Committee Best Practices

Common laments about committees is that they waste time, there are too many, and they are more of a liability than an asset.

Committees can be very effective when best practices are in place. They exist to benefit the board; their work should advance the mission and goals of the organization.

Committee Strategies

- Inventory committees at the start of the president’s term and eliminate or suspend unnecessary committees.
- Every committee should have a purpose statement to define (and limit) scope of work.
- Charges are made by the incoming president; assigning work and performance measures to advance the strategic plan.
- Committees must understand limitations of authority to speak and contract for the organization.
- Committees keep minutes, a question emphasized on revised IRS Form 990.
- Maintain a working notebook of documents and achievements to be passed on to the next committee chair.
- Appoint a vice chair for sustainability if the chair has to resign.
- Board and staff members serve as liaisons to assist committees.
- Good meeting practices are encouraged, including meeting notices, agendas, room set up and reports.
- Committees are depicted on the organizational chart to show the proper flow of information and authority.

Committee Names

- Standing - Identified in the bylaws.
- Ad Hoc and Task Forces - Appointed as needed for special assignments.
- Creative Teams - A pleasant name for a motivated committee.
- Special Interest Groups - Like-minded members working to benefit their interest.

1 Provide a one-page template for committees to record name, attendees, meeting times, actions taken and economic impact of actions.

Robert C. Harris, CAE, provides association and chamber tips and templates at www.nonprofitcenter.com. He can be contacted at 850-570-6000 or bob@rchcae.com.

HEIGHTS OF ELEGANCE

Is are more chic, / Westin Virginia / Aden example.

designed meeting / that is delivered / for better health.