



Halifax Chamber of Commerce

“Competency Based Approach for Chamber Board Recruitment”

Approved January 24, 2008

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Many not-for-profit organizations have traditionally had constituency-based or geographically-based boards. Constituency-based boards are made up of members who represent specific interest groups, while geographically-based boards are made up of members who represent a particular territory served by the organization.

Many of these organizations are moving towards competency-based boards, which are considered a best practice. In this case, board members are chosen based on a particular skill set/expertise needed to support the organization. Competency-based boards are able to make more effective use of intellectual capital resulting in better decisions.

Potential competencies for the Chamber of Commerce board could include;

Board Overall

- Business Acumen
- Board Experience

Audit & Risk

- Financial/Accounting
- Legal
- Risk Management

HR & Governance

- HR
- Governance

Membership

- Marketing and Communications
- Advocacy/Policy Development/Government Affairs & Relations

The board should also consider additional skills, as determined by the Board

As a best practice, boards should have a skills matrix that is assessed annually to ensure that the board has the appropriate skills to achieve its mandate.

In addition to competencies, leading boards are looking to ensure that their membership includes the following:

- **Senior individuals** - individuals with the potential to become chair of the board; i.e. present or former chief executive officer, chief operating officer, or substantially equivalent level executive officer or owner of a business or corporation, university or major unit of government, or a professional who regularly advises such organizations.
- **Diversity of members** - typically relating to gender, age and ethnicity, reflective of the diversity of Halifax's business community.
- **Personal attributes of members** - including intelligence, perceptiveness, good judgment, maturity, fairness, integrity, honesty, commitment to act in good faith, discretion, the ability to communicate effectively, an ability to work collaboratively within a team, passion for the work of the Chamber, entrepreneurial.
- **Time and energy** - a willingness to devote the time and effort required to the board.
- **Positive record** - be well regarded in the community, have a positive record of accomplishment in present and prior positions and, if on other boards, have an excellent reputation for preparation, attendance, participation, interest and initiative.

Board members should be members of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

Board members should have no conflict of interest or legal impediment which would interfere with the duty of loyalty owed to the Chamber and its members.

Finally, board members should "fit" the desired culture and personality of the board.