

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

Best Practices: A set of standards of practice which will include administrative rules, guidelines, policies, and procedures, as well as performance indicators and historical performance levels, including program elements such as training, recruitment, club support, staffing, committee activities, Board/Officer, communications and organization operations. A best practice is a technique or methodology that, through experience and research, has proven to reliably lead to a desired result.

Facilitation of Effective Board Decisions

Background

The role of Senior Staff in identifying, synthesizing, analyzing and communicating issues and relevant data for the Board is vitally important to the success of the organization.

Policy Statement

Senior staff should identify and communicate key issues for Board decision-making, and ensure that the Board is provided with comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data and analyses sufficiently in advance of deliberations to enable their Boards to render effective decisions on behalf of the organization.

Best Practices for the Board of Directors

To render effective decisions, Board members should:

1. Regularly communicate issues to the President so that issues can be brought to the entire Board's attention.
2. Be deliberate in each Board member's responsibility to the organization by preparing for decisions, making sure that all materials are read and studied in advance of the meetings.
3. Consider the need for and request any additional information in advance of the meeting.

4. Be conscious of the need to make decisions in the best interest of the whole association keeping bias at a minimum, even though individual members may represent a special interest.
5. Recognize the role of the Staff as a part of the decision making process, which may or may not include a vote as a part of the Board.
6. Accept, support, and implement the Board's decision once it is made, including decisions made in the individual Board member's absence.
7. Provide an environment conducive to comprehensive analysis of issues and assessment of benefits and risk in an open dialogue between Board members and the executive director.

Best Practices for Staff

To help the Board of Directors to render effective decisions, Staff should:

1. Establish a system for regularly communicating key issues to decision-makers prior to scheduled meetings of the Board.
2. Develop written reports on issues for decision-making that provide background information, including: history; related policies; strategic impact; cost/benefit analyses; viable options; the risks in taking or not taking an action; financial and legal implications; and a means to evaluate implementation methods and outcomes.
3. Ensure that Board members have adequate lead-time to review issues and options presented.
4. Be available in advance of meetings to answer questions about issues and their possible impact on the organization.
5. Establish an agenda, in consultation with the President, that provides time for strategic dialogue/non-action items, and addresses the most important issue(s) at the beginning of the meeting.
6. Identify in advance of the Board meeting and in consultation with the President, who will present the issue, and ensure that it is properly framed for Board consideration and evaluation. Identify other individuals who may be called upon to discuss the issue, and clarify the responsibilities of those individuals in advance.
7. Provide draft language for recommended options.
8. Provide comprehensive information in as concise and consistent a format as possible recognizing and, where possible, accommodating the different learning styles represented on the Board.

9. Explore and communicate the risk/benefits of Board actions, and be willing to advocate for a particular outcome when you believe it to be in the best interests of the association to do so.
10. Accept, support, and implement the Board's decision once it is made.
11. At the end of every meeting, recap all actions taken by the Board. When feasible, recap required follow-up actions to be taken as a result of Board decisions.
12. Suggest an appropriate means to communicate and historically document Board decisions.
13. Establish proper procedures for conducting business outside of in-person meetings, should the Board decide to do so.

Paving the Way for Effective Leadership

1. **Assess Optimist International's needs:** Determine the competencies that are most critical for effective job performance in a particular type of job. In doing so, use a valid method, such as comparison of the behavioral events interviews of superior performers and average performers. Also make sure the competencies to be developed are congruent with the organization's culture and overall strategy.
2. **Assess the individual:** This assessment should be based on the key competencies needed for a particular job, and the data should come from multiple sources using multiple methods to maximize credibility and validity.
3. **Deliver assessments with care:** Give the individual information on his/her strengths and weaknesses. In doing so, try to be accurate and clear. Also, allow plenty of time for the person to digest and integrate the information. Provide the feedback in a safe and supportive environment in order to minimize resistance and defensiveness. But also avoid making excuses or downplaying the seriousness of deficiencies.
4. **Maximize learner choice:** People are more motivated to change when they freely choose to do so. As much as possible, allow people to decide whether or not they will participate in the development process, and have them set the change goals themselves.
5. **Encourage people to participate:** People will be more likely to participate in development efforts if they perceive them to be worthwhile and effective. Optimist International's policies and procedures should encourage people to participate in development activity, and leaders should provide encouragement and the necessary support. Motivation also will be enhanced if people trust the credibility of those who encourage them to undertake the training.
6. **Link learning goals to personal values:** People are most motivated to pursue change that fits with their values and hopes. If a change matters little to people, they won't pursue it. Help people understand whether a given change fits with what matters most to them.
7. **Adjust expectations:** Build positive expectations by showing learners that social and emotional competence can be improved and that such improvement will lead to valued outcomes. Also, make sure that the learners have a realistic expectation of what the training process will involve.
8. **Gauge readiness:** Assess whether the individual is ready for training. If the person is not ready because of insufficient motivation or other reasons, make readiness the focus of intervention efforts.

Doing the Work of Change

9. **Foster a positive relationship between the trainers and learners:** Trainers who are warm, genuine, and empathic are best able to engage the learners in the change process. Select trainers who have these qualities, and make sure that they use them when working with the learners.

10. **Make change self-directed:** Learning is more effective when people direct their own learning program, tailoring it to their unique needs and circumstances. In addition to allowing people to set their own learning goals, let them continue to be in charge of their learning throughout the program, and tailor the training approach to the individual's learning style.
11. **Set clear goals:** People need to be clear about what the competence is, how to acquire it, and how to show it. Spell out the specific behaviors and skills that make up the target competence. Make sure that the goals are clear, specific, and optimally challenging.
12. **Break goals into manageable steps:** Change is more likely to occur if the change process is divided into manageable steps. Encourage both trainers and trainees to avoid being overly ambitious.
13. **Provide opportunities to practice:** Lasting change requires sustained practice on the job and elsewhere in life. An automatic habit is being unlearned and different responses are replacing it. Use naturally occurring opportunities for practice at work and in life. Encourage the trainees to try the new behaviors repeatedly and consistently over a period of months.
14. **Give performance feedback:** Ongoing feedback encourages people and directs change. Provide focused and sustained feedback as the learners practice new behaviors. Make sure that peers, friends, family members – or some combination of these – give periodic feedback on progress.
15. **Rely on experiential methods:** Active, concrete, experiential methods tend to work best for learning social and emotional competencies. Development activities that engage all the senses and that are dramatic and powerful can be especially effective.
16. **Build in support:** Change is facilitated through ongoing support of others who are going through similar changes (such as a support group). Programs should encourage the formation of groups where people give each other support throughout the change effort. Coaches and mentors also can be valuable in helping support the desired change.
17. **Use models:** Use live or videotaped models that clearly show how the competency can be used in realistic situations. Encourage learners to study, analyze, and emulate the models.
18. **Enhance insight:** Self-awareness is the cornerstone of emotional and social competence. Help learners acquire greater understanding about how their thoughts, feelings, and behavior affect themselves and others.
19. **Prevent relapse:** Use relapse prevention, which helps people use lapses and mistakes as lessons to prepare themselves for further efforts.
20. **Encourage use of skills:** Leaders, peers, and subordinates should reinforce and reward learners for using their new skills. Coaches and mentors also can serve this function. Also, provide prompts and cues, such as through periodic follow-ups. Change also is more likely to endure when high status persons, such as supervisors and upper-level management model it.

21. **Develop an organizational culture that supports learning:** Change will be more enduring if the organization's culture and tone support the change and offer a safe atmosphere for experimentation.

Did It Work? Evaluating Change

22. **Evaluate:** To see if the development effort has lasting effects, evaluate it. When possible, find unobtrusive measures of the competence or skill as shown on the job, before and after training and also at least two months later. In addition to charting progress on the acquisition of competencies, also assess the impact on important job-related outcomes, such as performance measures, and indicators of adjustment such as absenteeism, grievances, health status, etc.

Fiduciary Duties for the Staff

Background

Under the laws of most states, officers and directors of not-for-profit associations are subject to fiduciary duties in managing the affairs of the association. Inasmuch as Staff are expected to carry out the association's day-to-day operations under the direction of the association's Board of Directors, Staff should be held to standards consistent with and similar to those imposed on the Board.

Policy Statement

Optimist International believes that Staff are subject to certain fiduciary duties, including the duty of care, the duty of loyalty, and the duty of obedience to Optimist International, in the performance of their responsibilities on behalf of the association.

Professional Standards for the Staff

Staff must perform their responsibilities in accordance with their fiduciary duties to Optimist International including the duties of care, loyalty and obedience. The duty of care requires association staff to act with the care that a reasonably prudent person in a similar position would use under similar circumstances. The duty of loyalty requires Staff to place the interests of the association over their own personal interests and to refrain from using their position of trust to further their own personal gain. The duty of obedience requires Senior Staff to perform their duties in accordance with applicable statutes, with the association's articles of incorporation, bylaws and policies.

To discharge these fiduciary duties, the staff shall:

1. Regularly attend and fully participate in meetings of the Board of Directors and the membership.
2. Review relevant material prior to making a business decision.
3. Inquire regarding and monitor all corporate affairs.
4. Provide the Board of Directors with information necessary to make reasonable and effective policy decisions on behalf of the association.
5. Advise the Board of Directors when the senior staff believes that action contemplated by the Board may not be in the best interests of the organization.
6. Advise the Board of Directors of their own fiduciary obligations to the organization.

7. Promptly notify the Board of Directors of any matter that may result in liability against, or otherwise adversely affect the reputation of Optimist International and/or the industry or profession it represents.
8. Provide the members with information necessary to make reasonable and effective decisions on matters coming before the membership.
9. Advise the Board of Directors and appropriate international committee chairman when the senior staff believes that action contemplated by the membership may not be in the best interests of Optimist International.
10. Keep the members reasonably apprised of the activities of the association.
11. Establish policies for, supervise the performance of, and maintain a level of communication with members of the association staff as necessary to oversee the day-to-day operations of the association.
12. Disclose to the Board of Directors any conflicting or potentially conflicting interest the senior staff may have with respect to a matter affecting the association or its members. Such interest may include, for example, directorships, consulting arrangements, or ownership interests in a vendor company.
13. Refrain from disclosing any confidential information of the association which the senior staff may acquire in the performance of their duties on behalf of the association, except as permitted by the association or required by law.
14. Identify and respond to any conflicts of interest presented by a director or staff member.
15. Refrain, absent proper disclosure and consent, from awarding association business to certain suppliers who will provide the senior staff an economic benefit in return.
16. Act within the limits of the instruction or authority given by the Board of Directors.
17. Follow association policies and procedures and ensure that association staff does the same.

Standards for the Board of Directors

Optimist International shall expect Staff to undertake their responsibilities in accordance with these fiduciary duties and shall provide the staff with an atmosphere conducive to the fulfillment of such duties.

Members of the Board of Directors shall perform their responsibilities in compliance with their own fiduciary duties which are essentially the same as those outlined above. They shall recognize that the President is the legal agent for the organization. They shall avoid any conflicts of interest in their interrelationships with the organization. And they shall ensure that directors and officers liability insurance is in force at all times.

The Board and Staff Relationship

Background

The complexity of contemporary association management calls for a governance structure that acknowledges and fosters the critical leadership roles and responsibilities of elected volunteer leaders and employed staff. Regardless of the size and focus of the association, both the elected leaders and employed staff must share a commitment to the mission and goals of the association, always pursuing the best interests of the Optimist International and the members it serves. Staff must recognize that the members are the “owners” of the association and work diligently to meet their needs.

Policy Statement

Optimist International believes that the Staff should play an active role in the operations process, ensuring the effectiveness of the association. Senior Staff shall consistently demonstrate a commitment to the organization’s mission, provide the elected leadership with management resources to achieve the association’s goals, and collaborate with the elected leadership to plan for the organization’s future. Optimist International should establish clear and consistent roles and responsibilities for the elected leadership and the executive director. Senior Staff shall ensure effective communications between Board and staff, and serve as a professional management resource to the Board and elected leadership.

Standards for the Board of Directors

1. Ensure an environment in which Board and staff roles and responsibilities are clearly understood by all, and in which staff participation is encouraged.
2. Recognize its responsibilities to the association and its mission, as well as to the Board and staff.
3. Maintain an ongoing dialogue with the President on all substantive association issues.
4. Ensure a positive and healthy climate for staff ideas and initiatives.
5. Provide the President with sufficient resources to accomplish the association’s work.
6. Develop a clear organizational structure that is acknowledged by all, delineating established lines of authority and communicating among elected leaders, members and staff.
7. Periodically review association programs and activities, encouraging staff participation in such evaluations.
8. Exercise fiduciary responsibilities, assuring that the staff is operating in an ethical and legal manner.
9. Recognize that the chief executive officer has the authority and responsibility to implement policy as established by the Board.
10. Ensure the ongoing use of consensus building and group process in decision-making, since it is the essence of voluntary organizations, incorporating staff participation as partners in the process.

11. Engage in an ongoing dialogue with the chief executive officer, evaluating his or her performance, providing feedback, and inviting input from the executive.
12. Perform annual self-evaluations of its effectiveness, member satisfaction and procedures.

Standards for Staff

Leadership

1. Keep the association's mission central to all relationships between the elected leadership and staff.
2. In collaboration with the elected leadership, facilitate the planning process to ensure Board leadership in setting direction for the association as expressed in its mission and goals.
3. Offer professional management and policy advice to the elected leadership with the goal of improving programmatic offerings and the overall productivity of the association.
4. Facilitate conflict resolution between and among elected leaders, staff and the membership.

Governance

1. Collaborate with the elected leadership to assure a fair and comprehensive governance structure that assures efficient and effective use of resources, timely policy decisions, and accountability for volunteers, leadership and staff.
2. Collaborate with the Board to develop organizational policy as needed, and to ensure compliance with that policy.
3. In conjunction with the elected leadership, develop and maintain a system for identifying, training, retaining and recognizing volunteer leaders.

Management

1. Ensure an appropriate mix of staff and other resources to assure implementation of approved programs and policy goals.
2. In collaboration with elected leaders, organize, plan and implement effective meetings that result in appropriate policy decisions in a timely and efficient manner.
3. Assure that the elected leadership can effectively fulfill its oversight and monitoring responsibilities through effective communication on key issues. Of special importance is preparation of supporting materials for Board and leadership decisions.

Financial Management by the Board of Directors and Staff

Background

The Board of Directors and Staff are responsible for the assets of the organizations they manage. This includes but is not limited to: planning and budgeting; receipt, disbursement and investment of funds; preservation of assets; filing appropriate tax and regulatory documents and presenting reports on these activities to the members and governing body of the organization.

Policy Statement

Optimist International asserts that the financial management responsibilities of the Board of Directors and Senior Staff must be carried out with the highest level of integrity and accountability, in full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Standards for the Board of Directors

The Optimist International Board of Directors should provide an environment conducive to responsible financial management by its Staff by undertaking the following:

1. Create and maintain a strategic plan for the association.
2. Adopt overall financial policies that complement the strategic plan but do not unnecessarily constrain management decision-making, and establish with the association executive appropriate monitoring mechanisms.
3. Adopt and monitor the implementation of a budget for the association that reflects the strategic plan and member needs.
4. Adopt and enforce a policy for disclosure of conflicts of interest.

Standards for Elected Leadership and Staff

Association executives should undertake the following to fulfill the responsibilities of financial management:

1. Develop, recommend, implement, review and manage the association's budget according to policies established by the association's governing body and generally accepted accounting principles.
2. Develop systems and policies to monitor and manage financial activities. This should include, but not be limited to, establishing internal controls designed to safeguard assets,

ensuring the accuracy and reliability of financial records and assuring compliance with established policies, laws and regulations. Ensure that financial records are audited or reviewed at least annually by an independent third party.

3. Develop, recommend, implement and review investment policies and manage or oversee the management of investments to ensure attainment and maintenance of established levels of reserves.
4. Provide timely and complete disclosure of financial information.
5. Maintain adequate liability coverage including at least fidelity bonding, general liability and workers compensation. Directors and officers liability coverage should be obtained whenever possible.
6. Maintain current knowledge of applicable local, state and federal tax laws and regulations related to the association's tax status and maintain systems to ensure compliance. Maintain current state and federal income tax and other tax and regulatory filings.
7. Establish mechanisms to report potential conflicts of interest and take steps to prevent any actual conflicts through divestiture or other steps to prevent inappropriate or illegal personal gains.

Association Planning

Background

Charting the future course of Optimist International is essential. Planning for the future and clearly articulating the plan will drive the organization's decisions related to policy, programs, and allocation of resources (volunteer, staff, and dollars). A well developed plan will enable the organization to clearly and succinctly state its reason for existence, motivate constituent participation, and communicate to external audiences the importance of the organization's work.

Policy Statement

Optimist International believes that the Board of Directors and the executive director should identify planning as a priority role for the governing body. The executive director should act to engage the governing body in a continuous planning process.

Standards for the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors should:

1. Regard developing and implementing a plan for the association as a primary role unique to the governing body.
2. Support implementation of the plan at every level of the organization.
3. Use the plan to focus Board agendas of the governing body.
4. Use the plan to drive financial forecasting and the annual budgeting process.
5. Use the plan to focus resources on the key issues facing the association.
6. Set aside personal agendas in favor of the long-range success of the organization, measuring new proposals against the priorities identified in the plan.
7. Update the plan regularly to assure its relevance to the needs of the organization.

Standards for the Executive Director and Staff

The Executive Director and Staff should:

1. Present the governing body with an outline, budget and time line for the strategic planning process, and obtain agreement from the Board to proceed.

2. Recommend planning models to the Board suited to the organization's culture and resources.
3. Accumulate relevant information needed by the governing body to fulfill its planning role, or to assure the development of information not available (e.g., research on member needs, member satisfaction, environmental scan, other data sources).
4. Consider employing an outside facilitator to advance the planning process.
5. Collaborate with the President to assure the appropriate level of participation in every phase of the planning process by the officers, Board members, and stakeholders.
6. Collaborate with the governing body to measure the organization's achievements using the plan as a yardstick.
7. Work with the governing body to regularly update, modify and revise the plan.

Evaluating the Performance of the Executive Director

Background

The performance appraisal process should be viewed by all involved parties as an important tool for measuring the effectiveness of staff leadership. Ensuring that performance expectations are mutually understood by both the Board and the Executive Director is central to the purpose of performance evaluation, which should be an ongoing process that measures progression toward attainment of performance goals. Given that most organizations function in an environment characterized by limited continuity at the Board level, a commitment to conducting regular performance appraisals with the Executive Director is imperative.

Policy Position

Optimist International believes that Board of Directors should formally evaluate their executive director at least annually, using a process that enhances the working relationship between the executive director and the Board and that encourages a two-way flow and sharing of information.

The following three objectives should be considered in the executive director's performance evaluation:

1. the association's contributions to the industry or profession and the members it serves,
2. the success of the association in the attainment of its organizational objectives, and
3. the executive director's personal performance goals.

Standards for the Board of Directors

The Board should be committed to a performance evaluation process for the executive director that exhibits the following qualities:

1. The performance evaluation should represent a continuous, year-long process of monitoring and feedback, which culminates in a formal, annual performance review containing no surprises for either the Board or the executive director. Such continuous evaluation provides meaningful feedback on many aspects of association operations and can clarify or prevent misunderstandings resulting from poor communications or lack of expertise in a particular area.
2. The performance evaluation of the executive director are expressed in terms of well advanced benchmark objectives, which are clearly identified well in advance of the formal evaluation in order to ensure a meaningful assessment of progress and achievement.
3. To the greatest extent possible, the executive director's performance evaluation should be based on factual information rather than subjective assessments.

Standards for the Executive Director

The executive director should develop personal performance goals based upon his or her unique perspective and understanding of the needs of the organization, and should secure the Board's approval for the pursuit of these goals. The executive director should engage in periodic self-evaluation and offer accountability to the Board on these goals at appropriate intervals.

Ethical Behavior of Association Leaders

Background

The conduct and ethical behavior of Optimist International's leaders set the tone for the conduct and ethical behavior of the staff, volunteers leaders and members. For this reason, the conduct and ethical behavior must be beyond reproach and free of any impropriety. The executive director is responsible for creating an environment that fosters the highest level of ethical and accountable behavior for both staff and volunteers at every level of the organization. In this environment, standards of conduct and ethical behavior that exceed legal requirements are the norm.

Policy Statement

The Staff have a responsibility to demonstrate the highest standards of professional and personal conduct, and to foster the same in both volunteers and staff, in order to protect the integrity of the association and to maintain respect for the profession of association management.

Standards for the Board of Directors

Staff and volunteer leaders alike value and support high standards of ethical and accountable behavior. Act in a manner that inspires respect for the organization and enhances its prestige.

1. Promptly disclose any current or potential conflicts of interest.
2. Avoid any appearance of impropriety.
3. Keep confidential all privileged and sensitive information that is gained by virtue of office or position.
4. Participate fully in deliberations of the governing body.
5. Represent all members and constituents in a fair and consistent manner, and refrain from promoting personal interests and biases.
6. Refrain from discussing individual differences and opinions about decisions of the governing body outside of the meeting room.
7. Be judicious when accepting any perquisites ("perks") from any members, suppliers, or other constituencies of the profession or industry represented by the association., and understand accepting any perquisites may have the appearance of being inappropriate.
8. Comply with all established operating policies and procedures of the governing body. Consult these policies, or consult the chief staff executive, regarding rules and procedures pertaining to supplier contracts with the association.
9. Report behavior that crosses ethical boundaries to the governing body or executive director, as appropriate.

Standards for Staff

1. Be loyal to the association and discharge responsibilities in a manner that fosters the association's mission.
2. Conduct all transactions for the benefit of the association and the public it serves, without prejudice or thought of personal gain.
3. Promptly disclose any potential conflicts of interest or any transactions which have the appearance of conflicts of interest (see standard of fiduciary duties).
4. Be judicious when accepting any perquisites ("perks") from suppliers, members, or other constituencies of the industry or professional represented by the association, and understand that accepting perquisites may have the appearance of being inappropriate.
5. Treat staff, volunteer leaders, members, and the public in a fair and consistent manner, free of favoritism and prejudice.
6. Be respectful of others, show concern for their well-being, encourage diversity, and refrain from discriminatory, harassing, or insensitive behavior.
7. Demonstrate respect for others' ideas and property, such as copyrights and other intellectual property.
8. Keep confidential all privileged and sensitive information that is gained by virtue of office or position.
9. Institute a policy that mandates the highest standards of personal conduct and ethical behavior for all staff members at every level.
10. Provide clear and concise information for volunteer leaders regarding expectations of personal and professional conduct, and the ethical obligations of volunteers to their organization.

Achieving Diversity

Background

As Optimist members and potential members become increasingly diverse, Optimist International must reflect this diversity in order to represent their stakeholders and the public they serve. For organizational vitality and impact, workforce diversity is also a strategic imperative. Diversity may be defined in many ways, including but not limited to individual characteristics such as age, ethnicity, race, gender, physical ability, religion, socio-economic status, professional choices and other facets of social diversity. Corporate and donor diversity can also be factors. As membership, customer and staff demographics evolve, demands on and expectations of Optimist International is changing.

Policy Position

Optimist International embraces diversity as a strategy to advance the effectiveness of associations and nonprofit organizations. The membership represents all aspects of society, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, physical ability, sexual orientation, religion and family status. Optimist International is a totally inclusive organization, which values the differences in its membership and recognizes that this diversity adds value to the organization, its mission and the quality of its programs and services."

Optimist International believes the future depends on its ability to adapt to, embrace and manage membership and societal demographic changes. Both the volunteer leadership and staff must demonstrate proactive efforts to seek out and involve those who reflect the diversity of the organization's membership and the public they serve.

Professional Practices for the Board of Directors:

1. Develop, publish and actively promote an organizational diversity policy.
2. Establish, communicate and support commitment to diversity through the organization's governing documents and through leadership behavior.
3. Take and support reasonable risks, including incurring criticism from dissenting individuals or groups, to foster positive behaviors that promote organizational diversity.
4. Commit funding for ongoing initiatives to strengthen organizational diversity at all levels.
5. Require accountability at all levels for fostering and achieving organizational diversity.
6. Ensure that nominating and appointing bodies proactively recruit and include a diverse mix of individuals that reflect the diverse mix of the membership.

7. Ensure that access to elected office, committee and task force memberships, chair and spokespersons positions is open to all members in accordance with their talents and interests.
8. Mentor new leaders and members from under-represented populations.
9. Eliminate barriers to membership.

Professional Practices for the Executive Director:

1. The executive director should foster diversity in staff recruitment, development, opportunities for advancement and decision-making.
2. Facilitate the development of an organizational diversity vision, and the establishment of measurable objectives to achieve and communicate the vision as core to the organization's viability and success.
3. Actively promote the value of diversity in the association's workforce.
4. Ensure inclusionary hiring and promotion practices consistent with the organization's diversity vision.
5. Maximize opportunities for each employee to contribute to organizational goals by actively ensuring a fully diverse body of staff participants in appointments to task forces, special projects, decision- making activities and leadership roles.
6. Eliminate barriers to full participation in all staff roles by staff members who are physically disabled.
7. Foster and model positive behaviors that demonstrate individual and group accountability to diversity among the membership and staff.
8. Reward staff behavior that demonstrates and fosters tolerance and support of a diverse membership and staff at all levels of the organization.
9. Assist the Board to ensure that diversity initiatives are sustained through the organization's strategic plan, and continuously evaluate and communicate results.
10. Attract and mentor association staff from under-represented populations.

(Adopted March 2007)