

LEADERSHIP

201

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

# NIMBLE DECISION MAKING



---

**Ontario Real Estate  
Association**

*Promoting Professionalism*

Ontario Real Estate Association  
99 Duncan Mill Road  
Don Mills, Ontario M3B 1Z2  
Telephone: 416-445-9910  
Fax: 416-445-2644  
Toll Free: 1-800-265-OREA (6732)  
[www.orea.com](http://www.orea.com)

REALTOR® is a registered trademark of REALTOR Canada Inc., a company owned equally by the Canadian Real Estate Association and the National Association of REALTORS® and refers to registered real estate practitioners who are members of The Canadian Real Estate Association.  
Printed in Canada

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Building Leadership Through Learning .....	1
Course Overview .....	2
What is nimble decision making? .....	3
Governance Principles.....	4
Responsibilities of the Board of Directors .....	4
Leveraging Emerging Trends .....	5
Where do we find emerging trends?.....	5
Emerging Trends at Board meetings.....	5
Activity: Get Informed on Emerging Trends .....	6
Informing the Board .....	8
Sample Briefing Note.....	9
Sample Discussion Guide.....	11
Sample Email Summary .....	12
Barriers to Nimble Decision Making .....	13
Barriers Survey .....	16
Eliminating Barriers to Decision Making.....	17
Activity: Eliminating Barriers .....	17
Individual and Collective Accountability .....	18
Inspiring Behaviours Checklist .....	20
Implementing Nimble Decisions .....	21
Activity: Defining the roles of the Board as Decisions are Implemented .....	21
Activity: Defining the Roles of the Board (CONT'D).....	22
Sample: Implementation Plan.....	23
Sample: Implementation Plan.....	24
Sample: Dashboard .....	25
Activity: Tools that support the implementation of decisions .....	26
Appendix .....	27

Participant Guide  
V1 Dec 1, 2021

## ***BUILDING LEADERSHIP THROUGH LEARNING***

As you expand your involvement in leadership, the leadership skills you possess become more important to your success. People can develop their leadership skills through understanding, learning, and experience. OREA's leadership courses are designed to help you develop your leadership skills. The goal of each course is to provide the necessary background, skills, and support to make you as effective as possible in your leadership role.

OREA's interactive courses will help you:

- Gain credibility as you develop the skills you need to excel as a leader
- Become a valuable asset as a knowledgeable and resourceful leader
- Build organizational strength through learning to work with others to tackle difficult issues, recruit volunteers, and create a strategic vision for your association

### ***ON THE PATH TO VOLUNTEERING***

#### ***LEADERSHIP 100***

In this online course, you'll learn the roles and responsibilities of association leaders, how to become a valuable committee member, and how to make your volunteer time meaningful and productive.

### ***BECOMING A LEADER***

#### ***LEADERSHIP 200***

This three-hour course helps you accelerate your leadership development with tools and techniques that give you the ability to see the big picture. You'll learn about good governance, how to make and amend motions, and how to build consensus as you become more involved in association leadership.

### ***ENHANCING LEADERSHIP SKILLS***

#### ***LEADERSHIP 300***

This three-hour course will help you strengthen your executive leadership skills so that you can work effectively as a director of your association. This interactive learning experience will help you fulfil your duties as a director, chair meetings, answer difficult questions, and advance your strategic plan.

### ***MEMBER-FOCUSED LEADERSHIP***

#### ***LEADERSHIP 301***

As you take on more responsibility as a leader, you recognize the importance of your fiduciary duty to act on behalf of members. This is a new experiential learning course that helps you fulfil your governance responsibilities of stewardship, accountability and oversight. Learn to make group decisions that advance your member-focused strategic goals and manage risk to the benefit of members.

# COURSE OVERVIEW

## LEADERSHIP 201: BECOMING A LEADER

A lot can get in the way of making good group decisions. In this 3-hour course, you will learn to remove the barriers to nimble group decision making and access the information you need to make sound, informed decisions. This intermediate course is for leaders of all kinds – individual leaders, organizational leaders and association leaders

### TOPICS

#### Nimble Decision Making

- Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

#### Leveraging Emerging Trends

- Getting informed on emerging trends
- Emerging trends at board meetings

#### Barriers to Nimble Decision Making

- Barriers Survey: Board Assessment
- Eliminating Barriers to Decision Making
- Individual and Collective Accountability
- Inspiring Behaviours Checklist

#### Implementing Nimble Decisions

- Defining the Roles of the Board as Decisions are Implemented
- Tools that Support the Implementation of Decisions

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Stay on top of emerging trends so you're ahead of the curve
2. Apply a lens of nimble decision making as you prepare for your meeting
3. Identify barriers at the board table and take action to remove them
4. Adopt powerful tools that will help you implement decisions as nimbly as you make them

---

*The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.*

*B. King*

---



# GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**STEWARDSHIP** is the responsible planning and management of resources to ensure the association is continuously working to achieve its purpose

- Ensure that actions taken by the association advance the association's mission or purpose
  - Avoid mission creep that distracts the board and dilutes resources
- Act on behalf of members who have entrusted the association to your care
- Set strategic direction and goals and use them to guide all board decisions
- Make decisions:
  - Strategic decisions that move the organization forward for the benefit of members
  - Fiduciary decisions that ensure the trust of members is retained

**ACCOUNTABILITY** is the obligation to account for activities, accept responsibility for them and to disclose the results in a transparent manner

- Account for activities, accept responsibility for them and disclose the results in a transparent manner
- Communicate with members on the decisions made by the board and the reasons for making them
- Hold each other accountable for good governance
- Fulfill your fiduciary duties

**OVERSIGHT** means the association has in place a robust process for monitoring its actions

- Put in place a robust process for monitoring the association's actions
  - Monitor strategic plan progress, compliance, EO performance and be prepared to make changes
- Ensure compliance with by-laws, policies, regulations, reporting requirements
- Work at a strategic level (nose in – fingers out)

**STRATEGIC GOALS** define the long-term objectives the association is working to achieve

- Align all decision-making to the strategic goals
- Seriously question any initiatives that do not align with these goals
- Assign resources to initiatives that advance these goals
- Ensure committee recommendations and staff work are focused on the strategic goals



## ***LEVERAGING EMERGING TRENDS***

Emerging Trends are those indicators that we begin to see in our own sector and in other sectors that indicate an impending change. As directors and committee members, it's important to consider how those changes might impact our members, and what we might want to consider today to better prepare for those impacts – or take advantage of the opportunities they provide.

### ***WHERE DO WE FIND EMERGING TRENDS?***

They're all around us. We find them in our local and national media. We find them in other associations within our own industry, and in associations in other industries. We see them in laws and decisions coming out of our courts, and regulations coming from government. We see them in consumer behaviour.

For example, today we see a greater trend in individual decision-making. People have access to more information through ever changing technologies. There's a trend for greater transparency and accountability from associations. And certainly, there is a trend by members to demand value for their money.

By continually staying on top of emerging trends you'll increase your readiness for nimble decision-making at every single board meeting. Where emerging trends are concerned, you'd like to be ahead of the curve. You absolutely need to be on the curve. You do not want to be behind the curve.

### ***EMERGING TRENDS AT BOARD MEETINGS***

It's normally the Executive Officer's responsibility to gather information on emerging trends and report to the board. In the Board Package, for example, there could be a section titled Emerging Trends which alerts board members to something on the horizon. As well, a section on your board agenda may be added called Substantive Issues that allows board members to ask questions and gain clarity on these emerging trends without having to make any decision.

## ACTIVITY: GET INFORMED ON EMERGING TRENDS

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. You will be put into a breakout room with a selection of your peers
2. A different question will be assigned to each group from the list below
3. Each person take notes (you could be called upon)
4. Introduce yourselves quickly when you get into your room
5. If you require assistance, use the Ask for Help button
6. You will have 10 minutes to discuss

#### Group One

What are some emerging trends you are seeing in your field?

#### Group Two

What are 3-4 publications (newspapers, magazines, research journals, blogs etc.) that are considered reliable and current in reporting information or field trends?

**ACTIVITY: GET INFORMED ON EMERGING TRENDS (CONT'D)****Group Three**

List 2-3 thought leaders you can follow (by registering for their webinars, attending their presentations, following on social media)

**Group Four**

How does your strategic planning process ensure that emerging trends are considered?

## **INFORMING THE BOARD**

Much of your information comes to you through a board package, the pre-reading materials sent prior to a board meeting.

### **BRIEFING NOTE**

One of the best ways to inform the board about a decision to be made is to use a briefing note. A briefing note is a short paper, included in the board package, which summarized the information a board member needs to know about an issue that requires the attention of the board. A useful briefing note distils complex information into a short, well-structured document.

A good briefing note will take each issue for discussion and provide this information:

- Why the decision is important
- How it aligns with strategic goals and objectives
- What resources will need to be committed
- Key benefits
- Known risks
- Impacts to membership (pros/cons)
- A recommendation and rationale summary

The briefing note document is prepared by the EO. While there may be some discussion between the EO and the President in advance of drafting the briefing note, it's imperative that it be prepared by the EO or staff. It's an operational responsibility for the EO to bring recommendations to the board. If the president were to influence recommendations, they would be doing the work of the EO. And they wouldn't be able to hold them accountable for that work.

### **DISCUSSION GUIDE**

In cases where decisions are made over a period of time, a discussion guide may also be required to keep discussions focused and on track. A discussion guide recaps what was already discussed or decided upon and highlights what else needs to be done to get to a decision point.

### **EMAIL SUMMARY**

As a board member, it's helpful, just prior to the meeting, to receive an email summary that puts highlights of pending decisions in the palm of your hand. When you do that last once-through of your materials before going into a board meeting, you know what needs to be top of mind.

As with the other tools, this piece is short and to the point. The message is a couple of sentences that reminds you that this is a pending decision and here's why it's important.

Unlike the other two tools, this message should come from the president, because it's the president's job to manage the agenda of the meeting.

## SAMPLE BRIEFING NOTE

### Memorandum

**From:** Executive Officer  
**To:** Shelby Real Estate Association Board Members  
**Subject:** Association member dues

#### Background

Association member dues were last increased in 2012. Since that time the association has diligently adhered to its approved operational budget, taking initiatives to control costs by conducting an operational review of expenditures and moving to more cost-effective office tools and suppliers.

#### Why Now? Importance of Action Required

At this time, there is a need to upgrade the member management database hardware and software to improve timeliness of delivering important information for members, support increased electronic communication (including social media) to members, and respond to the improved services being offered by expanding internet-based services.

#### Alignment with Strategic Goals and Objectives

Our current Strategic Plan includes the following goals:

- Accelerate association responsiveness to large scale (or regulatory) issues that impact members
- Members will be current with emerging trends, opportunities to support their business

By increasing revenue through a member due increase, the association will be able:

- to invest in improved technology to support member communication
- increase the value of membership through improved quality, variety and timeliness of communication
- support members in an escalating competitive environment

It is imperative that the association provides members with a high-quality database that competes with the emerging services that internet suppliers are providing. Data shows the current use of internet-based suppliers is expected to grow at a rate of 25% per year over the next 3 years.

#### Required Resources

Increasing member dues is always a controversial matter. Therefore, it will be necessary to invest in a comprehensive communication strategy to ensure early and frequent communication to members regarding the rationale, expected benefits and the application of the increase itself.

**SAMPLE BRIEFING NOTE (CONT'D)**

Short-term resources will include:

- Contracting a part-time communication assistant to provide support in the development of member information packages
- President and CSO time to communicate with and respond to members
- Additional IT support to reprogram the current database with new dues schedule

**Key Benefits**

Members will experience a higher quality database that remains competitive with internet-based suppliers. In addition, the association will have increased resources to communicate directly to members on the value of member services. This will serve to benefit all member service stability over time.

**Known Risks**

Based on the experience in 2012, when Shelby Real Estate dues were last increased, there is a risk of a 10%-15% member loss based on refusal to remit dues based on the new dues schedule. Lessons learned from that experience include the need to:

- Provide communication of notice and rationale for dues increase (at least 6 months in advance)
- Ensure President and CSO are available to respond to concerns within a 48-hour period
- Provide graduated options where the dues increase will cause undue hardship for a member

It is anticipated the member loss can be contained to fewer than 5% if the above strategies are applied

**Impacts to Membership**

Association dues increases have been considered by five other similar sized associations in the past 12 months: two have approved an increase, one voted down the increase and one continues deliberations. The two associations who approved the increase are reporting support for the increases and the resulting impact to members services by over 85% of the membership. Members are reporting feeling more supported by their association through the availability of improved communication, marketing strategies, and tools.

Any dues increase immediately impacts the in-year operational budget of members. However, the inability to respond effectively to increasingly competitive services brings with it a greater impact to revenue streams. By offering advance notice and a graduated dues increase option (with defined criteria) members will be supported by the association in mitigating the impact of the dues increase.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that a general dues increase take effect January 1st as per the attached dues schedule. The average dues increase is 5% and ranges from 3% - 7%.

## SAMPLE DISCUSSION GUIDE

### Memorandum

**From:** Executive Officer  
**To:** Shelby Real Estate Association Board Members  
**Re:** Member Dues Increase

#### Proposed Decision

At this time, there is a need to upgrade the member management data base hardware and software to improve timeliness of important information for members, support increased electronic communication to members, and respond to the improved services being offered by expanding internet-based services. A member's dues increase is being proposed to be effective January 1 of next year.

#### Deliberations to Date

**February Meeting:** Approval received to conduct needs assessment for future communication with membership.

**March Meeting:** Approval received to research current increases being considered by other associations, history of increases in our association and response to those increases. Approval received to obtain cost estimates for new software and hardware to finalize recommended dues increase percentage.

**April Meeting:** Deliberated on the alignment with the Strategic plan, the rationale and known benefits and risks for the proposed dues increase.

At this meeting it is expected the deliberations will focus on impact to association members and required mitigation strategies should the proposal be adopted.

#### Impacts to Membership

Association dues increases have been considered by five other similar sized associations in the past 12 months: two have approved an increase, one voted down the increase and one continues deliberations. The two associations who approved the increase are reporting support for the increases and the resulting impact to members services by over 85% of the membership. Members are reporting feeling more supported by their association through the availability of improved communication, marketing strategies, and tools.

Any dues increase immediately impacts the in-year operational budget of members. However, the inability to respond effectively to increasingly competitive services brings with it a greater impact to revenue streams. By offering advance notice and a graduated dues increase option (with defined criteria) members will be supported by the association in mitigating the impact of the dues increase.

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that a general dues increase take effect January 1st as per the attached dues schedule. The average dues increase is 5% and ranges from 3% - 7%.

## SAMPLE EMAIL SUMMARY

**From:** Shelby Real Estate Association President  
**To:** Shelby Real Estate Association Board Members (group email)  
**Cc:** CEO  
**Subject:** Board Meeting: Key Items

Hello,

I am looking forward to seeing you at our board meeting tomorrow. Just a quick reminder that we will be focusing on:

- Approval of Audited Financial Statements
- Decision regarding increase to Association member dues for next year
- Voting in members of the new Nominating Committee

See you in the morning at 10:00am.

---

Association President  
Shelby Real Estate Association  
T: 555-555-1234 | F: 555-555-1235 | [Pres@sample.com](mailto:Pres@sample.com)  
123 Main Street  
Anycity, ON  
X0X 0X0

*This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the individual named. If you are not the named addressee you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete this e-mail from your system.*

## ***BARRIERS TO NIMBLE DECISION MAKING***

As board members focus on their decision-making role, things can get in the way of making nimble decisions. The most common and destructive barriers involve behaviours at the board table. Individual actions can either impede or contribute to your board's ability to make nimble decisions.

We're going to focus in on some of the most common ones:

1. Personal self-interest
2. Lack of trust
3. Lack of focus
4. Delaying tactics
5. Fear

Each of these behaviours will impact board decision making. Your responsibility as a committee or board members is to think honestly about if any of these, at times, apply to your own behaviour. Remember, the only person who can change your behaviour is you. As tough as it is to hold a mirror up to ourselves, that's what leaders do.

### ***1. PERSONAL SELF INTEREST***

The most obvious example of personal self-interest is lobbying for personal gain. When a board makes a decision, it makes it in the best interest of the association. The board table is no place for personal gain. That's a clear conflict of interest and is totally inappropriate.

#### ***PERSONAL AGENDAS***

An example of this barrier is when people come to the board table with personal agendas. Those are specific personal objectives that may or may not serve the needs of the association. These personal agendas may be individually driven, or they may happen when someone comes to the board as a representative of a group or a specific community.

For example, a board member may be appointed to a board as a representative of an organization, such as a large member organization. A challenge arises when that person is sitting at the board table debating issues that aren't going to sit very well with the organization they represent. That person's fiduciary responsibility is to consider what's in the best interest of the association and all members, not what's in the best interest of his or her own organization. In that situation, that board member may have to take a message back to their own organization that they're not going to like. No wonder some board members lose sight of their bigger responsibility to the association.

## 2. LACK OF TRUST

When people don't trust their colleagues, they're likely to act in a way that impedes nimble decision making. When trust is lacking, we see things like aggressive behaviour, interruptions, inappropriate body language and other disrespectful behaviour.

When there's a lack of trust at the board table, you can't have nimble decision making. Instead of moving to a decision point, everyone is questioning what's being said or focusing on unhelpful behaviours. A lack of trust impedes honest, frank and open discussion. There's just too much noise going on, even when not a word is being said. Trust is a short word, but it has a huge impact, and it's well worth addressing.

## 3. LACK OF FOCUS

As a volunteer, you're generous with your time. Most likely you've volunteered to help give back and to make a difference. Despite that desire, the reality is you also have constantly competing interests and demands on your time and attention. Work, family, business, perhaps other volunteer commitments can all take your focus away from good decision making.

The most common symptom of this barrier is when we see board members come to the board table without having read the board package. We don't need to ask how prepared they really are. It's obvious they're not ready to discuss and make important decisions, especially in a one- or two-hour meeting.

Focus can also be a barrier during a meeting. It's so hard to separate ourselves from our smart phones, especially when they're an important part of our livelihoods. But no one can be reading e-mails and actively listening to colleagues or contributing to a discussion all at the same time.

A key to nimble decision making is focus. When we can't or won't focus, important and timely decisions don't get made.

## 4. DELAYING TACTICS

Sometimes boards use delaying tactics to put off making tough decisions. A typical decision avoiding tactic is to strike a committee. This can be a very effective way to put off making a decision, as committee's spend time developing terms of references, scheduling and rescheduling meetings, reviewing information, framing recommendations, reframing recommendations, going to the board for feedback – you get the picture

There's no doubt that committees do good and important work; however, boards need to ask themselves why they're striking a committee or task force. If they have the information, they need to make a decision, they need to decide.



## BARRIERS SURVEY

### BOARD ASSESSMENT

Do you and/or your board members exhibit any of these behaviours at your board meetings? If so, they may be hindering your ability to make nimble decisions. Assess your board honestly, and then discuss how you can eliminate these barriers.

<i>How often do you see board members exhibit these behaviours at your board table?</i>	Always	Sometimes	Never
<b>Personal Self-interest</b>			
Put their own interests or the interests of those they represent ahead of the interests of the association?			
Focus on personal advantage/gain when making decisions?			
Regularly consider matters from a purely personal viewpoint?			
<b>Trust</b>			
Avoid open, honest and frank discussions?			
Use tone or body language that is disrespectful towards others?			
Express personal slights at meetings?			
Breach confidentiality between meetings?			
<b>Focus</b>			
Arrive at meetings unprepared to discuss and make decisions?			
Participate in sidebar conversations while others have the floor?			
Are distracted by their smart phones during an important discussion/decision?			
<b>Fear</b>			
Keep with the status quo because of a resistance to change?			
Avoid making a decision because of discomfort taking risks?			
Are not confident enough to make a decision because they haven't fully informed themselves on a controversial issue?			
<b>Delaying Tactics</b>			
Avoid tough decisions because of potential fallout?			
Refer work to committees when a decision could be made?			
Keep deliberations going long after all points have been raised?			

## ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO DECISION MAKING

### ACTIVITY: ELIMINATING BARRIERS

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- You will be put into a breakout room with new people
- Introduce yourselves quickly when you get into your room
- Discuss some ways in which:
  1. individuals
  2. the board as a whole
 can work to eliminate these barriers
- Each person take notes (you may be called on)
- If you require assistance, use the Ask for Help button
- You will have 10 minutes to discuss

*How can an individual board member or the board as a whole work to eliminate barriers to decision making?*

Personal Self Interest
Lack of Trust
Lack of Focus
Fear
Delaying Tactics

## INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Removing these barriers involves both individual and collective accountability at the board. You have a responsibility to behave in a way that contributes to effective decision making, AND the board has a responsibility to respond to challenging behaviours and help the team move beyond it.

### INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

**Each committee or board member needs to come to meetings prepared.** That alone will help reduce the fear of making the wrong decision because don't have all the information. It will help everyone remain focused at the board table as you have efficient, well-informed discussions about important decisions. And it will reduce the need to delay those decisions.

**Each committee or board member needs to participate in good, open deliberations with respectful language.** If everyone commits to this, it will increase the trust within the group. At the end of the day, you may not agree with what your colleagues are saying, but you owe them time to explain their position and perspective. And you might learn something from listening. It may or may not change your position, but at least you'll know you have balanced information and perspectives to form your opinion.

**Each committee or board member has a fiduciary duty to act in the best interest of the association and its entire membership.** When we keep that perspective, we reduce the impact of personal self-interest or personal agendas. As difficult as that may be at times, it's the role you agreed to when you joined the board. You may need to work on helping others understand that role in order for them to accept the decisions of the board. We know that once a decision is made, everyone needs to support it without undermining or distancing themselves from the group.

**Each committee or board member has an obligation not to use up all the airtime in a meeting.** Avoid saying the same things that other members have already said. Your job is to say it once and then let other people speak. That means sharing the collective time and valuing your colleagues' time as well.

**Each committee or board member has the responsibility for speaking up about behaviour that doesn't help achieve good timely decisions.** For example, you might ask a person to use more respectful language, or perhaps express the opinion that delaying or stalling on a decision ends up causing other issues down the road. And of course, the president needs to ensure that decisions move along by managing board behaviour.

## COLLECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

### Code of Conduct\*

One of the best ways that a board collectively impacts behaviours at the board table is with a Code of Conduct. A code of conduct clearly outlines what behaviour is expected. It ensures that everyone makes a commitment to be prepared. And it addresses how conflict of interest will be handled at the board. A good code of conduct will help eliminate every barrier.

A code of conduct is only effective if it's adhered to. It's up to the president, all board members and the EO to ensure that a code of conduct is adhered to, with the president maintaining ultimate responsibility.

### Governance Policies

Another important tool for eliminating barriers is your governance policies. For example, your bylaws and governance policies should clearly outline how people will reconcile representing the interests of a specific organization or community, with their obligation to represent all members of the association. This will go a long way towards minimizing personal agendas.

### Tools that Inform the Board

Briefing Notes, Discussion Guides and Email Summaries help distracted board members regain their focus. They help minimize personal agendas as they continually reinforce how decisions align with the strategic plan and impact members. And they reduce fear by clearly laying out situations, issues and impacts.

### Meeting Evaluation Checklist\*

Many boards use a tool such as this to gather anonymous feedback regarding board meetings. Once compiled, it's a great vehicle for discussing changes that will help a board operate more effectively and make more nimble decisions.

---



---



---



---



---

\*Samples of these tools from Leadership 200: Becoming a Leader are included in the Appendix.

## INSPIRING BEHAVIOURS CHECKLIST

As a board member you have a responsibility to contribute to effective decision making. By adopting these behaviours, you will inspire others to participate in a similar way, leading to more nimble decision making by your board.

Preparation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review board materials with a mind to making decisions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call the President or CSO with clarifying questions before the meeting to avoid wasting precious meeting time</li> </ul>
Objectivity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive new ideas with an open and curious mind</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be prepared to take informed risk</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't be completely satisfied with the status quo</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay focused on what is in the best interest of the association</li> </ul>
Honesty
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State your honest opinion clearly including reasons why you feel that way</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select words that are not accusatory or attack others; instead, express your opinions in neutral or "I" words</li> </ul>
Respect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be perceptive and sensitive to others</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find the value in the opinions of others</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be confident without being arrogant</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be patient with others by listening to understand</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect your thoughts by writing down your comments/questions so you can speak once on a topic</li> </ul>

### HELPFUL PERSPECTIVES

- ~ Show strength and courage in the face of uncertainty
- ~ Remember why you volunteered to sit on this Board and lead this organization
- ~ Pay attention to your gut feelings and stay out of groupthink\*
- ~ Respect the roles of governance and management by remaining within your boundaries

\* Groupthink is a psychological phenomenon that occurs within groups of people, in which the desire for harmony in a decision-making group overrides a realistic appraisal of alternatives. Group members try to minimize conflict and reach a consensus decision without critical evaluation of alternative ideas or viewpoints.

## IMPLEMENTING NIMBLE DECISIONS

### ACTIVITY: DEFINING THE ROLES OF THE BOARD AS DECISIONS ARE IMPLEMENTED

For each of these governance principles, identify the board's responsibilities with respect to the governing of decisions as they are implemented

**STEWARDSHIP** is the responsible planning and management of resources to ensure the association is continuously working to achieve its purpose

1. What are the board's **stewardship** responsibilities as decisions are implemented?

---



---



---



---



---



---



---

**ACCOUNTABILITY** is the obligation to account for activities, accept responsibility for them and to disclose the results in a transparent manner

2. What are the board's **accountability** responsibilities as decisions are implemented?

---



---



---



---



---



---



---

## ACTIVITY: DEFINING THE ROLES OF THE BOARD (CONT'D)

**OVERSIGHT** means the association has in place a robust process for monitoring its actions

3. What are the board's **oversight** responsibilities as decisions are implemented?

---

---

---

---

---

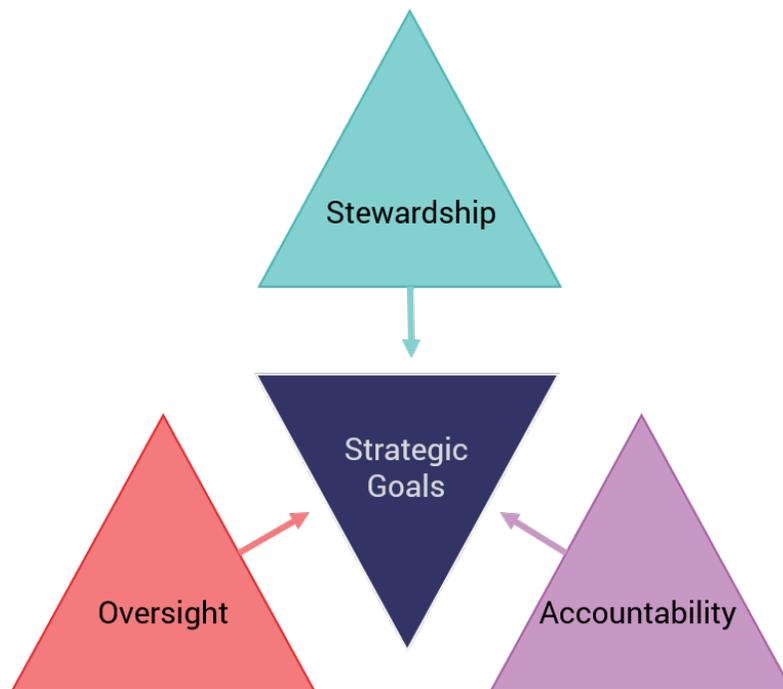
---

---

---

---

---



## SAMPLE: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

**Shelby Real Estate Association Board Decision:**  
Increase membership dues effective January 1

	Action	Timeline
<b>Phase 1:</b> Develop draft communication strategy	Develop key messages document Prepare Q & A supporting document Prepare member bulletin to announce increase	Due Date: June 1
<b>Phase 2:</b> Issue RFP for vendors to upgrade database fee schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft RFP</li> <li>• Source new vendors</li> </ul>	Due Date: July 1
<b>Phase 3:</b> Issue member bulletin announcing increase	Book CEO, President Tour to local member groups Ensure CEO and President available to respond to immediate member concerns Select vendor for database updates	Due Date: August 31
<b>Phase 4:</b> Commence roll out	Update database Prepare and issue member dues increase notices Respond to member enquiries and concerns Prepare and issue updated Q&A member bulletin based on responses received to notice Monitor membership cancellation rate and report monthly to Board CSO and President to follow up on each cancellation notice received within 5 business days Engage board members in informal outreach to members to support increase	Timeframe: Sept. 1 – Nov. 30
<b>Ongoing:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor member response via dashboard</li> </ul>	

*This sample document is intended for demonstration purposes, the content is fictitious.*

## SAMPLE: SPEAKING NOTES

### Membership Dues Increase

At this time, there is a need to upgrade the association's member management database hardware and software.

### Benefits for Members:

Upgrades will:

- improve timeliness of delivering important information for members
  - ~ timely information means that members are more knowledgeable, able to educate clients and make important business decisions
- support increased electronic communication (including social media) to members
  - ~ enhanced social media capabilities will provide members with tools and information to reach their clients quickly and easily
- respond to the improved services being offered by expanding internet-based services
  - ~ Members will access a high-quality database that provides the enhanced services that clients demand

### Value for Money:

- Last dues increase was in 2009
- The association has become more efficient over the past three years, thus reducing expenses by 20% to date
- The proposed increase will be allocated to specific initiatives that benefit members, as listed above, and as supported as priorities by membership survey input

### Impact to Members

- The average dues increase is 5% and ranges from 3% - 7% which equals on **average ten cents per day**
- Members are being provided with four months lead time to plan for the increase
- Delaying the increase will reduce the availability of timely information to members and significantly impact the responsiveness of the association on behalf of the membership to remain current and ahead of our collective competition, especially internet based suppliers

### Alignment with Strategic Plan (benefits for association)

This increase will help the association meet the following two strategic goals:

1. Accelerate association responsiveness to large scale (or regulatory) member competition issues
2. Members will be current with emerging trends and opportunities to support their business

---

*This sample document is intended for demonstration purposes, the content is fictitious.*

## SAMPLE: DASHBOARD

The purpose of the dashboard is to provide an at-a-glance summary of each strategic goal as approved by the board and highlight major risk areas that require monitoring.

<b>Core Purpose</b> Accelerate association responsiveness to large scale (or regulatory) issues that impact members						
<b>Decision: Increase membership dues effective January 1</b>						
Actions	Outcomes	Managed By	Start	End		Comments
Vendor selection (to upgrade database fee schedule)	4 proposals received	CEO	July	August Ongoing (see comments)		All submissions over planned budget, reviewing and contacting vendors, to determine if pricing reduction is possible Will bring recommendation to next meeting
Members informed via bulletin	Bulletins issued on schedule	CEO	June	August		5 calls received within 24 hours: 3 requesting clarification and details of specific new dues applicable, 2 expressing concern re: ability to pay, value for money
Membership outreach strategy	Achieve “buy-in” Retain membership	President, CEO	September	November		President Tour planning underway, availability to speak or meet with members directly established via special calendar, members will be scheduled in as required

*This sample document is intended for demonstration purposes, the content is fictitious.*

## ACTIVITY: TOOLS THAT SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Discuss the sample Implementation Plan, Speaking Notes, and Dashboard
  - Share if you use similar tools at your association
  - How do tools such as these help a board meet their responsibilities as decisions are implemented?
  - What other ways can a board ensure they are fulfilling these responsibilities?
2. Take your own notes, as you could be called on individually as we debrief
3. If you require assistance, use the Ask for Help button
4. You will have 10 minutes to discuss

What are some tools used by my board or other boards?	
How do tools such as these help a board meet their responsibilities as decisions are implemented?	
What other ways can a board ensure they are fulfilling these responsibilities?	

## ***APPENDIX***

1. Cheat Sheet for Meeting Participants
2. The Director Code of Conduct - Sample
3. Meeting Evaluation Checklist
4. Course Recap

## CHEAT SHEET FOR MEETING PARTICIPANTS

If this happens:	You can say:
Digression	“Point of order. Can we please get back to the agenda?” or “Can we please focus on the core issue, which is _____?”
Interruptions	“Point of order. Can we have one person speaking at a time?” or “Can we speak by raising hands?” or “Can we please hear people out?”
Last minute motion	“I am not comfortable debating a new issue this late and without the benefit of professional analysis. I move that this motion be postponed until the next meeting.” or “Given that it’s late, I suggest that we discuss this motion informally now, and then refer it to the administration for professional analysis.”
Personal criticism	“Point of order. We should be focusing on issues, not people.”
Rambling	“Can we please keep our comments concise and to the point? I’m concerned that we may run out of time for significant issues later on.”
Repetitive debate	“I am not hearing any new information and I’m worried about our time. Are we ready to close debate and vote on this motion?” or “I move to close debate.” or “I move the previous question.”
Side conversations	“Point of order. I’m having trouble concentrating when we have more than one conversation at the same time.”
Unbalanced participation	“Can we please speak by raising hands?” or “I am wondering if we could hear from members who have not spoken.”
Unclear motion	“Can we please have the motion repeated?” or “I move to amend the motion by ____.” (You may propose to replace, add, insert, or delete text to enhance clarity.)
A decision is being rushed through	“I am not comfortable with the pace of this discussion. This is an important decision and rushing it through may be risky. We need to slow down a bit.”
You disagree with a ruling of the Chair	“I appeal the decision of the Chair.” The appeal is put to a vote: “Shall the Chair’s ruling be sustained?” A majority against the Chair’s ruling overrides it.

## ***THE DIRECTOR CODE OF CONDUCT - SAMPLE***

The Director Code of Conduct outlines the association's values and standards of behaviour, which guide all director actions to ensure activities by the board are open, transparent, accountable, and professional. The principles outlined in the code are intended to guide each member and the board as a whole. The association is committed to fulfil its mandate to the highest ethical standards, integrity, and conduct, which will reinforce and enhance the positive reputation of the board and the association as a whole.

Compliance with the Code of Conduct is a mandatory requirement of serving as a director on the association board.

Failure to comply with the provisions of this code may result in sanctions ranging from a warning to removal from the board.

Declaration of compliance to the Code of Conduct and reaffirmation of same is required on an annual basis.

### **Application**

This policy applies to the directors of the association board.

### **Guiding Principles**

The association board as a whole and its individual members shall:

1. Conduct open and transparent business dealings and communication that reflect integrity, fairness, courtesy, and respect for all members and stakeholders.
2. Ensure that member confidence, trust, and respect in the association's operations are upheld and can bear close internal and third-party scrutiny.
3. Conduct itself in a business and ethical manner consistent with the best business practices and standards within the industry.
4. Avoid or mitigate any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. Each director shall be responsible for timely and appropriate disclosure and mitigations of conflicts of interest. A director aware of an undeclared conflict of interest shall directly inform the president or vice president of same.
5. Maintain confidentiality of information received in the course of carrying out director responsibilities.
6. Discharge duties in impartial, objective, and accountable manner while exercising wise use of member funds.
7. Comply with all applicable legislation, regulations, policies, and procedures.
8. Ensure that all business dealings and communication are conducted in accordance with governance and operational policies and are properly recorded to meet legal and financial reporting obligations.
9. Prevent the unauthorized use of the association's assets/property.

## THE DIRECTOR CODE OF CONDUCT (CONT'D)

10. Ensure a workplace free from violence, discrimination, and harassment in accordance with Bill 168.
11. Be committed to effective decision-making that is consistent with the association's and industry policies and regulations. Speak with one voice as a board once decisions have been made.

### Standards of Conduct

The following standards of conduct are intended to outline the expected behaviour of all directors:

#### Ethical Standards

The following represent the minimum ethical standards intended to guide directors with performing their duties.

The fundamental relationship between a director as an individual and the board and association, as a whole, is trust. Essential to trust is honesty and integrity. The board has a fiduciary agent of the owner of the assets, which is the membership of the association.

Directors shall act with loyalty in their service on the board. In doing so, directors are expected to support the achievement of the objects of the association without reference to any other business or personal association or interest they may have.

In specific situations, personal values and honesty will often guide individual director decisions and actions. However, individual directors must consider the manner in which their individual communication and actions may affect the integrity and credibility of the association and membership as a whole.

It is acknowledged that no articulation of policies, guidelines, and procedures to govern conduct or conflicts of interest can anticipate all situations. Accordingly, directors are expected to consider and respond to the following questions when considering any course of action and/or communication:

1. Is it legal?
2. Is it in conflict with or adverse to the best interests of the association?
3. Do I have a private business or personal interest (includes economic, social, altruistic) that I foresee may influence the actions of my duties and responsibilities?
4. Do I have a private business or personal interest that others may perceive as influencing the actions of my duties and responsibilities?
5. Will the action or communication meet or exceed the standard of behaviour that may be reasonably expected of directors?

## ***THE DIRECTOR CODE OF CONDUCT (CONT'D)***

### **Confidentiality of Information**

Confidential information includes personal information, information pertaining to the association, or any third party that is generally not available to the broader public and that, if disclosed, could result in loss or damage to the association and/or the membership or could give the person to whom it is disclosed an unfair advantage.

Directors who have access to and are entrusted with confidential information relating to the association must not use or disclose this information during or after their tenure as a director. Directors cannot take advantage of, benefit from, or confer a benefit on a third party from information obtained by their service on the association board that is not generally available to the public.

Directors are expected to exercise due diligence when protecting confidential information. This includes but is not limited to such physical measure as locking file cabinets, securing personal computer databases, password-protecting mobile devices, and shredding or returning appropriate documents.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The term “conflict of interest” means any situation where a director’s private business or personal interests may be actually, potentially, or perceived to be incompatible or in conflict with his/her association responsibilities because the director or a member of his/her immediate family (including spouse, parents, children) actually experiences, could potentially experience, or may be perceived by others to experience a personal gain, financial or otherwise, or an unfair advantage.

Directors must avoid actual, perceived, and potential conflict of interest situations. Where a conflict of interest exists, the association’s interest must always be considered paramount.

Directors are accountable to model behaviour through communication, decisions, and actions that are consistent with the provisions of the Director Code of Conduct.

Directors will contact staff only through the chief staff officer. Any written communication should be copied to the corporate secretary to maintain documentation integrity in the association corporate records.

### **Post Service Restrictions**

Directors shall refrain from taking advantage of their previous office once they cease serving as a director on the association board. Directors must also continue to observe their duties of confidentiality and conflict of interest once they cease serving as a director.

## MEETING EVALUATION CHECKLIST

A meeting doesn't end when the last attendee leaves; in some ways, this is just the start of the planning process for the next meeting. Gathering constructive feedback on the session is the best way to improve future meetings and to ensure the association is meeting stakeholders' needs.

- ✓ Consider using this or a similar evaluation after your meetings to ensure you are working to your peak effectiveness.

		Yes	Somewhat	No
1.	An agenda was developed and distributed			
2.	The necessary background information was provided for agenda items			
3.	Information was received in time to fully consider it before the meeting			
4.	Attendees reviewed information before attending the meeting			
5.	All items discussed fell within the responsibility of the group			
6.	The meeting was conducted fairly			
7.	All views were considered before making decisions			
8.	The meeting started and ended on time			
9.	Attendees used positive language when discussing issues			
10.	All attendees participated in the discussions and decisions			
11.	All items on the agenda were addressed			
12.	Conversations were kept on track and focused on outcomes			
13.	The chair restated opinions and summarized frequently			
14.	Attendees avoided side discussions			
15.	The chair knew when to draw the discussion to a close			
16.	The meeting ground rules were followed (when applicable)			
17.	Order and decorum were maintained throughout the meeting			
18.	After the meeting, attendees avoided parking lot meetings			



## ***COURSE RECAP***

For quick reference, here are the recap points for each course section.

### ***NIMBLE DECISION MAKING & LEVERAGING EMERGING TRENDS***

- Boards who adhere to Governance Principles stay focused on Strategy
- EO's gather information on emerging trends and report to the board
- Briefing Notes, Discussion Guides, and Email summaries help inform the board and keep directors focused on decision making.

### ***BARRIERS TO NIMBLE DECISION MAKING***

- Behaviours at the board table can become barriers to nimble decision making
- Think honestly about your own behaviours
- Use the Barriers Survey to reflect on the situation at the board

### ***IMPLEMENTING NIMBLE DECISIONS***

- Critical for the board to fulfil their governance role during implementation
- Nose in, fingers out
- Use implementation tools to keep on track
- Boards make nimble decisions when they:
  - Are informed on emerging trends
  - Stay on purpose
  - Make timely efficient decisions
  - Address behaviours that impede nimble decision making
  - Communicate and monitor implementations