

Arm the Chief Elected Officer

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The new chairman or president of the board has every intention of doing a good job to lead the organization. His or her primary role is to advance the mission and strategic plan -- producing significant results during the term of office.

Improve understanding and outcomes by providing a *toolkit* to the incoming officer about three months before they take office.

Leadership Manual – Provide the governing documents inside a leadership manual or posted on a board portal. At a minimum, leaders must be familiar with bylaws, articles, mission, strategic plan, budget, policies and conflict of interest statement.

Strategic Plan – Be sure he or she is well versed on the strategic plan; it is the roadmap. Take a copy to every meeting to frame board and committee discussions.

Committees – Committees supplement the work of the board. Bylaws often grant authority to the chair or executive officers to appoint committees. Provide the roster of committees and their respective purpose statements. Too many board chairs neglect the process of building a strong leadership team and assigning clear tasks.

Org Chart – The org chart depicts lines of communication and hierarchy; providing a comprehensive overview of the organization. Transform the rosters of board members, staff and committees into a chart.

Rules of Order – Strengthen understanding of meeting rules of order with a “cheat sheet” or short guide. The booklet, *ABC's of Parliamentary Procedure* is about \$1 published by Channing Bete Company.



Hit the Ground Running – Provide the guide designed specifically to help the board chair prepare 100 days before taking office. Forty pages, it can be downloaded free at www.associationoptions.com.

Cheat Sheets – Laminated guides are available to summarize board and committee responsibilities, and the strategic planning process. Check www.nonprofitcenter.com for resources.



Gavel – Personalize a gavel to facilitate order at meetings. Equally effective for keeping meetings moving is an 8 ½ x 11 sign, “*We’re in the Weeds.*”

Bookshelf – Many chairs ask, “Is there anything I can read to prepare for office?” These books offer insights into governance and membership trends: *Race for Relevance*, *The Perfect Board*, *The End of Membership as we Know It*, and *The Art of Membership*.

Provide the toolkit three months before the chair is installed to improve confidence and outcomes.

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Note: Bob Harris provides tips and templates for better board governance at www.nonprofitcenter.com. [bob@rchcae.com; 850 570 6000]