



Chief Professional Officer Evaluation

Board Briefs are a series of "at-a-glance" resources to assist board volunteers in supporting their Clubs. They are designed for use at board meetings as subject matter for a five-minute educational opportunity. They can be discussed in their entirety or in sections. Different questions from the same brief can be posed at different meetings. The CVO can use them or ask an appropriate committee to lead the conversation (e.g., finance, governance, etc.).

Executive Summary

The board has authorized the chief professional officer (CPO) to act on its behalf in managing and leading the organization. Since the board is ultimately accountable for the Club's performance, it needs to ensure that the Club has the appropriate executive leadership. It is not fair to a CPO not to let him or her know what the board thinks of his or her performance. It is essential to evaluate a new CPO 90 days after they begin in the position. After that, the board should evaluate the CPO annually.

CPO Evaluation

Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) indicates that a new CPO should be evaluated after 90 days in the position in order to recognize early achievements and to identify gaps in CPO skills or knowledge. BGCA has an appraisal form that boards can use.

Otherwise, a CPO should be evaluated annually. The timing may be linked to the organization's annual calendar and planning cycle. Annual evaluation serves three major and interrelated purposes:

1. Ensures CPO accountability for Club management. The board must hold the CPO accountable for the outcomes of his/her work and for acting in accordance with the policies established and with the values that are espoused by the Club. By conducting regular CPO performance evaluations, the board makes sure that there is agreement between the board and the CPO concerning what should be expected in terms of job performance, and determines the level to which the CPO has lived up to expectations.

2. Support the CPO in doing an excellent job. CPOs are in a lonely position; they have no peers inside the organization. Often they do not know how others feel about their work. Some will assume that if there is no negative feedback from the board, everything is fine. Others in the same position may assume that since there is no feedback the board must not be particularly pleased with their work. Either situation can result in abrupt departures and put the Club at risk. Problems may grow into crises and result in forced resignations or the CPO finding a new position where his or her contributions will be more appreciated. They also deserve appreciation both for effort and for accomplishment.

3. Evaluation is needed to ensure appropriate CPO leadership for the future. The board needs to be aware that the Club's leadership needs may change over time. The board must determine whether there is still a good match between what the CPO has to offer and what the organization needs. If there is not, the board needs to take action. Either the board will need to

find a new CPO or work with the CPO to correct the situation. With regular and careful performance evaluations, sudden or painful CPO departures can usually be avoided.

Process for Implementing and Conducting the Annual Chief Professional Officer Performance Review

BGCA has designed a new uniform performance management system. To implement the uniform performance management system, BGCA recommends the following process guidelines:

- Annually, the Chief Professional Officer and the Chief Volunteer Officer/Executive Committee mutually determine the following:
 - Target areas for leadership development (Source: Chief Professional Officer Leadership Model).
 - Target areas for organization development/improvement (Source: Standards of Organizational Effectiveness).
 - Establish key performance standards for organization performance
- Once the target areas for leadership development and organization development/improvement are approved, the Chief Professional Officer and the Chief Volunteer Officer meet on a monthly basis to review progress on the targets and metrics.
- At the end of the 12-month cycle, the Chief Professional Officer and the Chief Volunteer Officer/Executive Committee rate performance using the CPO Performance Review document.

Questions for Discussion:

The following questions can be used for discussion at board meetings:

- Do we evaluate the CPO annually? If not, why not and how can we ensure we begin this good practice?
- Have we experienced any challenges in conducting the annual CPO evaluation? Do we need to change and/or enhance the process we are using to evaluate the CPO?

Additional Resources

- Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Board Volunteer Training.
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Chief Volunteer Officer (CVO) Guide.

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