

THE  
**DISCIPLESHIP**  
PLACE

**Boardroom  
Transformation**

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Mark's unwavering focus lies in developing a strategic vision that promotes growth and leadership excellence, inspiring others to lead with conviction, deliver results, catalyze resources, and expand their capacity. He is a respected thought leader to clients and colleagues, leveraging his 28 years of professional business experience and deep expertise in sales, marketing, operations, development, executive management, board management, coaching, and mentoring.

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## Board Orientation

### SESSION OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

JESUS IDENTIFIES HIS TEAM

JESUS BEGANS TRAINING HIS TEAM

JESUS SENDS HIS TEAM OUT

JOURNALING

APPLICATION

MENTORING DISCUSSION

CONCLUSION

### LEARNER OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, you should:

- Realize what is included in board orientation.
- Identify with a board orientation that equips, trains, and educates new board members.
- Understand what it means to develop the board from non-performing to informed and contributing members.
- Equip board members to be engaged and knowledgeable on what it means to be part of efficient and productive board meetings.

### SCRIPTURAL FOCUS

Luke 6:13-16 (NIV)

Mark 6:7-12 (NIV)

# Board Orientation



## INTRODUCTION

There is a difference between mediocre and exceptional boards. Some would argue there is no reason for mediocre board members. If a church or ministry is experiencing mediocre boards, perhaps it is because the board chair and the board members do not know what it means to serve on the board. Probably no one is teaching the people what is expected of board members. It is time for the nominating board development or governance committee to have the conversation at the board level. Encourage orientation, training, and a process for changing the culture of mediocrity in the boardroom.

Often, frustration arises among the senior pastor, executive director, board chair, and board members because board members fail to fulfill their responsibilities or functions. Unless board members have been trained and gone through orientation and development, the lack of knowledge falls to the leaders of the organization. And at the same time, the responsibility to learn or add to their own knowledge about board governance and organizational knowledge falls within the responsibility of those considering joining the board or who are serving as board members.

The foundation of a committed, knowledgeable, and effective board is orientation and education. As an essential companion, every organization should have a thorough board manual that board members can use throughout their terms. Failure to provide training and poor recruiting habits plague many organizations. It is time to move away from being frustrated with non-performing board members or bemoaning the process; instead, make board development, training, and orientation a priority in order to emphasize their importance.

## JESUS IDENTIFIES HIS TEAM



### NOTES

Read these verses very carefully and slowly. The names in Luke 6 are important. Jesus chose these individuals to invest time in and to count on to help him communicate the life-changing message he was sent to proclaim. He knew their strengths and their weaknesses. He knew their personalities, and he knew who was related to whom. His team members did not surprise him with their personality quirks. Remember, the first thing Jesus did before choosing his team was to go out to a mountainside and spend the night praying to God. Scripture does not tell us what all he prayed for, but we do know that when morning came, he called those who were following him. He identified them as his disciples, and he designated twelve of them as apostles. Are you getting the picture? Are you seeing the model that Jesus has identified for us in selecting our leadership or ministry team?

1. Pray
2. Identify
3. Call out

I know what you are thinking at this point, “I’m the one who has been nominated, selected, and elected to serve as a board member. I had nothing to do with this, I was just attending, participating, and engaged in the life of the church. Then one day I received the phone call, the email, or the snail mail letter informing me that I have been identified.” Can you rest in the fact that perhaps the pastor or the nominating committee has prayed, identified, and called you out just as Jesus did with the twelve? In the Scripture passages above, I do not see Jesus approaching each of the twelve with an “if you’re not doing anything for the next three years, I have an ‘opportunity’ for you” proposition. Jesus prayed, identified, and called them out. If we believe our pastors are attuned to the leading of the Holy Spirit, then when it comes time for board member selection, may you be at a place where we find the twelve, who appear to have gladly accepted their new assignment and new roles.

## JESUS BEGINS TRAINING HIS TEAM

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**NOTES**

The foundation of a committed, knowledgeable, and effective board is orientation and education. Taking the time to train or be trained contributes to board members who serve the church successfully.

Jesus spent most of his ministry teaching and modeling the various facets of ministry. When he performed miracles, he wanted the miracles to teach lessons not only for those receiving the miracles but also for those seeing the miracles. When he used parables to teach, his goal was not only for his listeners to hear the meaning of the message of the parable but also for those on the outside listening in to get the meaning of the message. When he showed compassion, he was modeling for those around him to take heed, take notice, and do likewise. Then the day of graduation came for the twelve. He sent them out two by two (Mark 6:7). He commissioned them to carry forth the mission, to heal the sick, call people to repentance, and do ministry as he had done. He wanted them to do as he modeled for them. They received their training, and it was time for the rubber meet the road. It was graduation day at its best!

## JESUS SENDS HIS TEAM OUT



### NOTES

A healthy board functions as a team. Your work as a board member accomplishes more when you realize you are working as a team as opposed to working alone. In your board orientation, find time to discuss ways to exemplify the virtues of respect, trust, and candor, all of which speak of what it means to serve as a team. Do you know the roles and responsibilities of board members? If not, how will you meet the expectations of being a board member?

As Rassart and Miller (2014) point out, “Effective board members clearly understand their roles and responsibilities, the structure and processes of the board, ensure that they are familiar with the issues facing the organization, and accelerate their ability to contribute to the board’s business and the matters currently under consideration by the board” (23).

Here is a sample outline of what might be covered in the orientation:

- Your church/nonprofit’s mission, history, and statement of values
- Bios of current board members and key staff
- Board member agreement
- Conflict of interest policy and questionnaire
- Recent financial reports and audited financials
- Bylaws and certificate of incorporation
- Determination letter from the IRS and certificate of tax exemption from the state
- Summary of directors’ and officers’ insurance coverage
- Board travel reimbursement policy and form to use to request reimbursement
- Whistleblower policy
- Annual report or other documents that list the church/nonprofit’s donors/ funders
- Board roster and list of committees, their charters, and individuals who serve on them
- Calendar of meetings for the year ahead



## JOURNALING

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NOTES

1. Do new board members receive an effective orientation to the work of the organization and board responsibilities?
  
2. How do you convince new board members to go through orientation if they have already served on numerous boards and feel they understand board service?

## APPLICATION

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Write a one-page paper that you would include in a board member orientation.

## MENTORING DISCUSSION

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NOTES

Be prepared to discuss the following with your mentor.

- Commit to reading at least one article, blog, or book about board service. Share your insights and discoveries with your mentor.
- What is my role in helping to carry out the board's mission, and how can I help the organization carry out the organization's mission?
- Is there a difference between the mission of the board and the mission of the organization?
- As a board member, what will I commit to doing to ensure I am equipped?
- What will I do to help other board members or new board members to be properly equipped?

## CONCLUSION

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**NOTES**

Churches, ministry leaders, and senior pastors expect their board members to be knowledgeable of the best board practices and follow them; however, they come across members who do not effectively demonstrate best board behavior.

Why do churches have new board members who hold on to generational board governance practices? Perhaps it is because they think: “This is how I have seen board service done by others, and it worked well for them.” We need to equip, train, and educate the old and new board members on what it means to serve together as effective board members.