

Principles of Trusteeship: How to Become a Highly Effective Board Member for Colleges, Universities, and Foundations



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	Fiduciary	Team Member	Individual
UNDERSTAND GOVERNANCE			
1. Embrace the full scope of your responsibilities as a board member.	Fulfill your fiduciary responsibilities.	Recognize that governance is a collective endeavor.	Prepare in advance, show up fully present, and participate productively.
2. Respect the difference between the board's role and the administration's role.	Honor the academic norm of <i>shared governance</i> , which includes the president, administration, and faculty.	Be humble and respect your partners in governance and leadership.	Provide advice and counsel but leave operational decisions to the administration.
3. Be an ambassador for your institution and higher education.	Advocate on behalf of your institution and higher education.	Represent the institution proudly and recognize who speaks for the board and for the institution.	Engage actively and appropriately.
LEAD BY EXAMPLE			
4. Conduct yourself with impeccable integrity.	Act in the institution's best interests, putting them ahead of your personal preferences and political allegiances.	Preemptively disclose conflicts—actual and perceived—and dualities of interest.	Uphold the highest ethical standards.
5. Think independently and act collectively.	Constructively challenge <i>and</i> support the president, administration, and committees.	Speak up on important issues, even if they are uncomfortable or unpopular.	Express your concerns diplomatically to the appropriate person(s) at an appropriate time.
6. Champion justice, equity, and inclusion.	Protect and promote justice and equity throughout the enterprise.	Seek diversity and model inclusion on the board.	Be mindful of how your experience shapes your assumptions.
THINK STRATEGICALLY			
7. Learn about your institution's mission, constituents, culture, and context.	Shape your institution's vision and strategy based on its unique purpose and constituents.	Understand the present state of the enterprise and focus on its future needs.	Become a student of higher education.
8. Focus on what matters most to long-term sustainability.	Make decisions based on the strategy and vitality of the entire enterprise.	Help define what constitutes success for your institution.	Focus your personal and professional talents on significant strategic issues.
9. Ask insightful questions and listen with an open mind.	Pose the right questions, rather than prescribe answers.	Listen actively and seek to understand.	Bring genuine curiosity and an open mind to board service.