

# THE BOARD ENGAGEMENT ROADMAP

## Step 1: Reflect on your Board. My Board:

	+3	+2	+1	0	
Is focused first and foremost on whether our programs and strategies are achieving positive results					Doesn't focus on programs and strategies; sees programmatic work as the sole purview of professional staff
Pushes us to do more to make our community stronger through our work – even when our fundraising goals are met					Is happy and “hands off” as long as the books are clean and we’re meeting or exceeding our bottom line
Creates time in most meetings to talk about what people are experiencing in the community and its relevance to our work					Never talks about what people are experiencing in the community or only talks about it if it affects fundraising
Sees board diversity as critically important and also understands that it doesn't replace listening to the community					Believes that if we have a diverse board, we have what we need to make decisions for the community
Defines the “community” as the grassroots and the grassstops—those who can contribute to our mission and those whose lives are impacted by our work					Defines the “community” as donors and/or those who directly interact with our programs and services
Sees “community engagement” primarily as developing a deep understanding of people’s shared aspirations for moving the community forward, the challenges they see standing in the way and what progress together could look like					Mostly sees “community engagement” as educating the public about our work and/or getting them involved in our programs
Believes that our success and relevance are tied to understanding people in our community and using that knowledge to shape our work					Thinks listening to and understanding the people in our community is “nice” but not necessary so long as you have good research and best practices guiding your work
					<b>YOUR SCORE =</b>

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Step 2: Interpret Your Score and Discuss It!

0—7

Mostly  
Turned  
Inward

15—21

Mostly  
Turned  
Outward

8—14

Somewhat  
Turned  
Outward



**DISCUSS**

1. What do you make of your score? Does it ring true? How so?
2. Looking at the chart, where do you think your board is strongest? What do they do that makes you feel that way?
3. Looking at the chart, what are the 1 or 2 areas where would you like to see the most improvement? Why?

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## Step 3: Take Action

Here are some possible steps you could take to help your Board Turn Outward:

<p><b>INTRODUCE A DIFFERENT CONVERSATION TO REINFORCE NEW BEHAVIOR.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with your board chair to set aside time at your meetings (15—30 minutes at first) to share how your work is making the community stronger. Kick the meeting off this way as a way to frame the rest of the meeting.</li> <li>• Ask them what they think you should be doing to improve the work.</li> <li>• If you're afraid they won't bite, then tee up a board member to be ready with some ideas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>PUT THE MISSION FRONT AND CENTER.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage them in a conversation about your mission – or, find a board champion to do so.</li> <li>• Ask, "What does the mission mean to them personally? What are the implications for the board in terms of how they define success?"</li> </ul>
<p><b>CALL THE QUESTION: WHAT'S DRIVING US?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a discussion framed around these questions: "If we meet our bottom line, but we aren't producing the results we want in the community, what does that mean for us?"</li> <li>• Ask as a follow up, "How can the board be a stronger partner in pushing us on our mission?"</li> </ul>
<p><b>BRING THE COMMUNITY VOICE INTO YOUR MEETINGS.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up a conversation for your next meeting that starts with, "What's happening in the community that might be of significance to the work we are undertaking? And how so?"</li> <li>• Set the stage by giving them an example ahead of time and asking them to think of other examples.</li> <li>• If you think you can push harder on the culture, tell them the "how so" must be related to the substance of the work, not fundraising, branding, etc.</li> </ul>