

HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE BOARD MEMBER: MAXIMIZING BOARD IMPACT

Presented by: Marla Cornelius, CompassPoint

Webinar Objectives

- Understand underlying reasons that board work is often ineffective and/or disconnected from needs of the organization
- Introduce governance framework used to restructure board work to mission impact
- Understand how new framework might be applied to your organization

Less than the sum of our parts?

- Most boards are comprised of talented, bright, dedicated people.
- Not realizing the tremendous potential; waste of valuable resource
- Why and what can we do?

Common Board Problems

- ▣ Board meetings are not engaging
- ▣ Poor meeting attendance
- ▣ Committees aren't as effective as can be
- ▣ Problems recruiting “good” or desired board members
- ▣ Unclear relationship with the ED and/or staff
- ▣ Disconnected to staff and/or work of org.
- ▣ Not fundraising or connecting w/ stakeholders
- ▣ Not sustaining or developing leadership

Contributing Factors: Structure

□ Traditional Models

- ▣ Paternalistic frameworks; separate board and staff
- ▣ Governance has power: power over others, vs. power with others?
- ▣ Overemphasize fiduciary responsibilities
- ▣ Inwardly focused
- ▣ Rigidity → structures not responsive
- ▣ Not reflective of communities

Contributing Factors: Governing Processes

If it's in the board room it must be board business.

Is this really a board decision?

- ❑ Boards $\neq$ Governance
- ❑ Agenda misaligned with priorities
- ❑ Unclear decision-making processes

Agents of Governance



Governance as Leadership

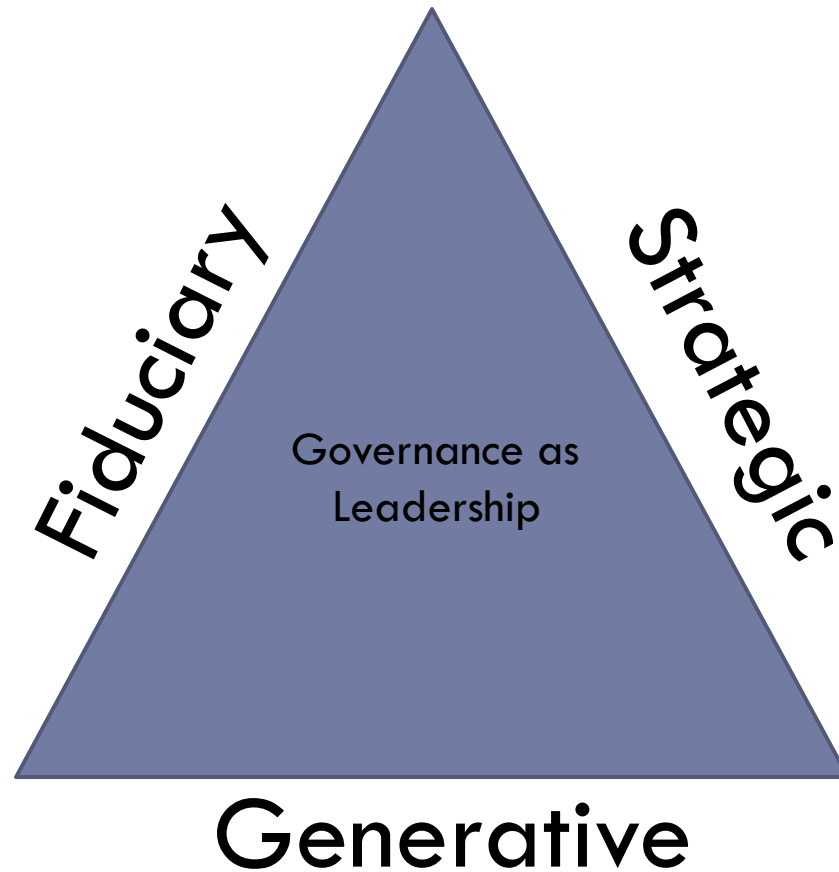
Richard Chait, William Ryan and Barbara Taylor,
2005

Premise

Focus on
the “right”
work at
the “right”
time.

- Understand what already doing; provide frame for new practices
- Board performance lies in board purpose.
- Need to distinguish what type of governance is needed when.
- Roles and responsibilities say nothing about the organization.

Three Governance Modes



Fiduciary

Board's central purpose

→ *Stewardship of tangible assets*

Board's principal role

→ *Sentinel*

Board governs

→ *The Productive Organization*

Board's core work

→ *Oversee operations*

→ *Ensure legal compliance & fiscal
accountability*

→ *Ensure efficient & appropriate use
of resources*

Strategic

Board's central purpose

→ *Ensure winning strategy*

Board's principal role

→ *Strategic partner to senior management*

Board governs

→ *The Logical Organization*

Board's core work

→ *Scan internal and external environments*

→ *Set priorities*

→ *Review and modify strategic plan*

→ *Monitor performance against plan*

Generative



Board's central purpose

→ *Source of leadership for organization*

Board's principal role

→ *Sense maker*

Board governs

→ *The Expressive Organization*

Board's core work

→ *Decide what to decide*

→ *Discern challenges & opportunities*

→ *Probe assumptions, logic, values behind
strategy*

	Type I Fiduciary	Type II Strategic	Type III Generative
Board's role	Steward	Strategic	Sense maker
Key question	What's wrong?	What's the plan?	What's the key question?
Problems are to be	Spotted	Solved	Framed
Way of deciding	Reach resolution	Reach consensus	Reach understanding

Community Engagement Governance

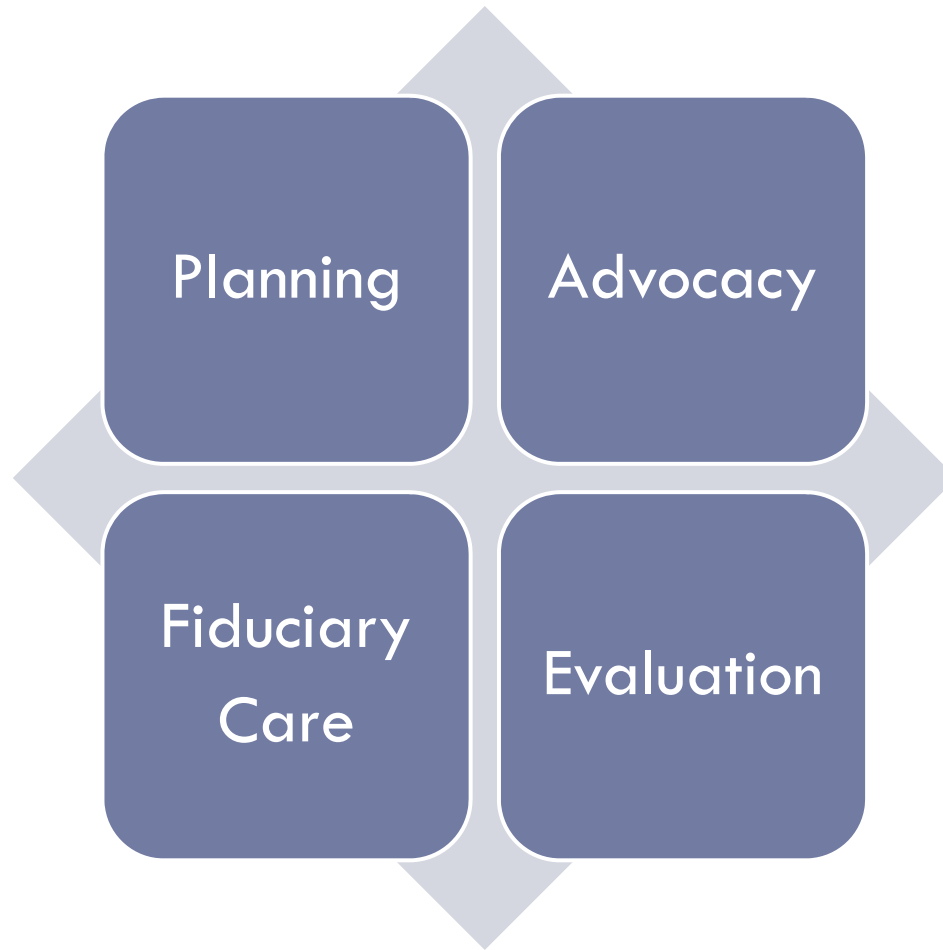
Judy Friewirth and Alliance for Nonprofits
Governance Affinity Group

Premise

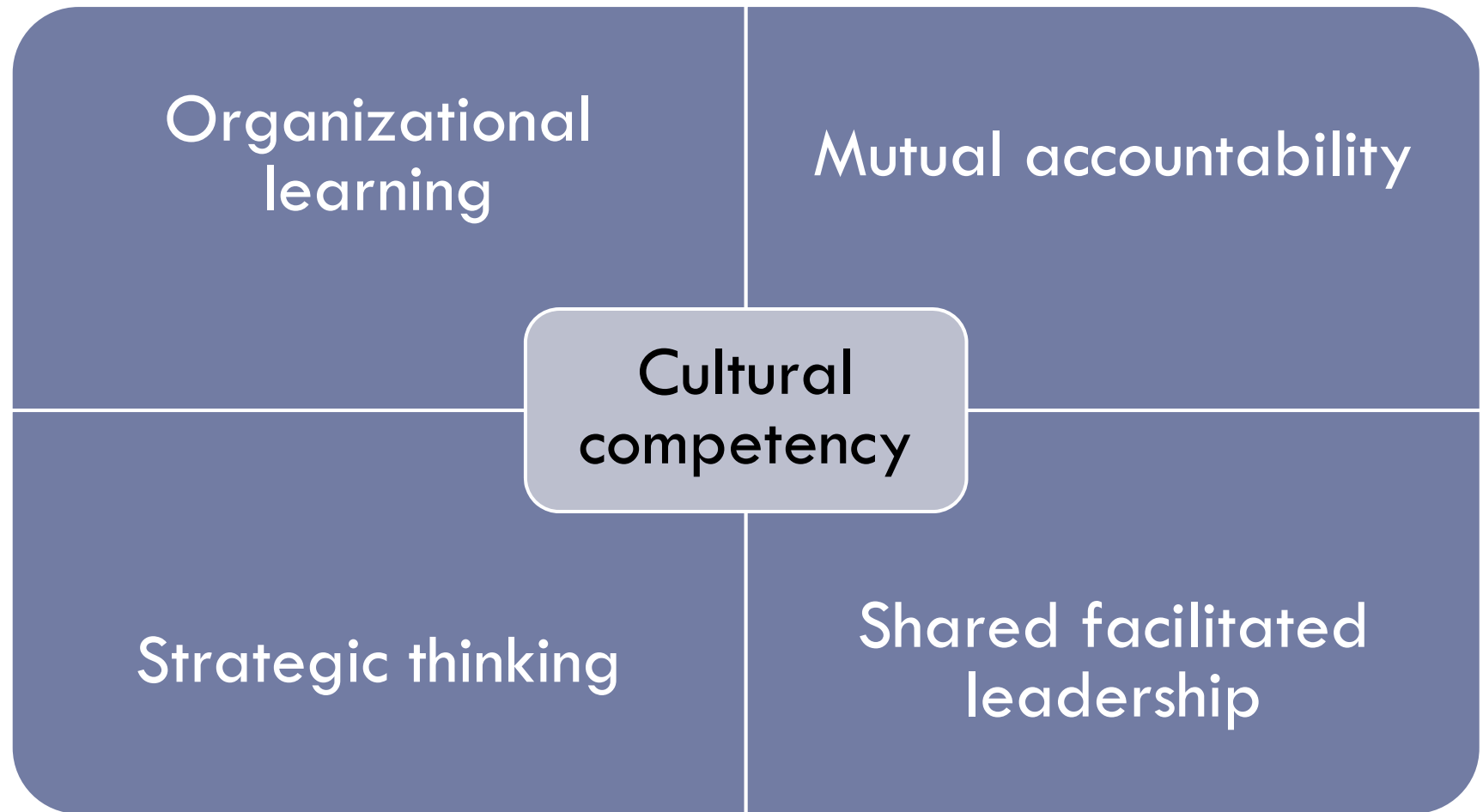
Who are
we
account-
able to?

- ❑ Board models often do not reflect who they are accountable to and they do not have practices to ensure this accountability.
- ❑ Accountability is at the core of governance.
- ❑ Brings the community into the governance process

Governance Functions

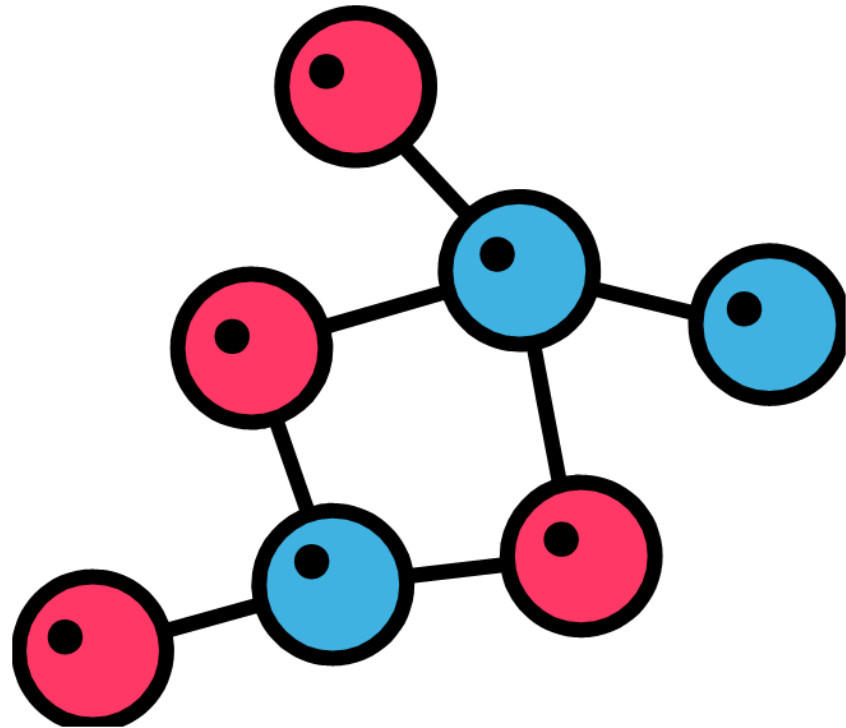


Board Competencies



Implementation of Frameworks

Diagram current model



Components of board model

- Board policies
- Work structures
- Meetings
- Agendas and reports
- Communications
- Decision making
- Board membership

Testing of Model

You've set
your own rules

Make them
work for YOU.

- ❑ What components facilitate the type of governing desired?
- ❑ What's getting in the way?

Migration strategy

▣ Considerations:

- Stage of organizational development
- Size of organization
- Adaptive capacity
- Constituency
- Community readiness
- Nonprofit sector/field

Migration strategy

- Change management team
 - ▣ Plan, objectives, timeline, process
- Identify barrier areas to address
- Selective adoption
 - ▣ Customized, unique and flexible

Questions and Comments?

Marla Cornelius

marlac@compasspoint.org