QUICK GUIDE FOR NOT-FOR-PROFITS · ONBOARDING

Welcoming a New Director

MINNIKIN
GOVERNANCE FOR STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE

Onboarding gives every incoming director the same consistent start. It lets them absorb what outgoing directors know, makes the transition smooth, sets a clear understanding of their role, and ensures they are adding value from day one, enabling them to be **3D© directors**: delivering value, deriving value and developing as directors.

THE ONBOARDING TIMELINE

STEP 1

Before the first meeting

The staff admin sends a link to the director orientation materials, all appendices and the minutes of the last two board meetings.

The Chair meets the new director (see right).

STEP 2

At the first meeting

A warm welcome and introductions around the table.

A photographer is present, so the website profile is ready to go.

STEP 3

At six months

The new director and the Chair of HR & Governance review the onboarding process and suggest improvements to the documents and steps.

The director shares whether the experience matches their expectations.

Review the seven duties together, before the first meeting

They apply from day one. See the Directors' Duties quick guide.

1 Fiduciary · **2 Loyalty** · **3 Care** · **4 Diligence** · **5 Collegiality** · **6 To manage (oversee)** · **7 Independence & conflict**

THE ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Welcome** the new director personally.
- ☐ **Personal details on file:** emergency contact; allergies; accommodations required or desired; travel or other restrictions; any medical or first aid training.
- ☐ **Issue property and access** from a structured checklist: passes, passwords, files and papers.
- ☐ **Expenses:** provide the reimbursement policy, instructions and forms.
- ☐ **Commitment letter** signed and on file.
- ☐ **D&O insurance:** a copy of the Directors and Officers Liability Insurance policy.
- ☐ **Directors' duties** reviewed with the Chair.
- ☐ **Communication protocols:** how to communicate going forward, and which channels to use.
- ☐ Paper copies of the **Crisis Communications Plan** and the board-level **Business Continuity Plan**.
- ☐ Current **charters** for every committee they are joining.
- ☐ **Website profile:** the information they wish to share.
- ☐ **Photographer** booked for their first meeting.

THE CHAIR'S FIRST CONVERSATION

Before the first meeting, the Chair meets the new director to build a complete inventory of what they bring, and to learn:

- Their skills, attributes and competencies
- Why they joined the board
- Any areas of particular interest to them

4 **Confirm board limits**

No more than four boards in total, including this one. And not on another board with two or more of this board's directors.

Keep an issuance log

Record every pass, password, file and paper issued, with the date. The same log becomes the return list when the director leaves (see over).

Learn from those leaving

Where possible, pair the new director with an outgoing director for a handover conversation, so knowledge passes person to person, not just on paper.

A consistent welcome builds a confident director.

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Saying Goodbye Well

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Offboarding gives departing directors the chance to pass their knowledge to current and incoming board members. It keeps the transition smooth and defines the ongoing relationship between the departing director and the organization.

THE OFFBOARDING TIMELINE

STEP 1

Next-to-last meeting

A departing committee chair invites the incoming chair to the next-to-last committee meeting.

After that meeting and the next, they brief the incoming chair on all current issues and progress, opening a direct channel and handing over materials and property where appropriate.

STEP 2

Before the last meeting

Introduce the new committee chair to the relevant staff and outside parties, such as the external auditors.

Ideally ahead of the meeting, over lunch.

STEP 3

At the last meeting

The director gives an honest evaluation of the board's processes, effectiveness and performance, and of their own contribution.

The Chair or Governance Chair interviews them on gaps and how to close them.

THE OFFBOARDING CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Thank** the director for their contributions.
- ☐ **Review the seven duties** and which ones continue after they leave.
- ☐ **Return property** using the onboarding issuance log: passes, passwords, files and papers, including the paper Crisis Communications and Business Continuity Plans.
- ☐ **Personal information:** offer to remove anything they provided at induction.
- ☐ **Feedback:** invite their ideas for improving the organization.
- ☐ **Email:** if they had an organization address, ask where to forward their personal email.
- ☐ **Communication protocols** for the future agreed (see right).
- ☐ **Reinforce** their commitment to supporting the organization in the future.
- ☐ **A small gift** and thanks from the Chair; if possible, one last board dinner.

30 days Outstanding expenses must be submitted within 30 days of the last day as a director. State this clearly in the exit package.

STAYING CONNECTED

Feedback on any issue? Channel it through the Chair, rather than directly to staff or current directors.

Ask them:

- Do you want to be kept apprised of public information?
- Are you available for consultation?
- Would you like to join the informal past board members group?

Thank them publicly

A departure is a recruiting opportunity. Thank departing directors on social media and elsewhere, highlighting their achievements and their contribution to the organization and its community. Recognition thanks them and helps attract the next ones.

Your duties survive your term

- **Confidentiality** continues: board matters and confidential information stay confidential.
- **Loyalty** continues: never use what you learned as a director for personal gain or to the organization's harm.
- Responsibility for decisions made **while you served** does not end when you leave.

Today's departing director is tomorrow's ambassador.

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