



Effective Board Chairing

Webinar Presented by L'Arche USA

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Welcome

We are a diverse group

Webinar Attendees

- Community Board Officers
- Community Leaders
- LUSA Board Members
- 5 months to 12 years of experience

Quick Introductions

- Name
- Community
- Role
- How long in L'Arche and specific role



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Break Out Session (4 minutes in pairs)

What would you name as a privilege for you and a challenge for you in your work with your board?



A Reminder of the Legal Responsibilities

Of the Board and the Chair

Ensure you benefit the public

- Provide a public benefit in an ethical way.
- Governing board of community members
- **Financial, legal, and moral well-being**
- Receive tax forbearance in exchange
- Must make a profit (or break even)



If Chair of the board is also President

- Ensure that the board fulfills its legal duties
- Signs legal documents

It's a big responsibility! And it's a great opportunity!

A great organization with a poorly functioning board will often become a poorly functioning organization.

A chair who is a skillful communicator and knows how to run a meeting efficiently, is an **essential component** of an effective organization.

But We're L'Arche

And for us it's about mission and belonging



Attract the People You Want to Attract

The secret to creating a good board is similar to creating a good company

Be a good communicator

Specify expectations

- Role description for board members and officers
- Articulate and then stand behind your culture, values, and responsibilities
- Immediately work to address problems as they arise.

Make sure everyone tracks

Be attentive to what is being said and *not* being said

Solicit feedback

- From the CL – “what can we do for you?”
- From the board – “any clarifying questions or comments, concerns?”



Create a Culture for Good Collective Decision-Making

Foster a Safe Place for Engagement



Don't let the same people monopolize discussions

Encourage the quiet ones to have their time

Have boundaries on behavior

Encourage respectful dissent during discussion and debate

Attain alignment when making a decision

Don't forget social time!

Helps build trust and understanding
Before or after, not during meetings



Some Keys to Effective Board Meetings

Meetings should be useful & instructive – provide tools to be effective



Be a good facilitator

People want to feel valued, uplifted and energized to help the organization thrive

- Start on time, end on time
- Set agendas with realistic time for each item
- Send out reports ahead of time
- Use committees effectively to do the detailed work
- Schedule - the right number of meetings - for the year

Answer 2 questions at the end of each meeting:

Did we accomplish something important that wouldn't have been accomplished if we hadn't had a meeting?

Did it make a difference to each board member or the organization that they were there?

Make Your Job Easier!

Recruiting and Succession Planning is a Continuous Process

Recruit and onboard (and offboard) professionally

Recruit for diversity – both identity and skill/gift diversity

Get to know people before you invite them to join the board

Interview as you would if hiring someone

Recruit people with whom you can work and collaborate

Take the time to onboard well

Joining a board is like joining a family

*Families have a culture with rituals, practices and rules
that evolve over time*

Have good systems and ongoing board development/training

If someone has outgrown the role, talk to the person about it





Create a Value Proposition for Each Member

Engage people at the point of their specific gifts

Make board members feel like they are serving a specific need and making use of their talents in a meaningful way

Board members should never doubt whether they're presence is useful

Helps build belonging – which is why we're in L'Arche!



The better our organizations operate, the healthier our society will be

The more effective board members can be, the better things will operate

Relationships Are Important

Board Chair + Executive Director/Community Leader Relationship

Governance vs management

Adapting to differences

Expectations for the working relationship

Establishing clear boundaries for roles

Agreeing on sound governance practices



Role of the Vice Chair

Continue Making Your Job Easier



Succession is your responsibility

Building capacity of the board

Diversity of ideas

Manageability of the board chair role

The Board Chair and the Federation

Membership in L'Arche Adds Layers

Responsibility to

- Connect
- Interact
- Engage

In the Federation

The triangle

How to balance the roles and relationships



Let's Discuss

What Questions and Comments Do You Have?

Q & A Time!



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Break Out Groups

What from what you heard can you put into practice with your board?

What other valuable practices and learnings have you gained in your board experience?

Wrapping Up What Have We Learned Today?

Plenary Sharing

What new learnings came up in your small group?



Closing Comments

What is one commitment you take into your board work coming out of this session?