



Board Self- Assessment Tool

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1. Introduction

The *OODP Board Self-Assessment Tool* has been developed to support and improve governance practice for the AIDS service organization (ASO) sector in Ontario. The objective of this resource is to provide an easy to use, practical process and tool that can be used by the Board to conduct a self-assessment and identify improvements to strengthen the Board and the overall functioning of the organization.

Once the Tool has been completed, the results can offer an impression of the overall effectiveness of the Board and provide an opportunity for the Board and Executive Director to step back and reflect on how well the Board is functioning. Importantly, the results should be used to encourage dialogue – refresh the Board’s understanding of its role and responsibilities, stimulate questions that need to be asked, identify areas of practice that may need attention, and draw out suggestions for improvement.

The survey is designed to be an easy to use self-assessment tool at a “group performance” level to generate discussion. The Tool is highly adaptable and ASO’s should feel free to make changes to it for their own use.

2. How to Best Use This Tool

This Tool is designed to be used for an annual Board evaluation. It is best to be completed by current Board members before an upcoming AGM. It seeks to help a Board answer the questions: *what are we doing well and what can we do better?* Using this Tool to answer these questions enables Board members to confidently say that they are acting in the best interest of the organization - a key governance requirement that OODP governance resources focus on.

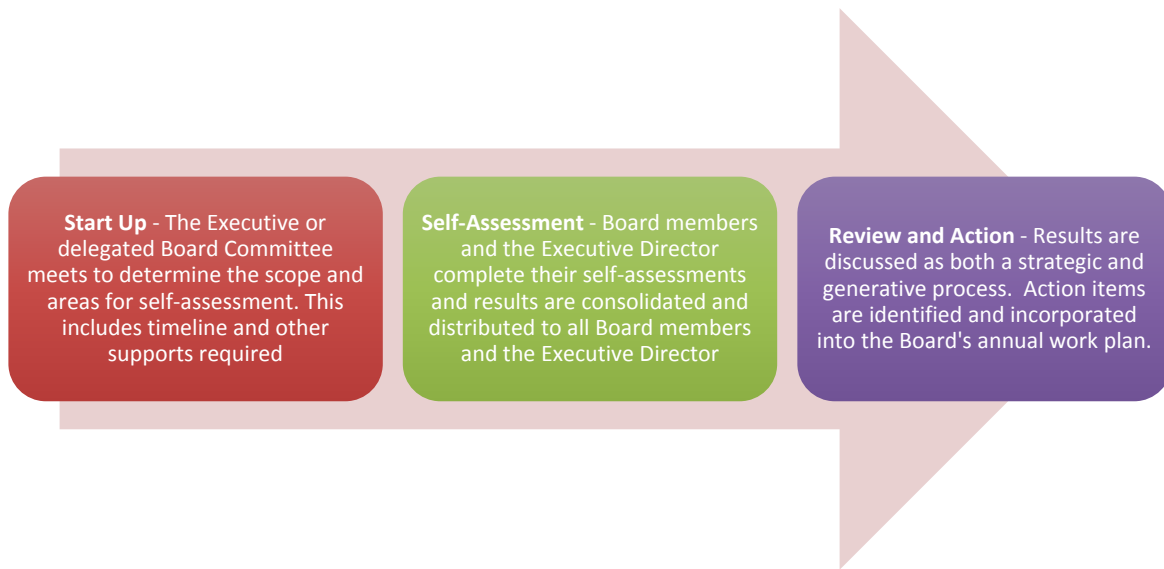
Are we acting in the best interest of the organization?



This Tool is designed for organizations with a Board of Directors and someone in the Executive Director role.

- Board members should individually complete Sections A, B, C, D and E. The Executive Director should complete Sections A, B, C and E. Board members and the Executive Director may also complete Section F, however, this is optional.
- Section D on the **Performance of Individual Board Members** provides an opportunity for Board members to personally reflect on their own performance. This section, once completed, should be retained by each Board member to support their own improvement goals. In addition, the individual results should be anonymously compiled to give the Board a sense of how individual Board members feel they are performing. It would also be useful for Board members to have a group discussion about the individual issues identified that they most want to improve upon.
- Section F on **Feedback to the Chair of the Board** is an optional section that seeks to solicit feedback aimed at strengthening the role of the Chair.
- The rating scale at the bottom of each section (“My Overall Rating”) asks that Board members add up the total of the numbers circled in the section. This rating is intended to provide insight on the level of performance for each section.
- Once 2 or 3 annual cycles have been completed, the results should be used to identify trends and issues that may require changes to Board policy and practice or confirm and validate best practices.
- Boards may wish to consider requesting OODP support and/or bringing in an **independent facilitator** to conduct the evaluation, compile and summarize the results, and support the Board to develop an action/work plan. Involving an external facilitator will provide Board members with the opportunity to answer freely knowing that their individual responses will be kept confidential.

3. Process



1. **Start Up** - The Executive Committee or designated Board Committee meets to determine the scope and process for the Board self-assessment. This includes timelines, individuals to be involved and roles. Ideally the process should be initiated 3 to 4 months prior to the AGM.
2. **Self-Assessment**¹ - Individual Board members and the Executive Director complete the Tool. A summary report of the consolidated responses is prepared and distributed to the Board and the Executive Director.
3. **Review and Action** – Results are discussed and opportunities and areas for improvement are identified. Board priorities are chosen and any activities required to achieve them are added to relevant work and operational plans.

The process above outlines how a Board might approach the self-assessment work by completing the survey, section by section, all at one time. Boards can also choose to do different sections at different times until the assessment has been completed. Feel free to determine a process that works best for your unique Board. What is most important is that on an annual basis, the Board comprehensively assesses its performance.

¹ Board self-assessment can be done at any time of the year and should be put on the Board's annual work plan. It may be best not to schedule it at the same time of the year that the Board is conducting an evaluation of the Executive Director or preparing for the AGM.

4. OODP Board Self-Assessment Tool

Name: (optional)

For period from: _____ to _____

Please answer each question. The responses will be consolidated and presented in a summary report for discussion by the Board and Executive Director. Board members should individually complete Sections A, B, C, D and E. The Executive Director should complete Sections A, B, C and E. Board members and the Executive Director may also complete Section F, however, this is optional.

Circle the rating that **best** reflects the degree to which you disagree or agree with each statement. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); and Strongly Agree (5).

Section A: How Well Has the Board Done its Job?						
Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1. Our organization has a multi-year strategic plan or a set of clear long-range goals and priorities.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The Board’s meeting agenda clearly reflects our strategic plan or priorities.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. The Board has a current annual Board work plan.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. The Board has ensured that the organization also has an annual operational plan.	1	2	3	4	5	



Section A: How Well Has the Board Done its Job?

Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
5. The Board gives direction to staff on how to achieve the organization's mandate and strategic goals primarily by setting or referring to policies.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. The Board recruits, supports and assesses the performance of the Executive Director.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. The Board ensures that the organization's accomplishments and challenges are communicated to members and stakeholders and that they receive reports on the use of human and financial resources.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. The Board has reviewed and approved an organizational risk management plan.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. I am confident that this Board would effectively manage any organizational crisis that could be reasonably anticipated.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. The Board has developed and/or reviewed and approved policies related to HIV disclosure.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. The Board has developed and/or reviewed and approved policies related to the Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GIPA) and the Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV/AIDS (MIPA).	1	2	3	4	5	
12. The Board conducts regular self-assessment on its progress, e.g. Board work plan updates and an annual Board self-assessment.	1	2	3	4	5	

Section A: How Well Has the Board Done its Job?

Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
My Overall Rating	Total =					<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (56-60) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (46-55) <input type="checkbox"/> Good (36-45) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (25-35) <input type="checkbox"/> Poor (12-24)

Name: (optional)

For period from: _____ to _____

Circle the rating that **best** reflects the degree to which you disagree or agree with each statement. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); and Strongly Agree (5).

Section B: Does the Board have Enablers of Board Effectiveness and Success ² in place?						
Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1. The Board composition is appropriate – members have skill sets and/or expertise to cover off areas of responsibilities, e.g. lived experience, human resources, finance, legal, social/health services.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The Board size is appropriate – there is coverage of duties amongst roles, cohesiveness amongst members and manageable workloads.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. There are clearly defined roles and expectations for Officers, i.e. Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. There is an up to date Board Governance Manual.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. The Executive Committee has a clear role that is well understood and supported by all Board members – serving as a valuable resource to the Board and the Executive Director.	1	2	3	4	5	

² This section of the Tool has been adapted from the OODP resource *Enablers of Board Effectiveness*, prepared by Wendy L. Pinder. © 2013 Ontario Organizational Development Program

Section B: Does the Board have Enablers of Board Effectiveness and Success² in place?

Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
6. All new Board members receive clear orientation on their role, responsibilities and expectations, including review of fiduciary duties.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. The Board has effective renewal processes in place for identifying, cultivating and integrating new Directors.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. The Committee structure is well documented and each Committee has a terms of reference.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. Board/committee meetings run well, e.g. start on time, give members a chance to engage on issues, and ensure all voices are heard.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. Board/committee meeting calendars, advance materials and agendas support the Board as needed.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. The role and expectations of the Executive Director in supporting the Board are clearly defined.	1	2	3	4	5	
12. Board interactions are productive and generally enjoyable with a good mixture of business and development activities.	1	2	3	4	5	
My Overall Rating	Total =					<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (55-60) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (45-55) <input type="checkbox"/> Good (35-45) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (25-35) <input type="checkbox"/> Poor (14-24)

Name: (optional)

For period from: _____ to _____

Circle the rating that **best** reflects the degree to which you disagree or agree with each statement. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); and Strongly Agree (5).

Section C: How Well Has the Board Conducted Itself?						
Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1. Board members are aware of what is expected of them.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The agenda of Board meetings is well planned so that we can get through all necessary Board business.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. We receive written reports to the Board in advance of our meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. It seems like most Board members come to meetings prepared.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. All Board members participate in important Board discussions.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. We do a good job of encouraging and dealing with different points of view.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. We all support the decisions we make.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. Board members demonstrate commitment to the organization's mission and values and are able to distinguish and set aside personal interest when there are different from the mission, goals and interests of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	



Section C: How Well Has the Board Conducted Itself?

Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
9. Board members conduct themselves in accordance with key elements of the governance structure, e.g. bylaws, code of conduct, conflict of interest, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. Board members demonstrate a clear understanding of the organization’s strategic focus when making decisions and use sound processes in such decision-making.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. The Board has planned and led the orientation process for new Board members.	1	2	3	4	5	
12. The Board has a plan for Director education and further Board development.	1	2	3	4	5	
13. Our Board meetings are always interesting.	1	2	3	4	5	
14. Our Board meetings are frequently fun.	1	2	3	4	5	
15. In the <i>(insert year)</i> Board Self-Assessment Tool, the Board noted the following issues and challenges for focus over the next year. In your opinion, how well has the Board dealt with them? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example - Succession planning • Example - Policy development 	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> Making Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Attention <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure					
My Overall Rating	Total =					<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (65-70) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (55-65) <input type="checkbox"/> Good (45-55) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (30-45) <input type="checkbox"/> Poor (15-30)

Name: (optional)

For period from: _____ to _____

Circle the rating that **best** reflects the degree to which you disagree or agree with each statement. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); and Strongly Agree (5).

Section D: Have you rated the Performance of Individual Board Members?						
Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1. I am aware of what is expected of me as a Board member.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. I have a good record of meeting attendance.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. I read the minutes, reports and other materials in advance of our Board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. I am familiar with what is in the organization's by-laws and governing policies.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. I follow through on things I said I would do.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. I maintain the confidentiality of all Board decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. When I have a different opinion than the majority, I raise it.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. I support Board decisions once they are made even if I do not agree with them.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. I promote the work of our organization in the community whenever I have a chance to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	



Section D: Have you rated the Performance of Individual Board Members?

Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
10. I stay informed about issues relevant to our mission and bring information to the attention of the Board.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. I am self-aware and recognize how my power and privilege may impact my colleagues on the Board and others in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	
12. I am committed to the principles of GIPA and MIPA and demonstrate that commitment in my Board work.	1	2	3	4	5	
13. I feel that I make valuable contributions in my role as a Board member.	1	2	3	4	5	
14. I am familiar with the organization's programs and services.	1	2	3	4	5	
15. I enjoy my role and foresee completing my term.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>					
16. Reflecting on your time as a Director, identify one or two Board achievements, decisions, and/or successes for which you feel special satisfaction and/or pride.	Comments:					
My Overall Rating	Total =					<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (65-70) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (55-65) <input type="checkbox"/> Good (45-55) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (30-45) <input type="checkbox"/> Poor (15-30)

Name: (optional)

For period from: _____ to _____

Circle the rating that **best** reflects the degree to which you disagree or agree with each statement. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); and Strongly Agree (5).

Section E: Does your Board measure the Board's Relationship with the Executive Director ³ ?						
Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1. There is a clear understanding of where the Board's role ends and the Executive Director's role begins.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. There is good two-way communication between the Board and the Executive Director.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. The Board has discussed and communicated the kinds of information and level of detail it requires from the Executive Director on what is happening in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. The Board delegate ⁴ provides the Executive Director with regular supervision and support.	1	2	3	4	5	

³ Section E on the **Board's Relationship with the Executive Director** is **not** intended as an evaluation of the Executive Director but rather an evaluation of the quality of the Board's relationship with the Executive Director as judged by both the Board and Executive Director. The statements here focus on matters that the Board can change about its performance.

⁴ It is important to note that the entire Board does not supervise the Executive Director. This task usually falls to the Chair or President of the Board of Directors.



Section E: Does your Board measure the Board's Relationship with the Executive Director³?

Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
5. The Board has developed formal criteria and a process for evaluating the Executive Director's job performance.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. The Board, or a committee of the Board, has formally evaluated the Executive Director's job performance within the past 12 to 24 months.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. The Board provides feedback and shows its appreciation to the Executive Director on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. The Board ensures that the Executive Director is able to take advantage of professional development opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5	
My Overall Rating	Total =					<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (35-40) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (30-35) <input type="checkbox"/> Good (25 – 30) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (15 – 24) <input type="checkbox"/> Poor (6-14)

Name: (optional)

For period from: _____ to _____

Circle the rating that **best** reflects the degree to which you disagree or agree with each statement. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); and Strongly Agree (5).

Section F: Does your Board provide Feedback to the Chair of the Board (Optional)?						
Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1. The Board has a formal Board Chair job description and has discussed the role and responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The Chair is well prepared for Board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. The Chair helps the Board to stick to the agenda.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. The Chair ensures that every Board member has an opportunity to be heard.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. The Chair is skilled at managing different points of view.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. In alignment with the organizational and governance policies, procedures and codes of conduct, the Chair knows how to be direct with an individual Board member when that Board member's behaviour needs to shift or change.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. The Chair helps the Board to work well together.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. I feel I can go to the Chair when I have a concern.	1	2	3	4	5	



Section F: Does your Board provide Feedback to the Chair of the Board (Optional)?

Statements	Rating					Comments
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure/ Maybe	Agree	Strongly Agree	
9. The Chair demonstrates good listening skills.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. The Board supports the Chair.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. The Chair is effective in delegating responsibility amongst Board members, e.g. assigning tasks with timelines.	1	2	3	4	5	
12. The Chair's strongest skill is.....						
My Overall Rating	Total =					<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (50-55) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (40-49) <input type="checkbox"/> Good (30-39) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (20-29) <input type="checkbox"/> Poor (10-19)

5. OODP Supports and Additional Governance Resources

OODP Consulting Support Available for Eligible Organizations upon Request:

- Strategic Plan development support
- Operational Plan development and support
- Board Chair Coaching
- Board Governance workshop
- Board workplan and development session(s)
- Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GIPA) workshop
- Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression (ARAO) workshop
- Provide telephone support to the Nominations Committee
- Facilitate meeting(s) of the Nomination Committee
- Organizational Self-Assessment Tool (OSAT)
- OSAT Implementation Plan development session(s)

Additional Resources

- [Effective Governance: Useful Governance Templates](#)
- [National Study of Board Governance Practices in the Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector in Canada: Executive Summary](#)
- [Ontario Provincial Resource for ASO Human Resources \(OPRAH\)](#)
- [OODP Governance Resources](#)
- [OODP Nominating Committee Resource](#)
- [The Not-for-Profit \(NPO\) Directors Series: The NPO Director Alerts](#)
- [The Policy Governance Model](#)
- [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Board Recruitment, Development and Assessment](#)
- [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Directors' and Officers' Liability Indemnification and Insurance \(includes Not-For-Profit Organizations supplement\)](#)
- [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Fiduciary Duty](#)
- [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Human Resources](#)
- [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Risk](#)
- [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Strategy and Planning](#)

6. Sources

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3. *Developing Leadership on Boards of Directors*. Journal for Non-Profit Management. 2008.
Retrieved from: <http://www.boardcoach.com/downloads/Developing-Leadership-on-Boards-Board-Leadership-Project-Governance-Matters.pdf>
4. *Governance Effectiveness ‘Quick Check’* - Institute On Governance
Retrieved from: <http://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Board-self-assessment-tool-for-pfc-en.pdf>
5. Ontario Organizational Development Program (OODP) resources – The following OODP resources were reviewed and/or adapted in the development of the Board Self-Assessment Tool: [The Organizational Self-Assessment Tool - Governance Module](#), *OODP Governance Workshop*, *OODP Board Self-Assessment Survey Template January 2014*, and *OODP Survey: Enablers of Board Effectiveness*.