



CHURCH BOARD TRACK

DISCUSSION GUIDE

MODULE 3: NUTS AND BOLTS OF A GOOD BOARD MEETING

MODULE INTRODUCTION

It is one thing to talk conceptually about how a church board should function with the pastor. It is something completely different to actually get in the trenches and make the nuts and bolts of the board its meetings be the most effective they can be. Spiritually savvy and attuned pastors and board members know what it takes to have great board meetings that accomplish what the Lord wants accomplished.

VIDEO 1

CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE

In this video, we look at how pastors and board members create an atmosphere, whether they intend to or not. With this in mind, we look at 6 aspects of creating an atmosphere in your board meeting. I would encourage you to think about these things as you watch this episode.

6 Aspects of Creating an Atmosphere in Your Board Meetings

1. Why even worry about _____?
2. You need to manage your _____.
3. Guide the board's emotions.
4. _____ and exits.
5. _____ together.
6. _____ together.

Discussion Questions

- A. How would you describe the current atmosphere of your church board?
- B. What are some ways you can help foster healthy emotions with your board members?
- C. How are you modeling prayer for your board members?
- D. What things are you doing to ensure board engagement is a highlight for the members (such as eating together, praying together, etc.)?

VIDEO 2

DEVELOPING AGENDAS TO GET THINGS DONE

In this video, we look practically on how to develop annual and regular monthly agendas to get things done. I encourage you to think about the following as you view this episode.

2 Components of Planning

1. Create an _____ board calendar.
 - a. Suggested monthly focus items:
 - January – Spiritual Support
 - February – Missional Fulfillment
 - March – Spring Break or March Madness
 - April – Document Curation
 - May – Audit/Financials Review
 - June – Policy Review
 - July – Break
 - August – Fall Planning
 - September – Strategic Planning
 - October – Budget
 - November – Prep for Year-End and Annual Meeting
 - December – Fun (Christmas Party, etc.)
 - b. Include a board _____ for planning, dreaming, prayer, and fun.
2. Create the _____ monthly agenda.
 - a. The _____ drives the agenda for the monthly meeting.
 - b. _____ the meeting's focus in your annual calendar.

For sample agendas, please refer to the additional resources.

Discussion Questions

- A. What does your current annual board calendar consist of?
- B. Where are some locations you could host an annual board retreat?
- C. How are you helping board members understand the lead pastor drives the agenda for the monthly meeting?
- D. How are you communicating the meeting's focus on your annual calendar?

VIDEO 3

WHAT, WHEN, WHERE AND HOW LONG

In this video, we cover five components of meeting beyond its overall purpose – what, when, where, and how long. Consider these items as you watch this video.

2 Things the Lead Pastor Needs to Focus On

1. Be continually _____ in all that you do in leading your board.
2. Be completely _____ aware of your church and your church board.

6 Nuts and Bolts Questions We All Need to Ask

1. How many _____ do we need?
2. _____ should the agenda be sent out?
3. _____ should we have the meeting?
4. How long should the meeting go?
5. How do we get board members _____?
6. Should we have staff members sit at the board table when the board meets?

Discussion Questions

- A. What is the culture of your board, church, and community?
- B. What are the ideal number of times your board needs to meet monthly/annually and why?
- C. What are three locations your board could hold meetings, and why are they good location choices?
- D. What are ways you can have staff involved with the board?

VIDEO 4

A PROCESS TO MOVE FORWARD

In this video, we cover a process to introduce an idea and carry it, with discussion, all the way through to action. Give thought to the following as you watch this episode.

4 Components to Move from the Beginning All the Way to Action

1. _____
2. Information
3. _____
4. Action

Discussion Questions

- A. How do you demonstrate your highest core value?
- B. How are you regularly feeding information/content to the board members?
- C. How can you be intentional in your prayer reminders for board members?
- D. What would you do if a major item did not receive a unanimous vote by the board.

VIDEO 5

DOCUMENTATION AND APPROVALS

In this episode, we'll cover the key things to document and talk through how approvals should happen at the church. I would encourage you to think about these things as you watch this episode.

Items to Consider for Documentation and Approvals

1. Primary documents for you to have in place:
 - a. Maintain _____ of all meetings.
 - b. Establish and maintain _____ policy.
 - c. Establish and maintain church policies.
 - d. Maintain your _____ records.
 - e. Maintain your _____.
 - f. Maintain records of capital facilities and projections for additions and improvements.
 - g. Create and maintain job or ministry _____.
2. Approvals
 - a. _____ always start from the lead pastor's office.
 - b. Pray, information, discussion, action.
 - c. _____.
 - d. _____ implications.
 - e. Mission.

Discussion Questions

- A. Using the list of primary documents to have in place above, create a list of what documents you currently have in place and what documents you need to begin to develop.
- B. Thinking about an item of which you will be seeking approval – what are the financial implications of the expected approval?
- C. Thinking about an item of which you will be seeking approval – how does it interface with existing ministries?
- D. Thinking about an item of which you will be seeking approval – where does the approval fit with the vision and mission of the church?

VIDEO 6

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

In this episode, we interview Pastor John Lindell and Board Member Jack Thurman on doing the nuts and bolts of ministry. We discuss very practical aspects of making the board experience the best it can be for everyone. What are your thoughts as you watch the video?

Interview with James River Church's Lead Pastor John Lindell and Board Member Jack Thurman.

1. Prior preparation _____ poor performance. Don't go into a board meeting unprepared.
2. There is a people component to church. Tell stories.
3. Board members should not see themselves as the _____.
4. Pastor should not spring things on the board.
5. When the pastor sends out the agenda in advance – come _____ up!
6. Board members need to have _____ in their heart and a spiritual walk.

Discussion Questions

- A. Tell of a time where you saw prior preparation for a board meeting help produce a good resulting decision.
- B. What is a great people story that has occurred at your church in the last three months?
- C. What is the process the pastor walks through to prepare the agenda for the board meeting?
- D. What is one thing you've done to cultivate joy in serving?

VIDEO 7

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

In this episode, we talk about the specific nuances of having good board meetings. Pastor Rusty Railey and Board Member Alicia Taylor share of the attention they give to the mechanics at their board table. We encourage you to consider their discussion as you plan your board meetings.

Interview with Joliet First's Lead Pastor Rusty Railey and Board Member Alicia Taylor.

1. The formula for good board meetings is to have things move from information to study to action.
2. The board makes better decisions if they are better _____.
3. The pastor should never use their position to manipulate a decision.
4. A good leader can see around the _____ and in doing so, they can inform.
5. There should never be a time where people leave the board meeting _____.
6. Board member, don't take yourself too seriously.

Discussion Questions

- A. Tell of a time when you saw a concept like information to study to action work to make a good decision at the board level.
- B. What are two things a pastor can do to better inform the church board of issues salient to the life of the church?
- C. If a person feels agitated near the end of the board meeting, how should they handle that agitation?
- D. Why does breaking bread together work to make for better board meetings?

VIDEO 8

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

In this episode, we talk with Lead Pastor Walter Harvey and Board Member Marcus Arrington about what it takes to have an effective board meeting. You'll hear of very real and practical aspects of making the monthly board meeting a time when both the pastor and the board member looking forward to being together. We encourage you to discuss how to make your board members even better!

Interview with Parklawn Church's Lead Pastor Walter Harvey and Board Member Marcus Arrington.

1. The key to an _____ board meeting is to know what you want to accomplish before the meeting starts.
2. Don't have a church board meeting just to have a meeting.
3. Don't be _____. Don't be a non-participant.
4. Don't be afraid to inject humor where appropriate.
5. Promote equity of _____. Just because you have a thought doesn't mean you have to be the primary person.
6. The _____ of the Lord is in even those things that don't seem very spiritual.

Discussion Questions

- A. In your context, what has been the most effective key to your church board meetings being the best they can be?
- B. What does being late to a meeting say to the rest of the board members?
- C. Tell of a time when you saw humor diffuse a tense situation at the board level.
- D. Tell of a time when you found yourself talking too much in a board meeting. Or if you're not a talking, reflect on a time when you saw/heard it happen.

VIDEO 9

Additional Resources

The following resources are available to assist you as you continue your journey of identifying, recruiting, and deploying board members.

Resources are available for download by clicking on the item below, or at [insert website link].

- Welcome & Overview
- Sample Annual Calendar
- Sample Agendas
 - Board Meeting Agenda #1
 - Board Meeting Agenda #2
 - Board Meeting Agenda #3
 - Board Meeting Agenda #4
- Sample Church Annual Meeting Minutes
- Church Board Action Sheet

Answers

Video 1: Creating An Atmosphere

6 Aspects of Creating an Atmosphere

1. Why even worry about **atmosphere**?
2. You need to manage your **emotions**.
3. Guide the board's emotions.
4. **Entrances** and exits.
5. **Eat** together.
6. **Pray** together.

Video 2: How to Recruit Board Members

2 Components of Planning

1. Create an **annual** board calendar.
 - a. Suggested monthly focus items:
 - b. Include a board **retreat** for planning, dreaming, prayer, and fun.
2. Create the **regular** monthly agenda.
 - a. The **lead pastor** drives the agenda for the monthly meeting.
 - b. **Communicate** the meeting's focus in your annual calendar.

Video 3: What, When, Where and How Long

Areas of Focus for the Lead Pastor

1. Be continually **prayerful** in all that you do in leading your board.
2. Be completely **culturally** aware of your church and your church board.

6 Nuts and Bolts Questions We All Need to Ask

1. How many **meetings** do we need?
2. **When** should the agenda be sent out?
3. **Where** should we have the meeting?
4. How long should the meeting go?
5. How do we get board members **involved**?
6. Should we have staff members sit at the board table when the board meets?

Video 4: A Process to Move Forward

4 Components to Move from the Beginning All the Way to Action

1. **Prayer**
2. Information
3. **Discussion**
4. Action

Video 5: Documentation and Approval

Items to Consider for Documentation and Approvals

1. Primary documents for you to have in place:
 - a. Maintain **minutes** of all meetings.
 - b. Establish and maintain **board** policy.
 - c. Establish and maintain church policies.
 - d. Maintain your **financial** records.
 - e. Maintain your **bylaws**.
 - f. Maintain records of capital facilities and projections for additions and improvements.
 - g. Create and maintain job or ministry **descriptions**.
2. Approvals
 - a. **Approvals** always start from the lead pastor's office.
 - b. Pray, information, discussion, action.
 - c. Budget.
 - d. **Ministry** implications.
 - e. **Mission**.

Video 6: Roundtable Discussion

Interview with James River Church's Lead Pastor John Lindell and Board Member Jack Thurman.

1. Prior preparation **prevents** poor performance. Don't go into a board meeting unprepared.
2. There is a people component to church. Tell stories.
3. Board members should not see themselves as the **challenger**.
4. Pastor should not spring things on the board.
5. When the pastor sends out the agenda in advance – come **prayed** up!
6. Board members need to have **joy** in their heart and a spiritual walk.

Video 7: Roundtable Discussion

Interview with Parklawn Church's Lead Pastor Rusty Railey and Board Member Alicia Taylor.

1. The formula for good board meetings is to have things move from information to study to action.
2. The board makes better decisions if they are better **informed**.
3. The pastor should never use their position to manipulate a decision.
4. A good leader can see around the **corner** and in doing so, they can inform.
5. There should never be a time where people leave the board meeting **angry**.
6. Board member, don't take yourself too seriously.

Video 8: Roundtable Discussion

Interview with Parklawn Church's Lead Pastor Walter Harvey and Board Member Marcus Arrington.

1. The key to an **effective** board meeting is to know what you want to accomplish before the meeting starts.
2. Don't have a church board meeting just to have a meeting.
3. Don't be **late**. Don't be a non-participant.
4. Don't be afraid to inject humor where appropriate.
5. Promote equity of **voice**. Just because you have a thought doesn't mean you have to be the primary person.
6. The **presence** of the Lord is in even those things that don't seem very spiritual.

Video 9: Additional Resources