

**Setting Up a Board of Directors for Non-Profits: A Biblical Perspective**

Non-profit organizations play a vital role in serving communities and advancing various causes. To ensure effective governance and accountability, it is crucial for non-profits to establish a Board of Directors. From a Biblical perspective, setting up a Board of Directors requires a focus on integrity, character, and adherence to God's principles. This essay explores the guidelines for selecting board members according to the Word of God and the leadership style of Yeshua (Jesus).

**Biblical Integrity and Character:** Proverbs 11:3 states, "The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity." Integrity and character are foundational qualities for board members. Individuals chosen to serve on the Board of Directors should be known for their honesty, moral uprightness, and commitment to doing what is right. These qualities ensure that the organization's actions align with Biblical principles and build trust with stakeholders.

**Qualifications of Board Members:** 1 Timothy 3:1-7 provides valuable insights into the qualifications of leaders: "Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money." While this passage specifically addresses church leaders, the principles can be applied to selecting board members. Key qualifications include being above reproach, self-controlled, respectable, and not driven by selfish gain.

**Diversity of Gifts and Skills:** Romans 12:6-8 teaches us, "We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully." A well-rounded Board of Directors should comprise individuals with diverse gifts and skills. This diversity ensures that the board can effectively address various aspects of the organization's mission and operations.

**Commitment to the Mission:** Colossians 3:23-24 reminds us, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." Board members should be deeply committed to the organization's mission and view their service as an act of worship and dedication to God. This commitment drives their passion and diligence in fulfilling their responsibilities.

**The Leadership Style of Yeshua:** Yeshua's leadership is characterized by humility, servant-heartedness, and a focus on the well-being of others. In **Mark 10:42-45**, Jesus teaches, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Board members should emulate Yeshua's servant leadership, prioritizing the needs of the organization and its beneficiaries over personal interests.

**Guidelines for Board Functioning:** Effective board functioning requires clear guidelines and accountability mechanisms. **Proverbs 15:22** advises, "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed." Regular meetings, transparent decision-making processes, and open communication are essential for a successful board. Additionally, board members should be accountable to one another and to the organization, ensuring that their actions align with the organization's values and goals.

**Prayer and Discernment:** James 1:5 encourages us, "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you." Prayer and discernment are crucial in the selection and functioning of board members. Seeking God's guidance ensures that the right individuals are chosen and that their decisions are aligned with His will.

**Avoiding passive leaders**on your Board of Directors is crucial for ensuring effective governance and strategic decision-making. Passive leaders often lack the initiative and assertiveness needed to drive the organization's mission forward, leading to stagnation and missed opportunities. In contrast, proactive and engaged board members actively contribute their expertise, provide valuable insights, and hold others accountable, fostering a culture of excellence and growth. By carefully selecting dynamic and committed individuals, organizations can ensure that their board is equipped to navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and make informed decisions that align with their mission and vision. This approach ultimately strengthens the organization's impact and promotes long-term success.

**In conclusion**, setting up a Board of Directors for non-profits requires a focus on Biblical integrity, character, and adherence to God's principles. By selecting individuals who exemplify these qualities and who are committed to the mission, organizations can ensure effective governance and accountability. Emulating the leadership style of Yeshua and seeking God's guidance through prayer and discernment will further strengthen the board's effectiveness, ultimately advancing the organization's mission and glorifying God.

-Dr. Stephen Phinney