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 **Board Self- Assessment Tool**

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# 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 completed, the survey 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 it is functioning. Importantly, the results will 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. It is highly adaptable and ASO’s should feel free to make changes to the tool for their own use.

# How to Best Use This Tool

This tool is designed to be used for annual Board evaluation. It seeks to help Board’s answer the question: *what are we doing well and what can we do better*? Using this tool to answer this question ensures that all members can say that they are acting in the best interest of the organization - a key governance question that OODP governance resources focus on.

**Are we acting in the best interest of the organization?**



This tool is designed for organizations large enough to employ staff and with someone in an Executive Director or CEO role.

* Section D on the **Performance of Individual Directors** provides an opportunity for Board members to personally reflect on their own performance. This portion of the questionnaire, once completed, should be retained by each Board member, to support their own improvement goals. However, individual results should also be anonymously compiled to give the Board a sense of the overall confidence level of its members. 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. There are likely to be common issues.
* This Tool includes an optional section, Section F, **Feedback to the Chair of the Board** that seeks to provide 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 on the page. This number is intended as a rough interpretation of the results of each section.
* Remember that this tool is best used to stimulate reflection and discussion; and once a few annual cycles have been completed, can identify trends and issues that may require changes to Board policy and practice or confirm and validate best practices.
* Boards may wish to consider OODP support and/or bringing in an **independent person** to conduct the evaluation and compile and summarize the results, and support the Board to develop an action/work plan. Involving an external facilitator will ensure that individual responses are kept confidential and may result in more honest answers.

**Process**

1. **Start Up** - The Executive Committee or designated Committee meets to determine the scope and process for the Board self-assessment. This includes timelines, individuals involved and roles.
2. **Self-Assessment[[1]](#footnote-1)** - The self-assessment exercise process is underway. Individual Board members and the Executive Director complete the questionnaire and all responses are consolidated and a summary is 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. It should be noted that Boards can also chose to do different sections at different times of the year. Feel free to determine a process that works best for your unique Board. What is most important is that a Committee or persons are responsible for the process from start to finish.

# OODP Board Self-Assessment Tool

**Name:** (optional) **For period from: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Questions should be answered by all Board members. When completed individually the results of Sections A, B, C, D and E should be consolidated, shared and discussed by the whole Board. Sections A, B, C and F should also be completed by the **Executive Director**. Section F, which provides feedback to the Chair of the Board is optional.

*Circle the response that* ***best*** *reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).*

|  |
| --- |
| **Section A: How Well Has the Board Done its Job?** |
| **Question** | **Rating** | **Comments** |
| 1. Our organization has a multi-year strategic plan or a set of clear long range goals and priorities.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board’s meeting agenda clearly reflects ourstrategic plan or priorities.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board has a current annual Board work plan.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board has ensured that the organization also has an annual operational or business plan.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board gives direction to staff on how to achieve the organizations mandate and strategic goals primarily by setting or referring to policies.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board recruits, supports and develops the Executive Director.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. 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 |  |
| 1. The Board has reviewed and approved an organizational risk management plan.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I am confident that this Board would effectively manage any organizational crisis that could be reasonably anticipated.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board has developed and/or reviewed and approved policies related to HIV disclosure.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board has developed and/or reviewed and approved policies related to GIPA and MIPA.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board conducts regular self-assessment on its progress e.g. Board work plan updates, an annual state of the Board assessment.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| **My overall rating** | **Total =**  | * **Excellent (55+)**
* **Very Good (46-55)**
* **Good (36-45)**
* **Satisfactory (25-35)**
* **Poor (12–24)**
 |

**Section B: Enablers of Board Effectiveness and Success**

**Name:** (optional) **For period from: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*Circle the response that* ***best*** *reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).*

|  |
| --- |
| **Section B: Enablers of Board Effectiveness and Success[[2]](#footnote-2)** |
| **Question** | **Rating** | **Comments** |
| 1. The Board composition is appropriate – members have skill sets, expertise to cover off areas of responsibilities (Lived experience, HR, Finance, Legal, Social/Health Services etc.).
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board size is appropriate – there is coverage of duties amongst roles, cohesiveness amongst members and manageable workloads.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. Officers have clearly defined roles & expectations (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary).
 |  1 2 3 4 5  |  |
| 1. There is an up to date Board Governance Manual.
 | 1 2 3 4 5  |  |
| 1. The Executive Committee have 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  |  |
| 1. All new Board members receive clear orientation on their role, responsibilities and expectations including review of fiduciary duties.
 | 1 2 3 4 5  |  |
| 1. The Board has effective processes in place for identifying, cultivating and integrating new Directors (renewal).
 | 1 2 3 4 5  |  |
| 1. The Committee structure is well documented and each Committee has terms of reference.
 | 1 2 3 4 5  |  |
| 1. Board/committee meetings run well, e.g. start on time, and give members a chance to engage in issues, ensure all voices are heard.
 | 1 2 3 4 5  |  |
| 1. Board/committee meeting calendars, advance materials and agendas support the Board as needed.
 | 1 2 3 4 5  |  |
| 1. The Executive Director role/expectations in supporting the Board are clearly defined.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. Board interactions are productive and generally enjoyable; with a good mixture of fun and development activities.
 |  1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| **My overall rating** | **Total =**  | * **Excellent (55+)**
* **Very Good (46-55)**
* **Good (36-45)**
* **Satisfactory (25-35)**
* **Poor (12–24)**
 |

**Section C: How Well Has the Board Conducted Itself?**

**Name:** (optional) **For period from: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*Circle the response that* ***best*** *reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section C: How Well Has the Board Conducted Itself?** |  |  |
| **Question** | **Rating** | **Comments** |
| 1. Board members are aware of what is expected of them.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The agenda of Board meetings is well plannedso that we can get through all necessary Board business.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. We receive written reports to the Board in advance of our meetings.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. It seems like most Board members come to meetings prepared.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. All Board members participate in important Board discussions.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. We do a good job encouraging and dealing with different points of view.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. We all support the decisions we make.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. Board members demonstrate commitment to the organization’s mission and values and are able to distinguish and set aside personal interest when different from the mission, goals and interests of the organization.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. Board members conduct themselves in accordance with key elements of the governance structure (bylaws, code of conduct, conflict of interest, etc.).
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. Board members demonstrate a clear understanding of the organizations strategic focus when making decisions and use sound processes in such decision–making.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board has planned and led the orientation process for new Board members.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board has a plan for director education and further Board development.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. Our Board meetings are always interesting.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. Our Board meetings are frequently fun.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| In the *(insert year)* State of the Board Self-Assessment, 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?* Example - Succession Planning
* Example - Policy development
 | * Completed
* Making Progress
* Needs Attention
* Not Sure
 |  |
| **My overall rating** | **Total =**  | * **Excellent (61+)**
* **Very Good (56-60)**
* **Good (43-55)**
* **Satisfactory (29-42)**
* **Poor (14-28)**
 |

**Section D: Performance of Individual Board Members**

**Name:** (optional) **For period from: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*Circle the response that* ***best*** *reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).*

|  |
| --- |
| **Section D: Performance of Individual Board Members**  |
| **Question** | **Rating** | **Comments** |
| 1. I am aware of what is expected of me as a Board member.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I have a good record of meeting attendance.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I read the minutes, reports and other materials in advance of our Board meetings.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I am familiar with what is in the organization’s by-laws and governing policies.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I follow through on things I said I would do.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I maintain the confidentiality of all Board decisions.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. When I have a different opinion than the majority, I raise it.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I support Board decisions once they are made even if I do not agree with them.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I promote the work of our organization in the community whenever I have a chance to do so.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I stay informed about issues relevant to our mission and bring information to the attention of the Board.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I am self-aware, and recognize how my power and privilege may impact my fellow Board members and others in the organization.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I am committed to the principles of GIPA and MIPA and demonstrate that commitment in my Board work.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I feel that I make valuable contributions in my role as a Board member.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I enjoy my role and foresee completing my term.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 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 =**  | * **Excellent (61+)**
* **Very Good (56-60)**
* **Good (43-55)**
* **Satisfactory (29-42)**
* **Poor (14-28)**
 |

**E: The Board’s Relationship with the Executive Director**

**Name:** (optional) **For period from: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*Circle the response that* ***best*** *reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).*

|  |
| --- |
| **Section E: The Board’s Relationship with the Executive Director[[3]](#footnote-3)** |
| **Question** | **Rating** | **Comments** |
| 1. There is a clear understanding of where the Board’s role ends and the Executive Director’s begins.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. There is good two-way communication between the Board and the Executive Director.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. 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 |  |
| 1. The Board delegate[[4]](#footnote-4) provides the Executive Director with regular supervision and support.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board has developed formal criteria and a process for evaluating the Executive Director’s job performance.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board, or a committee of the Board, has formally evaluated the Executive Director’s job performance within the past 12 months.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board provides feedback and shows its appreciation to the Executive Director on a regular basis.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board ensures that the Executive Director is able to take advantage of professional developmentopportunities.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| **My overall rating** | **Total =**  | * **Excellent (33+)**
* **Very Good (30-32)**
* **Good (25 – 29)**
* **Satisfactory (17 – 24)**
* **Poor (8-16)**
 |

**Name:** (optional) **For period from: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*Circle the response that* ***best*** *reflects your opinion. The rating scale for each statement is: Strongly Disagree (1); Disagree (2); Not Sure or Maybe (3); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (5).*

|  |
| --- |
| **Section F: Feedback to the Chair of the Board (Optional)** |
| **Question** | **Rating** | **Comments** |
| 1. The Board has a formal Board Chair job description and has discussed the role and responsibilities.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Chair is well prepared for Board meetings.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Chair helps the Board to stick to the agenda.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Chair ensures that every Board member has an opportunity to be heard.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Chair is skilled at managing different points ofview.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. 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 their behaviour needs to shift or change.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Chair helps the Board work well together.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. I feel I can go to the Chair when I have a concern.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Chair demonstrates good listening skills.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Board supports the Chair.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Chair is effective in delegating responsibility (e.g. assigning tasks with timelines) amongst Board members.
 | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| 1. The Chair’s strongest skill is…..
 |  |
| **My overall rating** | **Total =**  | * **Excellent (50+)**
* **Very Good (41-49)**
* **Good (33-40)**
* **Satisfactory (22-32)**
* **Poor (11–21)**
 |

# 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](http://www.effectivegovernance.com.au/useful-resources/governance-documentation-templates/)
* [National Study of Board Governance Practices in the Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector in Canada: Executive Summary](http://www.efls.ca/webresources/National_Study_of_board_governance_practices.pdf)
* [Ontario Provincial Resource for ASO Human Resources (OPRAH)](https://oan.red/oprah/)
* [OODP Governance Resources](http://oodp.ca/online-resources/)
* [OODP Nominating Committee Resource](http://oodp.ca/media/1.%20OODP-Nominating-Committee-Resource-Sept-2013.pdf)
* [The Not-for-Profit (NPO) Directors Series: The NPO Director Alerts](https://www.cpacanada.ca/en/business-and-accounting-resources/strategy-risk-and-governance/not-for-profit-governance/publications/canada-anti-spam-law-questions-for-not-for-profit-directors-to-ask)
* [The Policy Governance Model](http://www.carvergovernance.com/model.htm)
* [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Board Recruitment, Development and Assessment](https://www.cpacanada.ca/en/business-and-accounting-resources/strategy-risk-and-governance/not-for-profit-governance/publications/20-questions-on-recruiting-a-not-for-profit-board)
* [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Directors’ and Officers’ Liability Indemnification and Insurance (includes Not-For-Profit Organizations supplement)](https://www.cpacanada.ca/en/business-and-accounting-resources/strategy-risk-and-governance/not-for-profit-governance/publications/directors-and-officers-indemnification-and-insurance-20-questions-for-directors)
* [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Fiduciary Duty](https://www.cpacanada.ca/en/business-and-accounting-resources/strategy-risk-and-governance/not-for-profit-governance/publications/questions-about-not-for-profit-fiduciary-duty)
* [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Human Resources](https://www.cpacanada.ca/en/business-and-accounting-resources/strategy-risk-and-governance/not-for-profit-governance/publications/hr-questions-for-not-for-profit-board-directors)
* [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Risk](https://www.cpacanada.ca/en/business-and-accounting-resources/strategy-risk-and-governance/not-for-profit-governance/publications/20-questions-for-nfp-directors-on-risk-management)
* [20 Questions Directors of Not-For-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Strategy and Planning](https://www.cpacanada.ca/.../20%20questions%20directors%20of%20not-for-profit%25)

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The Ontario Organizational Development Program (OODP) resources – The following OODP resources were reviewed and or adapted in the development of the State of the Board Resource: [*The Organizational Self-Assessment Tool - Governance Module*](http://oodp.ca/product/organizational-self-assessment-tool/)*, The OODP Governance Workshop, OODP Survey: Enablers of Board Effectiveness.*

1. Board evaluation can be done at any time of the year and should be put on the board’s annual agenda. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This section of the tool has been adapted from the OODP resource *Enablers of Board Effectiveness*, Prepared by Wendy L Pinder. © 2013 The Ontario Organizational Development Program [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Section D 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 both by the Board and by the Executive Director. The items evaluated here should focus on matters that the Board can change about its performance. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
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. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)