

Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector, Nonprofit Organizations, Nonprofit Leadership and Governance

This course introduces you to the nonprofit sector, nonprofit organizations, and the concepts of leadership and governance. While this course has been developed with North American culture in mind, we do appreciate that in other parts of the world the nature of the nonprofit sector, nonprofit organizations, nonprofit leadership and governance may not be the same. Nevertheless, it is our hope that much of the course content will still be of value to those in other parts of the world. To learn more about this course, please watch the overview video by copying and pasting the following link into your web browser: <https://goo.gl/Lvhdqj>. Keywords: Nonprofit; Nonprofit Sector; Voluntary Sector; Nonprofit Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Volunteer Organizations, Leadership, Management, Governance, Board, Board of Directors, Performance, Effectiveness Course 1 Overview: Week 1: Some of the questions you will explore this week are: What is the nonprofit sector and why does it exist? What are the unique characteristics of nonprofit organizations? What are the trends and emerging issues facing organizations in the nonprofit sector? Week 2: Questions to be explored this week are: What is leadership at the governance level and how is it different from management? What is good governance and why does it matter? What is a board of directors? Week 3: This week's questions: What roles do board members play in nonprofit organizations? Broadly speaking, what are boards responsible for and how do they go about their work? What are some of the issues that challenge the board's ability to go its work? Week 4: At this stage, you are asked to review the course content, submit a written assignment (known lightheartedly as a BEAR (Board Effectiveness Readiness Assessment), and take two multiple choice Readiness Assurance Tests (known similarly as RATs). One RAT will assess knowledge and reading comprehension and the other will test application of knowledge within a practical case. Week 5: We will encourage you to discuss the RATs in the discussion forums and take them again should you wish to change any of your answers based on the information exchanged.

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COURSE 2

The Roles and Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards of Directors within the Governance

About the Course

This course provides a more in-depth look at the roles and responsibilities of boards of directors in the governance of nonprofit organizations. While the course has been developed with North American culture in mind, we do appreciate that in other parts of the world, the nature of the roles and responsibilities of boards of directors may not be the same. Nevertheless, it is our hope that much of the course content will still be of value to those in other parts of the world. To learn more about this course, please watch the overview video by copying and pasting the following link into your web browser: <https://goo.gl/SXZEZS>. Keywords: Nonprofit; Nonprofit Sector; Voluntary Sector; Nonprofit Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Volunteer Organizations, Leadership, Management, Governance, Board, Board of Directors, Performance, Effectiveness Course 2 Overview: Week 1: Some of the questions to be explored this week are: What is the board's role in

planning for the organization's future and why is it important for nonprofit organizations to do it? What is strategic planning and what can boards do to carry this out effectively? Week 2: This week's questions: What is the board's role in assessing the performance of the organization? Why is performance assessment important? Why do many boards have difficulty meeting their performance assessment responsibilities? Week 3: This week's questions: What are the elements of the fundraising/resource development process? What is the board's role in ensuring the organization has adequate funding? What information should be in a resource development plan? Week 4: At this stage, you are asked to review the course content, submit a written assignment (known lightheartedly as a BEAR (Board Effectiveness Readiness Assessment), and take two multiple choice Readiness Assurance Tests (known similarly as RATs). One RAT will assess knowledge and reading comprehension and the other will test application of knowledge within a practical case. Week 5: We will encourage you to discuss the RATs in the discussion forums and take them again should you wish to change any of your answers based on the information exchanged.

More Details

COURSE 3

The Factors that Influence the Effectiveness of Boards and the Governance Process

About the Course

The third course in this Specialization introduces you to the factors that influence how effective boards of directors will be in carrying out their roles and responsibilities and hence the impact they have in shaping the success of the organization they govern. While this course has been developed with North American culture in mind, we do appreciate that, in other parts of the world, the nature of the factors that influence the effectiveness of nonprofit boards of directors may vary. Nevertheless, it is our hope that much of the course content will still be of value to those in other parts of the world. To learn more about this course, please watch the overview video by copying and pasting the following link into your web browser: <https://goo.gl/aAMlfl>. Keywords: Nonprofit; Nonprofit Sector; Voluntary Sector; Nonprofit Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Volunteer Organizations, Leadership, Management, Governance, Board, Board of Directors, Performance, Effectiveness Course 3 Overview: Week 1: This week's questions: What factors influence the effectiveness of board meetings? What are the formal procedures and structures within the board that impact its performance? What can a board do to intentionally improve the way it structures itself and runs its decision making meetings? Week 2: This week's questions: What do we mean by board composition and development and why is it important? Why is it difficult to change the composition of the board? How do you design the ideal mix of board members? How do you locate, recruit and develop board members? Week 3: This week's questions: What do we mean by the "culture" of the board and why is it important? How do boards develop and pass along culture? Can board cultures be intentionally changed? What is the role of leadership in shaping board culture? What do effective nonprofit leaders involved in governance do? How can leadership be managed for higher performance? Week 4: At this stage, you are asked to review the course content, submit a written assignment (known lightheartedly as a BEAR (Board Effectiveness Readiness Assessment), and

take two multiple choice Readiness Assurance Tests (known similarly as RATs). One RAT will assess knowledge and reading comprehension and the other will test application of knowledge within a practical case. Week 5: We will encourage you to discuss the RATs in the discussion forums and take them again should you wish to change any of your answers based on the information exchanged.

[More Details](#)

COURSE 4

Capstone - Managing Board Change for Higher Levels of Leadership and Governance

Effectiveness

About the Capstone Project

The Capstone Project is a service learning experience designed to apply the knowledge and skills developed in the three Specialization courses to a real world leadership and governance situation. It is also intended to develop the participant's capability to act as an agent for positive change in nonprofit organizations. To this end, you will analyze the leadership and governance effectiveness of a real board of directors in an organization of your own choosing (or, if that is not possible, data gathered from a real board provided by the course instructors). By the end of the Capstone Project, you will have produced a professional consulting report detailing your analysis and recommendations to improve board leadership and governance effectiveness. You will then present it to the board and advise them on implementing change. To learn more about this course, please watch the overview video by copying and pasting the following link into your web browser: <https://goo.gl/GTWrN2> Keywords: Nonprofit; Nonprofit Sector; Voluntary Sector; Nonprofit Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Volunteer Organizations, Leadership, Management, Governance, Board, Board of Directors, Performance, Effectiveness Capstone Project Overview: Weeks 1-3: This period will be spent choosing a board of a nonprofit organization and gathering information using two specially designed tools and resources: The SUNY Open textbook (to download the book copy and paste the following link into your browser: <http://tinyurl.com/peolnjb>), "Guidelines for Improving the Effectiveness of Boards of Directors of Nonprofit Organizations", and The Board Check-Up, online board performance self-assessment tool that can be accessed by copying and pasting this link into your browser: <https://www.boardcheckup.com>. Weeks 4-5: In this phase, the information gathered will be analyzed leading to an evaluation of the board's effectiveness in the different dimensions of board effectiveness examined in the Specialization courses. Weeks 6-8: In the final phase of the Project, the results of the analysis and recommendations for positive change will be brought together a specially prepared consulting report intended for the use of the board of the client organization.