



BOARD BRIEF: Assessing Your CEO

Board Briefs are "at-a-glance" resources that help board volunteers better support their Boys & Girls Club. They are designed to occur as five-minute education opportunities at board meetings.

SUMMARY

A Boys & Girls Club board of directors authorizes its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to act on its behalf by managing and leading the organization. As the board is ultimately accountable for the Club's performance, it must ensure that executive leadership is sound. Additionally, it is fair and just to let the CEO know what the board thinks of his or her performance. Every CEO should be evaluated 90 days after they begin. After that, the board should evaluate the CEO annually.

CEO EVALUATION

Every CEO should be evaluated after 90 days in the position to recognize early achievements and identify gaps in skills or knowledge. BGCA has an appraisal form that boards can use for this purpose. After this initial period, the CEO should be evaluated at least annually. The timing should be linked to the organization's annual calendar and planning cycle.

The Annual Evaluation

Evaluating the Chief Executive Officer annually serves three purposes:

1. **Ensures CEO accountability for Club management.**

The board must hold the CEO accountable for outcomes and for acting in accordance with established policies and values. By conducting annual CEO performance evaluations, the board makes sure there is agreement with the CEO regarding job expectations, and evaluates the level to which these expectations were met.

2. **Supports the CEO for doing an excellent job.**

CEOs 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 no negative feedback means everything is fine. Others may assume no feedback translates to a displeased board. 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 CEO finding a new position where his or her contribution will be more appreciated. CEOs deserve appreciation for their accomplishments.

3. **Secures appropriate CEO leadership for the future.**

Club leadership needs may change over time. The board must determine each year whether what the CEO has to offer and what the organization needs match. If there is not a match, the

board needs to take action. Either the board will need to find a new CEO or work with the current CEO to correct the situation through development activities.

Evaluation Process

Each year, the Chief Executive Officer and the Board Chair/Executive Committee *mutually* determine the following:

- Target areas for leadership development (Source: CEO Leadership Model)
- Target areas for organization development/improvement (Source: Standards of Organizational Effectiveness)
- Key performance standards for organization performance

Once the target areas for leadership development and organizational development/improvement are approved, the CEO and Board Chair meet monthly to review progress on targets and metrics. At the end of the 12-month cycle, the CEO meets again with the Board Chair/Executive Committee to rate performance using the CEO Performance Review Document.

TIPS

Do practice communicating about performance throughout the year, not just during the evaluation process. With regular communication between the CEO and the Board Chair, there should never be any surprises during the evaluation process.

Do schedule routine performance evaluations so they are not seen as a reactive approach to a performance issue.

Do clearly communicate performance expectations in advance. Use 360-degree feedback to encourage healthy communication.

Do discuss development opportunities. Use performance meetings to review options for professional development to build skills.

Do offer development options other than training. CEO coaching, networking, and mentoring relationships are all a large part of the development process.

Do call on your DOD to provide resources, tools and best practices for the performance evaluation process.