance, many board members get tempted by operational complexities that are too into the weeds. Furthermore, the practice of governance involves more than meeting preparation and attendance, financial contributions, and oversight. Some key practices that lead to greater board effectiveness are framing board and committee meeting agendas for governance, setting realistic expectations through detailed job descriptions, and conducting annual board member self-assessments.