

EMSP SEMINAR
Using one of your
organisation's biggest assets
– Board members and other
key volunteers as a resource

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VISION

That picture of an ideal world, where the problem the organisation is addressing is being solved, maybe not in the short term, and maybe not for everyone affected by the problem, but it is the goal you are aiming for

MISSION

What your organisation intends to do to make the vision a reality

Example:

to exchange and disseminate information relating to multiple sclerosis considering all issues relevant to people affected by MS

OBJECTIVES

- Lobbying and awareness raising
- Facilitating Pan-European projects (both funded and non-funded)
- Providing information both from internal and external sources

Governance

Governance is the process by which a governing body ensures that an organisation is effectively and properly run

Governance is not necessarily about doing, it is about ensuring that things are done

Roles of the Board

To ensure the organisation

has a clear sense of purpose and direction

has adequate resources and uses them to achieve its objectives

is properly and legally managed

Board collective responsibilities

- ✓ Financial
- ✓ Legal
- ✓ Strategic
- ✓ Managerial
- ✓ Reputational

Financial

- Maintaining proper scrutiny of the organisation's resources
- Monitoring spending and cash flow
- Securing sufficient resources to fulfil the mission
- Approving the budget
- Monitoring its maintenance

Legal

- Ensuring compliance with the governing document
- Ensuring compliance with the country's laws, charity or not-for-profit law, company law
- Accountability required by the tax authorities
- Publishing annual reports

Strategic

- Developing short, medium and long-term strategy to deliver the mission
- Having meeting agendas which reflect the key points of the strategy to keep the organisation on track
- Avoiding 'mission drift'

Managerial

- Ensuring that correct employment procedures are in place
- Being watchful for the welfare and appropriate remuneration of staff
- Selecting and supporting the chief executive who will have day-to-day responsibility for delivering the mission

Reputational

- Promoting the organisation and its values, acting as ambassadors
- Protecting the good reputation of the organisation
- Having internal and external communication strategies so that information flows freely
- Consulting with stakeholders whose knowledge of the organisation will inform strategic thinking and planning

The Nolan Principles

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

❖ The Board is a volunteer resource of

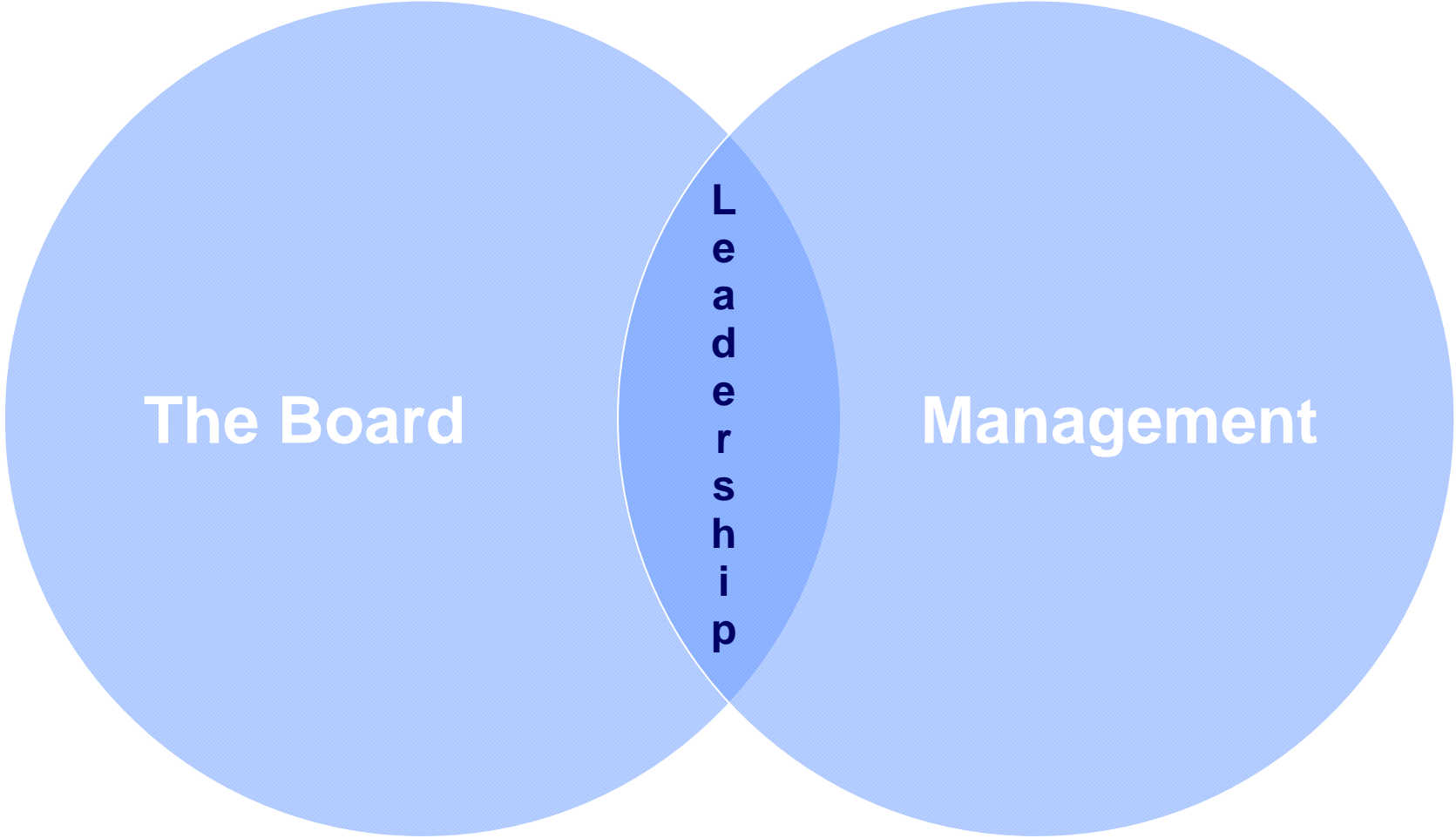
Knowledge

Experience

Specialisms

Connections

Strategic thinking



The Board

Leadership

Management

The Chair and the Chief Executive

The Key Relationship

- ✓ The Chair's role is as both member and leader of the Board, acting as their spokesperson and representing their views
- ✓ The Chief Executive is accountable to the Board as a whole and is the person to whom responsibility is delegated by the Board to implement the organisation's policies

Chair's Role

- To provide leadership to the Board
- To ensure the highest possible standards of governance
- To ensure the proper and efficient conduct of Board meetings
- To support and where appropriate to challenge the Chief Executive
- To make sure the Board understands and fulfils its responsibilities

Chief Executive's Role

- To provide leadership to the organisation
- To enable the Board to fulfil its duties and responsibilities
- With the Board to develop, monitor and review a long term strategy
- To ensure there is an appropriate management structure and systems
- To ensure that staff and volunteers are focused and supported

Board/Chief Executive relationship

- ✓ Availability
- ✓ Access to expertise
- ✓ Who needs to know what
- ✓ Confidentiality
- ✓ The 'loose cannon'
Board member
- ✓ Knowing when to say 'no'

Communication between Chief Executive and Board

When –

Formal

Board meetings

Officers meetings

Sub-committees/working
groups

Informal

Individuals

'Elephant Traps' –

- Getting the balance wrong
- Not allowing sufficient time for people to absorb information
- Chair and CEO a 'secret society'
- CEO 'editing' information being conveyed to the Board

Dealing with disagreements

- ✓ Awareness
- ✓ Grievance procedures for the Board
- ✓ Disputes require resolution – they don't just dissolve
- ✓ Separate the person from the problem
- ✓ Internal negotiating/mediating skills
- ✓ Use of external third party – facilitator/mediator
- ✓ Prevention is better than cure

Potential for Conflicts of Interest for Board members who:

- Have been nominated by another organisation, possibly with a competing mission
- Provide professional services to the organisation
- Provide commercial products to the organisation/beneficiaries, eg. pharms
- Are beneficiaries of the organisation's services

Communication and mutual support between Board and Management

- Ongoing
- Ensuring the Board are kept informed of what they *need* to know collectively and individually
- Encouraging, supporting, managing conflict
- Chair sharing with the rest of the Board, CEO sharing with staff/volunteers
- Mentoring for the Chair and for the CEO

Knowing when you are on the right track

- ✓ Decision making becomes smoother
- ✓ Individuals feel more confident
- ✓ Communication is more relevant and more transparent
- ✓ Roles have greater clarity
- ✓ Boundaries are respected
- ✓ Morale is raised throughout the organisation
- ✓ Users benefit from improved service delivery

To make all this happen it is necessary to address

- Your Board's strengths and weaknesses/Board performance
- What skill sets are needed on the Board
- What skills are lacking
- Role descriptions for the Board and for key volunteers
- Recruitment of Board members and key volunteers with the specific skills needed

Who are the key people?

- Board/Committee members
- The Chair of the Board
- Management team
- Chief Executive
- President/Vice Presidents
- Specialist advisers
- Other stakeholders/supporters/donors
- Volunteers

How to help them connect

- What skills do they have?
- What do they know/who do they know?
- Why are they interested in your organisation?
- What do they *want* to do for it?
- What are the benefits for them?
- How will you support them?

The Action Plan

- Think about your organisation's mission
- Developing leadership on your Board is a vital step towards your organisation's future sustainability
- Start to fill in the Work Plan
- Complete it with others when you return home so that they share ownership of the process