

Keeping Your Board Relationship Solid

By Bob Kobielush

The relationship you, as ministry director, form with your board will either make or break you and your ministry. While you may feel it's just another impediment to progress, it's actually a critical piece of your landscape. Learning to be effective in this arena is a unique and necessary skill. Here are some maxims that could hold the key to your success.

► **Your board has a personality that morphs.** Every time a new board member is added or one leaves, or leadership roles change, the personality of the board changes. As you try to connect your board with the realities of your ministry, you must be aware of these changes and adapt your methods and message accordingly. When a new chairperson is appointed, immediately try to enter that person's mind, get acquainted with his or her world, learn what biases may exist, and find out what he or she likes. You don't want any surprises at the first board meeting your new chairperson leads.

(For more maxims for building a solid relationship with your board, go to CMA's Management Resource Center at www.CMAonline.org/mrc for the full article.)

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A Scriptural View on Board Planning

By Robert C. Andringa

IN PLANNING, IT'S

IMPORTANT to note what part God plays and what part he expects us to play.

Consulting Scripture will give needed perspective to the planning process. For example:

■ "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you" (Psalm 32:8, NIV).

■ "Without good direction, people lose their way; the more counsel you follow, the better your chances" (Proverbs 11:14, The Message).

■ "A prudent man foresees the difficulties ahead and prepares for them" (Proverbs 22:3, TLB).

(For more Scriptures on planning, go to www.CMAonline.org/mrc.)

Helping Your Board Be More Effective

By Robert C. Andringa

HERE ARE SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS that will help your board do its work more effectively.

- 1. Ask the board to define what reports it needs in order to monitor achievement of its major goals.** Board reports should measure "ends/results" or goals, not just activities. The board needs to decide *when* it wants each report (monthly, quarterly, whenever "x" happens, etc.). It should also annually evaluate and redefine its reporting needs.
- 2. Obtain expert help in designing board-friendly reports.** Financial reports for boards need to give them a quick picture (staff financials are too detailed) of the current financial status of the organization, including "red flags" with notes of explanation to alert board members to significant data, new developments or trends.
- 3. Prepare a 12-month budget and cash flow projection, comparing it with "actuals" on a year-to-date basis.** Put reports in an historical context (this month, same month one year ago, two years ago, etc.). Put reports in context to similar organizations by comparing operating ratios. Use graphs and charts whenever possible.
- 4. Leverage the work of preparing board reports for other purposes.** Use these reports as newsletter items, donor reports, annual report, and the website for the general public. Use them also to inform and train staff.
- 5. Ask the board development committee to do an annual report on the "state of the board."** This will encourage quality and the board's accountability to itself.

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Board Governance Section Resource Commission. For more resources on board governance, go to CMA's Management Resource Center (www.CMAonline.org/mrc). Email or call the volunteer members of this Section Resource Commission, or contact: Dan Bolin, Section Leader (2004-2006) Board Governance Email: dbolin@tyler.net, Phone: (903) 593-5863, Fax: (903) 509-9942 Dan Bolin is president of Encouragement FM, Tyler, Texas, and a member of CMA's board of directors.