

The Nonprofit Governance Matrix

At La Piana Consulting, we conceive of nonprofit governance as encompassing five key board roles, portrayed across the top of the chart below. We also like the three levels of engagement described in *Governance as Leadership*¹ and portrayed on the chart's left column. These five roles and three levels of engagement comprise what we call The Governance Matrix.

| | Define and Protect the Mission | Protect the Assets | Hire, Support, and Remove the CEO | Be Ambassadors to the External World | Ensure Adequate Resources to Carry Out the Mission |
|-------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| Fiduciary | Set the mission Ensure adherence to mission | Review financials Approve budget Create audit committee Approve HR/other policies Ensure good risk management | Hire/fire CEO Review CEO performance Plan for emergency succession | Speak with one voice Talk up the organization | Make personal donation Fundraise |
| Strategic | Develop and approve strategies Commission business planning | Address any systems weaknesses | Partner with CEO around strategy development/execution | Do targeted outreach Advocate for the cause | Create development strategy |
| Generative | Discuss long-term path to mission achievement | Ask: what are the biggest threats that might evolve over the next decade? | Plan for CEO succession long-term | Ask: what external relations challenges will we face in an evolving world? | Ask: What new revenue sources will we need in 10 years? |

¹ Governance as Leadership, Richard P. Chait, William P. Ryan, and Barbara E. Taylor, BoardSource, 2005