# Fostering Strong Working Relationships Between the GM/COO and Club Directors

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*Acknowledgments*

A special and grateful thank you to J. Richard Hackman. Professor Hackman suggested that I take on this task over six years ago. Whenever I visited my daughter at Harvard University while she was an undergraduate, she would arrange for me to go to classes with her and meet at least one professor for discussion. During her second semester, we met with Professor Hackman on his 15th floor office balcony overlooking Cambridge. He asked me a simple question: "What is your biggest challenge?"

I responded that the biggest challenge I faced in my work was navigating the relationship between the GM and Board. He replied, "Then why don't you become the expert? I'll be glad to help you."

Unfortunately for the many people who knew and admired him, Professor Hackman died of cancer three years later. His challenge, however, was what started me on this long journey. I can't by any stretch think of myself as an "expert," but I hope what follows will be in some small measure helpful to club managers as they develop working relationships with their Boards of Directors. I also hope that Professor Hackman would have been pleased with the work.

A special thanks to William Frye, PhD without whom this monograph would never have been complete. Dr. Frye provided the technical and aesthetic guidance to make this an acceptable piece of work.

The MCM team was comprised of:

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|---|---|---|
| Calvin Bolling | Kirk Bowman | William Frye, PhD |
| Jerry McCoy | Dennis McEvoy | |

Professionals with whom I consulted:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Anne Whiting | Cloyd Marvin | Jim Judson |
| Ann Danner | Mike Byrd | |

The list of club managers with whom I consulted over the years is too large for individual recognition, but their contributions were invaluable. Managers are the best people to enlighten us all as to what is really happening in their clubs.

Biographies of the Team and professionals can be found in Appendix I.

*Executive Summary*

Most clubs have some form of governance, which often includes professional management, Boards of Directors, and committees. To establish its appropriate governance model, managers must foster relationships with members and directors that will promote collaborative work with committees and the Board. Together, managers, directors, and members must operate the club in a forward-thinking, professional manner that maintains current and future member value. If the directors set policy, the manager manages, and the members enjoy the club, then effective work has been accomplished.

This necessary relationship can be fostered through the use of good strong communication; an understanding of the dynamics affecting the manager and directors; the general ability of the manager to be a leader; and the establishment of a workable governance model. The purpose of this monograph is to explore ways in which operationally competent managers can influence club leaders in the effort to bring standardization and professionalism to the governance model. This monograph focuses on the steps that club managers may take, within the context of the club environment, to influence club leaders to work with them more effectively. A survey of managers and presidents was created and executed to determine if there is disparity between the perceptions of the managers and directors. Possible solutions, derived from the research literature and interviews, are offered to help mitigate or overcome those discrepancies. Finally, this information is brought together in Appendices V and VI. Appendix V offers tactics on leadership, and Appendix VI outlines the establishment of a workable governance model. These Appendices are offered as guides to help create a comprehensive plan under which a collaborative environment can be formed to accomplish the club's vision and goals.

*Statement of Problem*

The problem being examined is how to create an environment in which the GM/COO and Board of Directors can effectively work together to accomplish the club's vision and goals. Through interviews and survey responses, we have found several areas that create ancillary problems that limit that effective work.

Most clubs have a general governance model that includes a manager and group of club officials. Through our survey, we found that the most common form of governance is the GM/COO concept in conjunction with the Board of Directors (Appendix IV, Q 3.). According to the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) in its white paper *The General Manager/Chief Operating Office Concept*, "The General Manager/Chief Operating Officer (GM) is hired by the Board of Directors (Board), reports to the President or Executive Committee and is responsible for carrying out the Board's policies. The GM will be held accountable for all areas of the club and will ensure the synergism of all club activities. He/she becomes the Board's bridge to the staff and committees and enables the Board to avoid the intricacies and short-term focus that is the staff's responsibility." The paper further expresses that, the GM is a partner with the Board in achieving the club's mission, and assists in developing a format by which the progress of the club may be assessed (CMAA).

A key component in the GM description is that all department heads report directly to the GM (Appendix IV, Q 4). Further, from the CMAA white paper: It is the responsibility of the GM to appropriately delegate and monitor the activities in a manner which fulfills the duties prescribed by the bylaws of the club in addition to any duties required by the Directors. The GM assists the directors in determining important matters and helps create a consensus on these issues in an effort to promote efficient operating procedures (CMAA). The survey suggests that there is sometimes be a discrepancy between the president's understanding of their GM's role, and the GM's understanding of their own role. While this is not an insignificant discrepancy, it is logical that if the leadership does not agree upon role definitions at the start, there will be challenges for the GM that could potentially endanger the success of the club. If the president understands the GM to hold less authority by definition than the GM ought to hold, the GM will have difficulty being a strong leader.

According to the CMAA white paper, the Board is expected to work exclusively on the holistic and long-term focus of governance (CMAA). Chait, Ryan, et al (Chait, Ryan, & Taylor, 2005) add that there are three equally important modes of governance: fiduciary, strategic, and generative. However, it appears that across the range of nonprofit organizations, directors are often taken in directions not related to the three duties and, instead, delve into details that can conflict with the GM's duties (p. 4). Even when only one or two directors are unclear, or have differing thoughts, on the modes and roles, effectiveness will be limited.

Additionally, there is a question as to the competence of the GM regarding not only operational capabilities, but the ability to foster effective relationships with directors in a manner that will promote leadership and cohesiveness (Appendix IV, Q 13.). After interviewing hundreds of managers, we have found that all but a very few have had significant problems with the relationship between themselves and the club leader(s) at one time or another, causing the manager to consider leaving the club. The major factor of this problem, per the GM, is "failure to get along"; while the presidents respond that "incompetence" is their top reason for separation. The survey results indicate that managers are more often dismissed than voluntarily leave their clubs for better opportunities. This trend is corroborated anecdotally by manager interviews. While the operational competence of the GM is not a topic of this paper, its perception has bearing within the overall subjective nature of the GM/Director relationship, where lack of good communication may play a role.

The problems in club management are exceptionally complex because of the nature of the relationship among the GM, directors, and membership. Former corporate CFO and club president Jim Judson suggests that "as a member-owned entity there is a sense of both participation entitlement and pressure to make decisions. Directors and members feel as if they need to contribute. Unlike corporate boards where directorship is by design from either expertise or shares owned, club directors are often less expert in the business, but expected to be more engaged in knowing about the operation." Directors have an intense pressure to perform successfully in part because of their relationship to their peer members. This pressure is often very different from the pressures associated with their for-profit work or their philanthropic directorships. Cloyd Marvin, a member at multiple clubs and director of corporations, nonprofit philanthropic organizations, and member-owned equity clubs, suggests problems arise because "a big difference for member-owned clubs is that everyone is equal. In philanthropic organizations, the most influential person is normally the one donating the most. In corporations, the most influential person is the one with the most stock. In clubs, we are all

technically the same and influence is through peer consensus. We are all theoretically friends, so the influence is more socially oriented. Agreement tends to be made in an effort to get along. The manager is rarely part of the circle of friends and, therefore, carries little social power." (Marvin, 2015)

There is the added dimension that leadership is different between the nonprofit and corporate structure of leadership. When asked if there is a difference between a for-profit corporate CEO and a club manager, executive coach Anne Whiting responded, "Yes – there are significant differences. With nonprofit clients, the executive director typically does not have the breadth and depth of staff support that exists in the for-profit sector. The phrase 'chief cook and bottle washer' comes to mind where they have to be strategic, future focused, and market facing like any CEO – but they are also less shielded from details such as the choosing between the more expensive 100% cotton table cloths or the less expensive poly-cotton blend tablecloths for the annual fundraiser gala. (A real life example!)" (Whiting, 2015)

Mike Byrd, former president of multiple clubs, states the following: "Presidents are often different. They each bring their own level of competency, arrogance, and sometimes, agendas." (Byrd, 2015) The transient nature of both the club leaders and the GM further amplify the challenges. Each year, a new team evolves as a Board transitions; each year, the GM needs to decipher the individual codes of conduct for each new director; each year, the boss may change; each year, new business challenges arise. According to the survey, the average tenure for this group of GM respondents is just over three years. The average tenure of Fortune 500 Company CEOs rose to 9.7 years in 2013, according to non-profit research firm The Conference Board (Study: CEO Tenure on the Rise, 2015). The average tenure for a nonprofit CEO was nearly 12 years (Executive Summary, 2014). Boards facing a three-year GM transition, in conjunction with their own one-year transition, will inevitably experience long periods of time when there is uncertainty and flux in the leadership. This paper does not address the rotational nature of the directorships or GMs, but does offer guidance on understanding and addressing the potential issues that arise, which may help to minimize GM transience and mitigate any negative impact on director transience.

Several related issues arise due to the nature of group dynamics. Because the GM is not normally within the group of members, and most often not a member of the Board, the GM may often have difficulty influencing the president and other directors. In addition to the nature of the relationship between the GM and Directors, club members

often form very intricate and complex relationships, not only among themselves but also among staff and management. Clubs are a uniquely emotional place because they are where people live, socialize, and relax, and thus these relationships tend to be emotional as well. Many members may even consider a club as their second home. Managers are required to deal with this emotionality and develop advanced emotional control.

The overarching issue that this Monograph addresses is the relationship between the member leadership and the professional management and how to make that relationship valued, collaborative, and successful. Member-owned country clubs are prevalent throughout the world and come with unique issues pertaining to governance and management. This monograph has, at its basis, the hypothesis that a governance model, regardless of its content, is needed to establish the vision and goals for the club, and that the interactions between the GM and Directors are crucial to fluidly and successfully executing those visions and goals.

*Review of Literature*

Two basic premises within this monograph are that the club being discussed has a distinct mission statement, visions, and goals; and that the GM is competent. The focus of the monograph is on the practical art of influencing leaders in an effort to create and sustain a governance model that promotes efficiency in operations and strategy.

The most well-known documents dealing with club-specific governance are those produced by the Club Managers Association of America: *Director's Guide for Understanding Club Governance* (McCoy, Director's Guide for Understanding Club Governance, 2003)*, The Governance Checklist* (McCoy, Governance Checklist, 2003)*,* and *The Board Resource Manual* (McCoy, Board Resoures Manual, 2003). These publications provide specific templates for a governance model. Many of the top recruiters and consultants offer solutions to the governance format, but none delves into the specific difficulties inherent in leading leaders within the club environment. Literature and seminars focusing on board dynamics may outline the different responsibilities of leaders and managers, but do not address how managers can influence leaders to effectively fulfill their role.

"The relationship between the governing body and the general manager must be carefully defined" (Merritt, 2003). "Nonprofits waste unaccounted hours debating who is superior and who is subordinate − board or executive officer. The answer is that they must be colleagues. Each has a different part, but together they share the play. Their tasks are complementary. Thus, each has to ask, What do I owe the other? Not as a board and executive officer still tend to do – What does the other owe me?" (Chait, Holland, & Taylor, 1993). Chait, Ryan and Taylor define the board responsibilities of Fiduciary, Strategic, and Generative processes. Fiduciary responsibility is where the Board is concerned primarily with the stewardship of the tangible assets. The Strategic component refers to creating a strategic partnership with the Management, and Generative refers to overall leadership (Chait, Ryan, & Taylor, 2005). Each process has an impact on the governance model. Additionally, many in-person manager comments refer to Directors influencing the day-to-day operations; therefore, we added to our survey a fourth category, Operational, to test the validity of this assumption.

While GM competence is assumed, research has found that displaying competence is nearly as important as having competence (Hewlett, 2014). Competence can be enhanced by another strong basic component: the overarching

influence that emotions play in the club business: All experiences in life are inherently emotional (Brooks, 2011). Having, or attaining, emotional intelligence may be more important to job performance than raw intelligence (Goleman, Working with Emotional Intelligence, 2006). Goleman describes the importance of emotional intelligence, which he believes may be a more reliable indicator of potential success than Intelligence Quotient, as having five domains: Knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships (Goleman, Emotional Intelligence, 2006). Emotional intelligence has been linked to leadership effectiveness and further supported that a leader who can identify and understand his or her own emotions can also help to influence the emotions of others (Cichy & Singerling, 2005). Emotional intelligence is defined as "the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional meanings, and to reflectively regulate emotions in ways to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer, 1997 as cited in Scott-Halsell, Blum, & and Huffman, 2008). Howard Gardner poses two intelligences: interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence (Gardner, 2006). Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to "discriminate among persons, figure out their motives, work effectively with them, and, if necessary, manipulate them." Intrapersonally intelligent persons "possess a good working model of themselves; can identify personal feelings, goals, fears, strengths, and weaknesses; and can, in the happiest of circumstances, use that model to make judicious decisions in her life." It has been found that emotional intelligence accounts for 30% in the variance of management performance (Dulewicz, Higgs, & and Slaski, 2003). Further research shows us that emotional intelligence has a positive impact on emotional labor, as well as emotional exhaustion. Emotional labor is defined as "the physical and mental management of one's feelings to express organizationally desired emotions; emotional exhaustion is the "feeling of being emotionally strained by one's work" and occurs in high stress environments (Kim, Yoo, Lee, & Kim, 2012). The GM is under the eyes of hundreds of observers on a daily basis, and even a tiny lapse of control, if it leads the manager to adopt a disrespectful tone towards a member, can turn into catastrophe.

Having emotional intelligence and control allows a GM to begin the process of influencing others. Understanding the minority position in which the GM tends to work is exceptionally important in influencing directors. "Minority" is defined as the individual or group that has limited (or no) power to force acceptance of their positions (Crano, 2012) and seems to describe the position of most GMs. Crano points out several tactics, the use of which will help a GM to

influence directors from the position of the minority (or directors to influence the general membership): 1. Be persistent: don't retreat and don't compromise; 2. Be consistent: stay on message; 3. Be unanimous: everyone must be on board; 4. Be flexible: adjust your message to circumstances (Crano, 2012). Influence usually means attempting to change a person's, or group's, mind. Research suggests eight steps to large scale change: 1. Increase urgency; 2. Build a guiding coalition; 3. Get the vision right; 4. Communicate for buy-in; 5. Empower action; 6. Create short-term wins; 7. Keep at it; 8. Make change stick (Kotter, 2010).

However, influencing leaders is very difficult in the club environment, and expectations of success must be tempered by an awareness of the prevalence of group-think. Group-think is the mode of thinking used by people deeply involved in a cohesive group, when members striving for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action (Janis, 1982). There are three consequences of group-think: 1. Overestimations of the group – its power and morality; 2. Closed-mindedness; 3. Pressures toward uniformity (Janis, 1982). Understanding group dynamics is an important aspect of club management.

Forming teams in which the GM participates will assist in thwarting group-think. Clearly, committees and the Board can become teams of influence in which the GM participates. J. Richard Hackman suggests that there are six enabling conditions in creating collaborative teams : 1. Create a real team; 2. Specify a compelling team purpose; 3. Put the right people on the team; 4. Establish clear norms of conduct; 5. Provide organizational supports for teamwork; 6. Provide well-timed coaching (Hackman, Collaborative Intelligence, 2011). Hackman explains that a real team has four features: a team task, clear boundaries, clearly specified authority to manage their own work processes, and membership stability over some reasonable period of time (Hackman, Leading Teams Setting the Stage for Great Performances, 2002).

Appendices V and VI are offered as guides to help create a comprehensive plan under which a collaborative environment can be formed to work most effectively to accomplish the club's vision and goals.

*Research Methods*

**Introduction**

My research was conducted by interviewing managers (in both structured and free-association formats), observing them at their clubs (in a casual, non-imposing manner), reading extensively, and interviewing published professors.

Using the results of this initial research, our team designed a survey that would ask managers and leaders pertinent questions about the governance at their clubs. This effort was not so much to test one hypothesis, but to confirm or dispel perceptions of various problems that managers face when dealing with directors. Because it is simple to use and widely known, we determined that Survey Monkey (SM) would be the best survey platform.

**Study Instrument**

We carefully constructed 56 questions, derived from the literature review, common themes learned from the research, and the personal experience of our team. After four revisions of the survey within the team, we sent it to the Master Club Manager Academic Council for comment. There were several excellent suggestions from the Council and we were able to reduce the lengthy survey to 32 pertinent questions: 10 demographic and 22 more specific to our topic. To get the clearest picture of the manager/leader dynamic, the team decided that a survey would be considered "complete" only when both the manager and the highest-ranking club official had filled it out.

The survey (see Appendix III) was intended to identify potential problem areas regarding roles and responsibilities within the club governance structure.

**Study Sample and Participants**

Our first thought was to email the survey to clubs that had been distinguished in some manner: Top 100, Platinum Club, etc. However, we felt that we would get a better random sampling by emailing the survey to as many managers as possible, and simply adding qualifiers to the survey that would allow us to sort through these distinctions. We used the Club Managers Association of America's (CMAA) database, sending the Study Invitation (See Appendix II) and link to 4,423 email addresses of CMAA Members, along with a request to forward the survey on to their club

presidents. The survey encouraged both the Manager and President to participate, meaning that there was a potential for around 9,000 responses. The solicitation letter was emailed on May 11, 2015 and closed three weeks later on June 1, 2015. Three hundred seventy-one (371) responses were received the first week, one hundred seventy-nine (179) the second week, and twenty-five (25) the third week. There were no follow-up prompts. We ultimately achieved 575 responses. The response rate will be discussed in detail in the Results section.

*Results, Discussion and Implications*

**Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to compare and contrast the perceptions of the most senior club official (President, Commodore, etc.) and the GM on the many issues that arise in the club environment, and to offer suggestions for ways in which to promote a collaborative environment so that the directors and GM can work together to accomplish the club's vision and goals.

**Response Rate**

Because of the nature of our research, we used a descriptive designed survey to gain the desired information. Our response rate for managers who proceeded past the first question was 299 out of 4,423 for a response rate of 6.7%. We incorporated both continuous and categorical data: considering that the validity requirement for categorical responses are more stringent, we compare our sample size to the required size, using 4,000 managers as the target population. Since only participating managers would forward the survey to their respective presidents, the target population for presidents was 299. With 62 participating presidents, the response rate is 20.7%.

575 surveys were initiated; 512 responded "Yes." This question was forced in order to remove respondents who did not meet the baseline requirements. Those who answered "Yes" proceeded automatically to the next question, while the 63 who answered "No" were sent to a page that thanked them for their participation and ended the survey. Of the 512 respondents who answered "Yes," 361 chose to continue with the survey. The response rates are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Response Rate of Participants (N= 575)

| Sample | Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Surveys Mailed and potentially forwarded | 8,846 | 100.0% |
| Initiated the survey | 575 | 6.5% |
| Correlations to those initiating the survey | | |
| Responded "Yes" and began the survey | 512 | 89.0% |
| Responded "No" and did not complete survey | 63 | 11.0% |
| Respondents answering more than one question | 361 | 63.0% |

One concern raised by this survey is that there was a low participation rate from the directors. This will be explained in more detail in the Limitations section.

**Profile of Participants**

We asked for two types of participants: "Members serving as the President or highest ranking club official" (President) and "Highest ranking paid employee" (hereinafter referred to as GM or GM/COO) and defined as the person to whom staff report, not necessarily the person with the highest income. For further information, we asked about the respondents' education level, club officials' professional background, club type, and whether the club had received any kind of special national-level recognition. These results are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Profile of Participants

| Participants | |
|---|---|
| Club Officials | 62 |
| Club Staff | 299 |
| Total | 361 |
| Four or more years of college education | |
| Club Officials | 79% |
| Club Staff | 64% |
| Club Official Occupation | |
| Corporate CEO | 29% |
| Small Business Owner | 20% |
| Financial | 20% |
| Attorney | 18% |
| Sales and Marketing | 11% |
| Other | 9% |
| Club Type | |
| Country Club | 70% |
| Golf Club | 13% |
| City | 6% |
| HOA | 5% |
| Other | 6% |
| | |
| Distinguished Club | 48% |

**Results**

Survey Questions and Responses are presented in Appendix IV. Within those responses, questions 3 – 23 pertain to our initial problem(s) and are addressed below.

Question 3 asked about describing the role of the GM/COO. Table 3 breaks out the responses by President and GM. As Table 3 shows, there are distinct differences in the perception of the role of the GM, with the President consistently placing the GM in a lesser role as compared to the GM's perception of that role.

Table 3. Perception of the Role of the Highest Ranking Club Employee

|  | President | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|
| Manager | 16.13% | 8.7% |
| GM/COO | 80.65% | 83.28% |
| CEO | 3.23% | 8.03% |

Question 4 of the survey was the heart of the survey because it asked both the club official and GM to select the term that best describes the roles of the Board, committee and GM in relation to indicated areas of club governance. Listed below are the descriptors used in the survey:

Definitions are:

Administers - *executes a policy, plan or decision that has been created or approved by others*

Approves - *final authority for others' to execute policy, plan or decision*

Develops - *creates policy, plan or decision for approval by others*

Establishes and Executes - *policy, plan or decision is created and executed by this person or group without formal approval by others*

No Role – *the party in questions plays no role in this area*

Input - *has informal influence in planning stages, but no formal authority for action or recommendation*

Recommends - *makes formal recommendation about policy, plans or decisions to others for actionable consideration*

The following matrices depicts the top answer to each category. Topics with agreement across all three areas are as follows:

Table 4. Areas of Agreement on the Roles and Responsibilities Among the Board of Directors, Committees, and GM

|  | Board of Directors | Committee | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bylaws | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| Policies | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| LT Strategic Goals | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| Day-to-Day Operations | No Role | Input | Establishes and Executes |
| Fees | Approves | Recommends | Administers |
| Staff Evaluations (Not Manager) | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| GM/COO Compensation | Approves | No Role | Input |

Table 5 shows areas with significant differences in responses between the President and GM. The matrix is designed so that the president and manager responses are reflected for each group. For example, with regard to the topic of Short Term Goals in the table, both the president and GM have given the same response, that the role of the Board for Short Term Goals is *Approves*. Meanwhile, the president feels the role of the committee is *Recommends*, while the manager feels the committee role is *Input*. The president sees the role of the manager as *Administers* and the manager sees the role for Short Term Goals as *Establish and Execute* (E&E).

Table 5. Areas of Differences in Roles and Responsibilities Among Board of Directors, Committees, and GM (Differences are **bolded**)

|  | BOD Role | | Committee Role | | GM/COO Role | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | President | GM | President | GM | President | GM |
| Short Term Goals | Approves | Approves | **Recommend** | **Input** | **Administers** | **E & E** |
| Budget | Approves | Approves | **Develops** | **Input** | **Administers** | **Develops** |
| Capital Purchases | Approves | Approves | **Recommend** | **Input** | **Administers** | **Develops** |
| Renovations/Expansion | Approves | Approves | **Recommend** | **Input** | Administers | Administers |
| Emergency Repairs | **Approves** | **No Role** | No Role | No Role | E & E | E & E |
| Personnel Policy | Approves | Approves | **Input** | **No Role** | E & E | E & E |
| Staff Hiring (Not GM) | **Input** | **No Role** | No Role | No Role | E & E | E & E |
| Staff Development (Other than GM) | **Input** | **No Role** | No Role | No Role | E & E | E & E |
| Staff Salaries (Other than GM) | **Approves** | **No Role** | No Role | No Role | E & E | E & E |
| GM/COO Hiring | Approves | Approves | **Input** | **No Role** | No Role | No Role |
| GM/COO Development | **Input** | **Approves** | No Role | No Role | **No Role** | **E & E** |
| GM/COO Evaluation | E & E | E & E | No Role | No Role | **No Role** | **Input** |

Question 5 asks the President and GM to estimate the percent of time that the President spends on club related business with respect to the three modes of governance plus operations. These results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Perception of Time Spent by President on Modes of Governance

|  | President | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|
| Operational | 20% | 11% |
| Fiduciary | 31% | 31% |
| Strategic | 27% | 34% |
| Generative | 22% | 24% |

Table 7 represents responses to the question of how much time the president is perceived to be spending on the three modes of governance plus operations, broken out by type of general occupation. The results reflect how the president feels that his or her time is divided. The GM responses represent how the GM perceives that the president's time is spent. According to presidential responses, the Small Business Owner and Entrepreneur spend nearly 32% of their time in operations; yet, the GM's perception is that only 6% of the Entrepreneur's time is spent on operations.

Table 7: Perception of Time Spent on Modes of Governance by Occupation.

|  | Respondents (#) | | Operational (%) | | Fiduciary (%) | | Strategic (%) | | Generative (%) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | President | GM | President | GM | President | GM | President | GM | President | GM |
| CEO | 9 | 71 | 21 | 10 | 32 | 33 | 28 | 35 | 20 | 23 |
| Small Business Owner | 11 | 44 | 32 | 12 | 22 | 30 | 24 | 33 | 22 | 25 |
| Entrepreneur | 3 | 21 | 32 | 6 | 27 | 33 | 25 | 36 | 17 | 25 |
| Financial | 8 | 47 | 24 | 12 | 31 | 34 | 21 | 32 | 23 | 21 |
| Sales | 8 | 20 | 20 | 11 | 32 | 26 | 26 | 37 | 22 | 26 |
| Attorney | 6 | 44 | 15 | 15 | 29 | 33 | 36 | 32 | 20 | 21 |

Questions 6-10 pertain to perceptions about the roles of the President and GM on a scale of 1 (Very Unlikely) through 3 (Very Likely). The results illustrated in Table 8 show that the GM should be highly engaged with the membership and that both the President and GM have confidence in the job security of the GM. Both agree that the President should not run the club and both feel moderately sure that the GM should take a stronger leadership role. It is possible that the question on leadership may have left too much room for differing interpretation. For example, if a GM has tremendous leadership responsibility, then the answer may be that the GM is less likely to take a stronger role, because it is already very strong. On the other hand, a President may not want a weak GM to take a stronger role.

Table 8. Roles of President and GM

|  | President | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|
| GM is an ambassador for the Club | 2.75 | 2.91 |
| GM should be highly engaged with the membership | 2.87 | 2.92 |
| I feel confident in the job security of the GM | 2.65 | 2.65 |
| I am confident that, if necessary, the president can manage the daily operations of the club | 1.63 | 1.25 |
| I would like the GM to have/take a stronger leadership role | 2.15 | 2.17 |

Question 11 asks about the formal approval of the President or Board for hiring and releasing of senior management. The responses, as shown in Table 9, indicate that the President wants a role in hiring or releasing senior management. A 22-point differential indicates a potential problem in a critical area.

Table 9. Need for Formal Approval to Hire or Release Senior Staff

|  | President | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|
| When hiring or releasing senior position the GM must get formal approval from the president or Board | 69.23% | 47.64% |

Question 12 refers to the amount of time between determining that a separation would occur and the time of actual separation as reported by the President and GM. Table 10 suggests that 53.64% of responding GMs only learned about separation of employment at the time of termination or voluntary resignation, which indicates that the move was most likely not the choice of the GM.

Table 10. Time for Manager Departure from Club Employment

|  | President | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|
| At time of departure | 44.19% (19) | 53.64% (118) |
| 6 month | 51.16% (22) | 41.36% (91) |
| 1 year | 4.65% (2) | 3.18% (7) |
| 2 years | 0 | 0.91% (2) |
| 3+ years | 0 | 0.91% (2) |

The reasons for GM termination were derived from Questions 13 –23 and are presented in Table 11. Using the same scale as above, indications in the second column "How likely this would cause termination" (Termination). For example: an incompetent manager may be rated "3" being Highly Likely to cause termination. In the third column, "How likely is this to occur" (Occur) refers to how often the respondent has been part of, witnessed, or heard from peers of the occurrence. Using the same example, if the respondent witnessed incompetence that resulted in termination the response would be "3"; however, if it's very rare that the respondent witnessed incompetence resulting in termination, then the rating would be "1".

The results show that Presidents feel that the top occurrence of termination comes from GM *Incompetence*, followed by *Failure to fit the "Club Culture"*, and *Failure to communicate effectively with BOD/Committees/Members*. The GMs rate *Failure to "get along" with the president* as the number one reason for termination, followed by *Failure to follow Board directives* and *Failure to fit the "Club culture."*

Table 11. Reasons for GM Termination

|  | President | | GM/COO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Termination | Occur | Termination | Occur |
| Incompetence | 2.81 | 1.71 | 2.70 | 1.95 |
| Drinking or illegal drug use while at work | 2.92 | 1.42 | 2.77 | 1.90 |
| Theft or illegal activity | 2.9 | 1.42 | 2.82 | 1.90 |
| Staff Indiscretion | 2.5 | 1.42 | 2.46 | 1.83 |
| Member indiscretion | 2.31 | 1.43 | 2.24 | 1.74 |
| Failure to fit the "Club culture" | 2.35 | 1.65 | 2.32 | 1.98 |
| Failure to "get along" with the president | 1.85 | 1.56 | 2.30 | 2.01 |
| Failure to follow Board directives | 2.67 | 1.58 | 2.57 | 2.00 |
| Insubordination | 2.67 | 1.49 | 2.54 | 1.81 |
| Failure to communicate effectively with Board/Committees/Members | 2.25 | 1.6 | 2.19 | 1.88 |
| Inappropriate internet postings affecting person and club negatively | 2.56 | 1.35 | 2.38 | 1.63 |

**Limitations of the Study**

One study limitation that should be taken into consideration is that of survey bias, because of the self-selection of participants. We had no control over who participated: the only criterion was that they be professional members of the Club Managers Association of America, with their email addresses listed in the national database. The number of presidents who participated, 62, is relatively small as compared to a potential 299 participants, which also creates concerns about bias. We did have a good ratio of distinguished and non-distinguished clubs, with 41% and 59% respectively. Club size, as determined by gross revenues, appeared to representative as well, with the largest percentage of clubs reporting between $4M and $7M.

Another potential problem is the disparity between interview responses and survey responses concerning the question of job security. Both presidents and managers rate the security of the manager at 2.65 out of 3.0. However, in personal interviews with a convenience sample of managers, the rating is clearly lower. This further suggests a possibility of bias within the survey answers: those managers who participated in the survey may be more aligned with their presidents and their clubs' governance model than those who did not. It then follows that those managers who are not aligned with their presidents may not have passed the survey on for completion, thereby skewing the results. However, we are also aware of a certain natural bias inherent in general conversation, in that we may have framed the conversation in a manner that led the participant to express job insecurity.

**Discussion**

This monograph has, at its basis, the hypothesis that a governance model, regardless of its content, is needed to establish the vision and goals for the club, and the interactions of the GM and directors can create significant problems in fluidly and successfully executing on those visions and goals. The overarching issue that this Monograph addresses is the relationship between the member leadership and the professional management, and how to make that relationship valued, collaborative, and successfully integrated within a solid governance model.

One fundamental question is the definition of the manager: Manager, GM/COO, or CEO. Our third question simply asked to confirm the agreed-upon definition of the role of the GM. Our survey found that there was a discrepancy between what the President perceived as the role and what the GM perceived as the role. It appears that the Presidents, on

average, identified their GM as occupying a less authoritative position than the GMs' self-identification. There is no question that this type of confusion over roles will breed problems. A simple solution is to ask this question of the Board, gather the information, review the results, and in a collaborative manner, come to a consensus as to the actual role of the manager. Once this is clearly defined, and all parties agree, the GM can act in the manner consistent with leadership expectations. For consensus building and general influence, please refer to Appendix V: *The Ability to Lead* which characterizes some club management issues and suggests solutions that should allow managers to more effectively work with directors.

Consensus building is part of the process for Question 4, which pertains to a listing of several issues that are common within clubs. Clearly defining to whom responsibility falls is critical to the process of executing decisions. Staff must understand who is making the decisions and whom they should follow. The solution to this issue is the same as with defining the role of the GM: ask the questions and gain consensus. As former multi-club president Mike Byrd states, "It's important that the ground rules are established each year and there is Board agreement."

As with many multi-option issues, there are disparities in responses. In an effort to create a solid document, Table 12 suggests the following template that represents both the common responses and some managerial logic to the issues; however, the document is a tool from which to gain consensus and is not meant to be a hard-and-fast template for all club use.

Many of the issues had agreement from both parties. Those issues having disparity are described in Table 12; reasoning for the categorical selection is subsequently offered.

Table 12. Summary of Best Practices Roles and Responsibilities Among Board of Directors, Committees, and GM

|  | Board | Committee | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bylaws | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| Policies | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| LT Strategic Goals | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| Day-to-Day Operations | No Role | Input | Establishes and Executes |
| Fees | Approves | Recommends | Administers |
| Staff Evaluations (Not Manager) | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| GM/COO Compensation | Approves | No Role | Input |
| Short-Term Goals | Approves | Input | Develops |
| Budget | Approves | Input | Develops |
| Capital Purchases | Approves | Input | Develops |
| Renovations/Expansion | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| Emergency Repairs | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| Personnel Policy | Approves | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| Staff Hiring (Not GM) | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| Staff Development (Other than GM) | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| Staff Salaries (Other than GM) | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| GM/COO Hiring | Approves | Input | No Role |
| GM/COO Development | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| GM/COO Evaluation | Establishes and Executes | No Role | Input |

**Short Term Goals**: The discrepancy here is between the roles of the committee and GM. Following best practices, a goal-setting process should involve input from the entity that will actually be working to achieve the goal. Goals that are simply handed down are less likely to be attained or exceeded than goals identified through a collaborative process. (Hackman, Collaborative Intelligence, 2011) With this in mind, both the president and GM might be off target. A better response for short-term goals might be for the committee to provide *Input* while the GM *Develops* the goals.

**Budget/Capital Purchases**: These topics tend to be interlocked, and the discrepancy arises in relation to the committee/GM role. The budget combines the strategic plan with the day-to-day operations. The GM has full authority on day-to-day activities and should be a part of the strategic planning process. With the more substantial piece of the budget being day-to-day, it is clear that the GM's role should be more pronounced; therefore, it makes sense for the GM to *Develop* the Budget and Capital Purchases, with *Input* from committees.

**Renovation/Expansion**: Because of the size and scope of most projects, it is normal for a committee to be formed specifically to address these opportunities. The GM, along with other staff, is normally a part of this committee. The committee should *Develop* the plan for BOD *Approval*.

**Emergency Repairs**: Both the president and GM agree that the GM role is *Establish and Execute*; therefore, the president's requirement to *Approve* seems misplaced. The nature of emergency also lends itself to immediate action, rather than having a plan discussed and offered for approval. If the building is on fire, it is absurd to imagine that the president wants to receive a paper explaining the fire and the offered solution – the president wants the fire put out.

**Personnel Policy**: Here there is only a moderate difference in the committee's role, with the president wanting some *Input* as opposed to the GM's *No Role*. With both the president and GM agreeing that the GM role is to *Establish and Execute*, it follows that committees would have *No Role*. However, because of the possible legal implications for personnel, the Board, in its fiduciary capacity, should have *Approval*, as both the president and GM agree.

**Staff Hiring/Staff Development**: As above, the agreement is that the GM *Establishes and Executes*; therefore, *No Role* is appropriate for the Board or President.

**Staff Salaries**: *Approval* might be considered as non-specific through the budgeting process, but both agree that the GM role is *Establish and Execute*; therefore, the BOD role should not be one of *Approval,* and since both agree that the Committee has *No Role*, it makes sense that the BOD would have *No Role*.

**GM/COO Hiring**: The discrepancy here is minor, between the committee's role being *Input* or *No Role*. Common courtesy and political shrewdness probably dictate that the committees and influential members should have some exposure to the candidate prior to the formal decision being made. It is common practice that a club will create a special GM Search Committee to perform all the work necessary to vet GM candidates.

**GM/COO Development**: This is interesting because the president sees the Board role as having *Input*, but according to the president, neither the committee nor GM have execution. The GM sees the role as *Establish and Execute*, which more closely follows the prior two president responses.

**GM/COO Evaluation**: The only issue here is with the role of the GM; best practices demand that the target of the evaluation participate in that evaluation (Stone, 2014), so it follows that the GM has at least some *Input*.

From manager interviews, it is the general opinion that the role of the GM is to participate with each committee, not as a bystander, but in active collaboration with the chair, jointly determining the agenda and direction of discourse. The GM and chair should be acting in unison in an effort to engage the committee participants in discussions that will yield an understanding of issues and solutions, which they can then share with their peers.

Through manager interviews, we understand that in attempting to implement the best-practice matrix above, tools of influence are especially important, as these processes require consensus, and can be very difficult to control because of the transient nature of director terms. The manager must work towards establishing agreement and then *continually* reinforcing that agreement.

As previously discussed, per Chait, Ryan, et al. there are three formal modes of governance for the Board: fiduciary, strategic, and generative. However, we also understand that in clubs there is generally a fourth dimension that is relevant to directors, the operational dimension. The responses to this question give us insight into an area that can be devastatingly problematic for the GM and the proper functioning of the club. There appears to be an interesting gap between the president's view of operational participation and that of the GM, with the president feeling that he or she spends more time on operational matters than the GM. Further research would be required to determine why presidents tended to answer in this way. Regardless of the cause, however, having two leaders vying for the same area of responsibility is a problem and has been historically at the heart of much dysfunction between GM and president. The level of Board participation should be equally spread among Fiduciary, Strategic, and Generative. (Chait, Ryan, & Taylor, 2005)  The GM responses are more aligned with that model.

The results are broken out in order to compare the presidents' responses to the GM's perception of the time the president devotes to the Club. "Perception" is the term used because the president knows firsthand how much time they

are allotting to the club (or at least by the person's definition), while the GM can only guess at what the president is doing. It is very interesting that the GM, in every category, sees the president's role as less involved in operations than does the president. For example, presidents referring to themselves as Small Business Owners and Entrepreneurs feel that they spend 32% of their time on operational issues, while the GMs see the president's time as 12%. If we use the guide as suggested by Chait, Ryan, and Taylor, the operational role of a BOD should be minimal, and the division of time should be evenly split among the other three areas. It appears the presidents identifying themselves as Attorneys are the most aligned with the optimal mix of activities. The value of this matrix is to suggest some forewarning of the tendencies associated with differing backgrounds. The number of participants is small, so no real association can be made, but we can keep this information in the back of our minds when dealing with presidents. Primarily, the nature of "Member Ownership" seems to almost require that leaders take an active role in doing "work." This most likely results from the fact that member communication is so personal, and thus it is very natural for a director to want to have answers to every question. Unfortunately, although the director may not know all the relevant information, he or she may still give an answer. This common club practice is referred to as "overclaiming": The more people think that they know about a topic in general, the more likely they are to allege knowledge of completely made-up information and false facts (Atir, Dunning, & Rosenzweig, 2015). Overclaiming is very common, and can contribute to problems at a club because rumors can spread very fast. Any gaps in information will be filled by members, whether correct or not.

Another possibility is that the president is doing quite a bit of operational work unbeknownst to the GM, due to a discrepancy between what the president understands to be "operational work" and what the GM understands to be "operational work". Research has proven that even with more information, the *illusion of knowledge*: the intuition that having more information can increase prediction accuracy, when in reality more knowledge has proven to reduce accuracy and yet, improve confidence (Hall, Ariss, & and Todorov, 2007), may lead the president to confidently misrepresent facts and issues, all in good faith. This highlights a very important point: directors do a good bit of *work* outside the boardroom. It is common for discussions to take place on the tee, in the locker rooms, in the Grille, in the bar, in the pool, or at gatherings away from the Club. The Club is a social hub, and conversation is occurring at all times. Further insight into this issue is found in Kahneman's statement that "we know that people can maintain an unshakable faith in any proposition, however, absurd, when they are sustained by a community of like-minded believers"

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(Kahneman, 2011, p. 217). Managers need to be aware that a good bit of leadership activity will be well out of the manager's sight, and control!

According to many managers interviewed, possible solutions to this set of issues might be:

1. Keep leaders informed

2. Guide the Board members towards generative and strategic issues

3. Have standard decision making procedures as part of the Board Operations Manual

4. Be patient

The above reference to leaders being approached on the tee and other social areas leads us to the problem of the *expansive representation of one*: the natural tendency to believe that one member's opinion (particularly that of a close friend) represents the majority and requires immediate full attention of the leadership. This, in itself, is a natural driving force for club leaders who want to solve their friend's issues with a firm, fast hand. The prevalence of texts and emails makes this issue all the more prevalent; a president can get an emotional plea at a party, become engaged in the effort, text or email fellow directors, and begin a process of over-engagement before much thought has been given to the issue. A scenario such as this can cause snap decisions to be made.  Bringing this natural tendency to leader awareness is helpful, although not necessarily the full solution. A better solution is to set in place a governance model that minimizes the ability of directors to make snap decisions. Appendix VI: Establishing a Workable Governance Model explores how to create a governance model that will standardize and memorialize the decision-making process, focusing specifically on the roles and responsibilities of the manager, committees, and directors.

From the survey results we have seen that the GM and President are aligned on the issues of whom has responsibility for day-to-day operations, as well as staff hiring/release. Both agree that the Board members have no role. Yet, when asked specifically if the GM needs formal approval for the hiring or release of a senior position, 69% of Presidents responding answered "Yes."

The disparity between the president's response and that of the GM is alarming, and can have devastating consequences in practice. Although common sense, we learned through manager interviews that a GM who dismisses a staff member, only to have that dismissal overturned, will have lost all credibility. Regardless of the organizational chart

and original job description, the GM must understand the reality of the social system in which he or she operates. Retaining or dismissing an individual in a high-profile position usually has political ramifications, and as such, leaders and influential members should be part of the discussion. The question of whom precisely has the authority to make this difficult decision can, if all relevant parties are involved in the discussion, be resolved in a seamless manner. A mistake in a high-stakes situation such as this is catastrophic. Perfect clarity on this issue can be found by communicating with the President prior to execution of any hiring or dismissal of senior staff.

On a similar topic, according to the survey results, the president and GM are aligned on each of the statements regarding what constitutes reasons for GM termination and the actual occurrence of the infraction resulting in termination, except *Failure to 'get along' with the president*. The president ranks this lowest among the group pertaining to Termination, but the GM sees it as relatively strong. Once again, this disparity can have catastrophic consequences if there is a misunderstanding on what the leaders see as necessary to successful job performance. Communication between the leaders is essential to clarifying these issues.

Members tend to have a close relationship with their clubs. This personal aspect, combined with the transient nature of club leadership, requires managers to work with a continuing rotation of personalities, each of whom feels pressure to be "expert" at club business. Additionally, members will attempt to influence the manager in a manner very similar to that of the official leaders of the club. Having the ability to lead within this environment is the key to long-term success.

*Implications*

The successful GM exhibits very broad-based leadership skills, framed by a strong, supportive governance model that is accepted and embraced by the board and membership. The GM must be able to either establish this framework or, if it is already part of the culture, ensure its continuance. Once a governance model has been established, the GM and directors may create the collaborative environment necessary to successfully operate a club that can enhance member value. Furthermore, the GM must possess the skill set required to continually maintain this collaborative effort.

GMs need to be technically competent and influential in order to succeed in the more difficult areas of leadership. Leading the club leaders is very tricky business. GMs will be leading people who are leaders themselves; people who have been very successful in their areas of expertise or who have grown up in families where success has allowed them to value the more exclusive things in life.

When the governance model is either not in use or not being followed, issues can arise or micro-management can occur. Through personal interviews, we find that not only does this occur, but it has occurred to nearly all GMs interviewed at one time or another. GMs appear to follow three main tactics to this problem relationship: "wait out" the president and withdraw from (reduce) duties; a separation of the manager from the club ensues; or influence the direction using a variety of tactics.  This monograph is intended to help managers understand the third option, and to hopefully give managers a way to maintain a constructive and productive role at their club.

Some managers have a natural talent for understanding how to influence directors. Most of us, however, need to learn and utilize the tools of influence in order to effectively work together with the board to accomplish the club's vision and goals. The techniques outlined above, as well as those presented in Appendices V and VI, will help GMs become comfortable in the influential role. Competence in these techniques will take time, effort, and deliberate practice.

Appendix I

Team and Professional Biographies

Calvin Bolling, the General Manager of Biltmore Forest Country Club, has over 30 years of hospitality experience, including 18 years as a GM. He has operated clubs ranging from $3M to over $8M, some with single locations and others with multiple courses and facilities. His range of leadership experience encompasses member-owned boards and developer-owned operations.

Kirk Bowman is a Lecturer at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, where he teaches a course in sales organization. He currently serves on the board of various private companies, including Atlassian (software development and collaboration solutions), Code 42 (enterprise, SMB, and consumer data protection), Sookasa (encryption and HIPAA compliance), Couchbase (NoSQL database software), Grovo (digital learning platform), Semmle (data driven software engineering), and Delphix (data as a service). Kirk also advises several other private companies in sales strategy.

Kirk's most recent operational experience was as the sales executive at Equallogic, a storage system company, which was acquired by Dell, Inc. in early 2008. In the 20 years prior to Equallogic, Kirk held executive sales and general management positions at VMware, Inktomi, Model N, Object Design, and Parametric Technology Corporation. This diverse background has allowed Kirk to develop extensive industry experience with multiple technologies and associated sales strategies, including: enterprise software, embedded database software, enterprise search software, internet search, storage systems, internet infrastructure, and virtualization software.

Dr. William Frye is an Associate Professor at Niagara University's College of Hospitality and Tourism Management. He is the 10th recipient to receive the "Raphael Kavanaugh Champion of Education Award" as presented by the *International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education*. In 2015 he was conferred the prestigious Anthony G. Marshall award by the *American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute*. This award recognizes an individual who has made significant long-term contributions to the hospitality industry in educating future leaders. Dr. Frye's students have

been placed at the finest clubs across the world and the Niagara University CMAA Student Chapter has been awarded "Chapter of the Year" for the past eight years.

Jerry McCoy is a graduate of Michigan State University and has studied club construction and renovation at Auburn University, Cornell University, and the Graduate School of Design at Harvard. McCoy received his MCM (Master Club Manager) designation in 1995.

Jerry McCoy is a national lecturer on club construction, renovation and internal marketing issues. He is the author of The Service Gauntlet, a handbook for managers and directors on strategic planning and new operational thinking.

In 2003 Mr. McCoy was commissioned by CMAA's Premier Club Services (PCS) to write a comprehensive document that would help clubs develop better governance practices, a signature package that includes:

The Directors Guide for Understanding Club Governance

The Governance Checklist

The Board Resource Manual

These items offer real opportunities for unpaid volunteer leaders of private clubs to better understand their role in effective governance. The Checklist provides an option for a true evaluation of the club's existing practices compared to a series of accepted best practices. The Resource Manual is a prototype orientation book for new directors.

Dennis McEvoy is a retired Silicon Valley software development executive. Beginning his 30 year career as a programmer at Hewlett Packard, he went on to lead the software development efforts at Tandem Computers, Sybase, and Inktomi. McEvoy graduated with a BS in Mathematics from Carnegie Mellon University and holds ten patents.

*Professionals with Whom I Consulted*

Anne Whiting brings two decades of consulting and business experience to her coaching engagements. With experience as both an external consultant and as a line manager with responsibility for more than 50 employees, Anne brings a wealth of experience to her coaching assignments. Anne has coached leaders at all levels, from the C-suite to first-time managers and individual contributors. Ms. Whiting values a strong partnership with her coaching clients, and has a passion for helping individuals understand how to be more effective in their current roles and developing strategies for achieving career goals and aspirations.

Ms. Whiting earned her Master of Science degree in Industrial/Organizational psychology from Alliant International University in San Diego, and has worked in a variety of industries, including consumer packaged goods, aerospace manufacturing, professional services, high tech, and health care helping organizations to define and implement strategies for selecting and developing future leaders. Anne has also worked as management consultant for Right Management and Kaiser Permanente, assessing and coaching top-level talent and working with leadership teams to improve organization effectiveness.

Cloyd Marvin is a successful Silicon Valley venture capitalist, entrepreneur, and company builder. He is a former managing partner with Harvest Ventures, founder and builder of two major publicly-traded communications companies, and former CEO of two emerging technology companies.

Marvin considers that there are differences not only between NFP and For Profit, but among NFP. Most NFP are concerned with fund raising and board members are somewhat unofficially ranked by their giving. Corporate boards are similar in that those who control the majority of the shares have the majority of the influence. With club boards, the power is evenly distributed or given to the president, who tends to wield the most power by virtue of the position. The fact that most board positions are rotated annually only adds to the potential for dysfunction. Most boards have tenures of many years or decades. The board chair primarily runs the meeting. Most corporate boards have limited committees:

compensation, strategic thought, corporate compliance, treasurer, and ethics. The CEO play a pivotal role and is not a spectator. The board is exclusively oversight.

Jim Judson has over 30 years of financial management, operational, and leadership expertise developed over a career in product companies that has spanned the technology, healthcare, and housing industries, as well as community service. Since leaving Sun in 2002, Judson served as a financial executive advisor and private investor to small and mid-sized companies. In addition to numerous private companies, he had worked with three public companies in turnaround situations, two of them as the interim CFO restructuring the companies, implementing better business practices, evaluating strategic alternatives, and working closely with the investment community to reestablish confidence in the long-term opportunity for the company. Judson developed a broad base of experience leading strategic planning, systems and business process re-engineering, acquisition integration, pricing, forecasting, tax strategies, external reporting, and investor relations.

Judson has served on the board of directors of Omnicell, Inc since 2006 and is currently the lead independent director, chair of the audit committee, and chair of the M&A committee. Judson also served on private company boards and oversaw the activities of a self- funded charitable foundation.

Judson sees the difference between for profit corporate boards and nonprofits as being one primarily of ownership stake. Judson sees three corporate structures rather than two: corporate for profit, nonprofit, and nonprofit member owned. The difference in the member owned boards is that each person and the membership "own" the club and this ownership seems to hold some requirements for participation. Most nonprofits and for profits do not have this element of ownership. Club leaders are immersed among the participating owners and will get continual feedback, mostly unsolicited.

Ann Danner is a Stanford University graduate who has held Board-level positions at many local nonprofit agencies including, but not limited to, Junior League of San Jose, HOPE Rehabilitation Services, Resource Area for Teachers

(RAFT), The Health Trust, United Way, YMCA, Housing for Independent People (HIP), Volunteer Exchange, and the San Jose Museum of Art.

Ann noted, "It is easy for me to work on Boards since I've had so much experience serving on them. I always had the 'can do' attitude, but it was the Junior League that gave me the experience to get me started."

Ann has three recommendations for enhancing leadership skills:

1. Show up and come prepared. Do your homework: think about the challenge, the situation or the opportunity ahead of time, and what should be done differently to approach the problem. Then, show up ready to share your perspective.

2. Know beforehand what is going to happen – or the possibilities of what is going to happen – in a meeting. Figure out who your allies are and who are not. Work ahead of the meeting to get everyone on board. Assuming that everything will go smoothly or assuming that everyone is rational doesn't work – especially with nonprofit boards where there are a variety of reasons people hold board-level positions.

3. When working in a nonprofit agency, treat board members as volunteers rather than hybrid staff members. Cultivate relationships with them the same way you so with any donor – get them involved, make them feel ownership. Ann learned this first hand with her Junior League experience and noted this has helped her become successful in her various nonprofit leadership roles.

According to Danner, the ideal governance is that of fiduciary oversight with a focus on strategy. A board member should bring an unbiased outside perspective. For some nonprofits, because the board are part of the funding, or in the case of a member owned nonprofit, or are customers/clients themselves, the CEO will bring in the outside perspective which is flipped from the norm for a for profit. The boards' role is to advise and help the CEO.

Mike Byrd is a retired CFO from the high tech industry and former president of La Rinconada Country Club and Kuki'o Golf and Beach Club. Mike is a member of multiple clubs, where he has been in leadership for decades.

**Appendix II**

**Study Invitation**

The following instructions were sent along with the survey link:

"I am asking you to take this survey as part of the background research for my Master Club Manager Monograph. The survey should take about seven minutes to complete. The questions are very basic and straightforward: there will be no need to dig through financial statements or policies. I ask that each question simply be answered off the top of your head. The survey is both confidential and anonymous.

For the purposes of this study, I am looking for completed survey responses from managers who are the highest-ranking paid employee of the club, reporting to either the Board or highest-ranking club official. I would also appreciate if you would forward this survey to your highest-ranking club official. A key theme that my research has unearthed is a difference between the manager's understanding of his or her role and that of the club official(s). One topic I am particularly interested in is whether there is alignment between the way the manager views the leadership relationship, and the way the club official views the relationship. Therefore, it is important that both the highest-ranking manager and highest-ranking club official complete the survey.

The CMAA Master Club Manager committee sees this work as potentially yielding information that will be very useful to all managers. It should provide insight into how managers and their bosses relate to one another. The Monograph will show my interpretation of the survey results within the context of other research to offer an answer to the question "How can a club's GM/COO and its Board of Directors effectively work together to accomplish the club's vision and goals?"

I hope that you will help me with this project. When the final product is completed, you will be able to access it through the CMAA, by contacting me directly at Macniven09@gmail.com, or by my contact information with the CMAA. I welcome all comments throughout and after this process.

Thank you for your assistance.

Respectfully,

MacDonald Niven, CCM, CCE

# Appendix III

**Survey**

1. Is your club Member-owned and governed by a Member-comprised   Board?

◯  Yes

◯   No

Thank you for your time. This survey is seeking input from Member-owned clubs.

✱ 2. Your  position:

◯  Member serving as the President or highest ranking club official

◯  Highest ranking paid employee

✱ 3. Please read the following descriptions and select the one that best describes the role of the club's highest ranking paid employee:

Club Manager - facilitates the activities as directed by the BOD reporting directly to the president or BOD. Normally shares duties with other senior staff, such as the head Golf Professional and Golf Course Superintendent

GM/COO (CMAA Definition) - The General Manager/Chief Operating Officer (GM/COO) is hired by the   Board of Directors, reports to the President or Executive Committee and is responsible for carrying out the Board's policies. The General Manager/Chief Operating Officer will be held accountable for all areas of the club and will ensure the synergism of all club activities. He/she becomes the Board's bridge to the staff and committees and enables a Board to avoid the intricacies and short-term focus that is the staff's   responsibility. All department heads report to this   position.

CEO - Typically, the CEO has responsibilities as a director, decision maker, leader, manager and executor.  As leader of the company, the CEO advises the board of directors, motivates employees, drives change,   and presides over the organizations day-to-day operations.

◯  Club Manager

◯   GM/COO

◯  CEO

4. Please use the drop-down menus to select the term that best describes the roles of

Board of Directors (Trustees) Committee
Manager (being the highest ranking paid   employee)

in relation to indicated areas of club governance listed   below.

For example: in the area of Bylaw Development, your Board of Directors may Administer, Approve,      Develop, Establish and Execute, and Recommend, but its main role is to make final Approval; therefore, the appropriate selection is  "Approves."

1. Administers - executes a policy, plan or   decision
2. Approves - final authority for others' to execute policy, plan or    decision
3. Develops - creates policy, plan or decision for approval by    others
4. Establishes and Executes - policy, plan or decision is created and executed by this person or group without formal approval by others
5. No  Role
6. Provides Input - has informal influence in planning stages, but no formal authority for action or recommendation
7. Recommends - makes formal recommendation about policy, plans or decisions to others for actionable consideration

| | BOD | Committee | Manager |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bylaw Development | | | |
| Policies | | | |
| Long Term and Strategic Goals | | | |
| Short Term Goals | | | |
| Day-to-Day Operations | | | |
| Budget | | | |
| Capital Purchases | | | |
| Renovations | | | |
| Emergency Repairs | | | |

| | BOD | Committee | Manager |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fees | | | |
| Personnel policies | | | |
| Staff Hiring (Other than GM) | | | |
| Staff Development (Other than GM) | | | |
| Staff Salaries (Other than GM) | | | |
| Staff Evaluations (Other than GM) | | | |
| GM/COO Hiring | | | |
| GM/COO Development | | | |
| GM/COO Compensation | | | |
| GM/COO Evaluations | | | |

5     Given the following definitions, what percentage of the Board of Directors' Club devoted time is spent in each area (the sum of your 4 answers must add to   100)

Operational: daily functioning of service, golf course, food and beverage quality;
specific Member enjoyment activities; handling of complaints and compliments.

| |
|---|

Fiduciary: ensures that the Club is faithful to its mission, accountable to
performance standards, and compliant with laws and regulations.

| |
|---|

Strategic: sets the Club's priorities and course.

| |
|---|

Generative: thoughtfully frames the problem or situation at hand before moving
to choose strategies, make decisions or develop solutions.

| |
|---|

On a scale of 1 to 3, with 1 being "Very Unlikely" and 3 being "Very Likely," please rate the following statements. (GM represents the highest ranking manager; BM refers to Board Member.)

6. The GM is an ambassador for the   Club

| 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|
| ○ | ○ | ○ |

7. The GM should be highly engaged with the   membership

| 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|
| ○ | ○ | ○ |

8. I feel confident in the job security of the   GM

| 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|
| ○ | ○ | ○ |

9.   I am confident that, if necessary, the president can manage the daily operations of the club

| 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|
| ○ | ○ | ○ |

10. I would like to see the GM have/take a stronger leadership    role

| 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| ◯ | ◯ | ◯ |

Please respond to the following Yes/No statements

11. When hiring or releasing senior positions the GM must get formal approval from the president or BOD

◯ Yes

◯ No

12. Recalling a time when a manger left your club (or when you, as manager, left a club): how long before the actual departure were you aware that the GM was to be dismissed or intended to resign (or, if you yourself were the GM, did you become aware of your impending dismissal or first make the decision to resign)?

◯ At time of departure

◯  6 month

◯ 1 year

◯ 2 years

◯ 3+ years

For the following, using the same scale as above, please indicate in the first row "How likely this would cause termination" (Termination). For example: an incompetent manager may be rated "3" being Highly Likely to cause termination. In the second row, "How likely is this to occur" (Occur) refers to how often you have been part of, witnessed, or heard from peers of the occurrence. Using the same example, if you witness incompetence that results in termination your response would be "3"; however, if it's very rare that you've witnessed incompetence resulting in termination then your rating would be "1".

13. Incompetence

|  | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

14. Drinking or illegal drug use while at work

|  | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

15. Theft or illegal activity

|  | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

16. Staff indiscretion

|  | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

17. Member indiscretion

|  | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

18. Failure to fit the "Club culture"

|  | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

19. Failure to "get along" with the president

|  | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

20. Failure to follow BOD directives

| | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

21. Insubordination

| | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

22. Failure to communicate effectively with BOD/Committees/Members

| | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

23. Inappropriate internet postings affecting person and Club negatively

| | 1 (Very Unlikely) | 2 | 3 (Very Likely) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Termination | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Occur | ○ | ○ | ○ |

24. Your highest completed level of education:

○ High School

○ Two-year college degree

○ Four-year college degree

○ Masters Degree

○ JD

○ PhD

○ MD

○ Other (please specify)

[                                        ]

25. What is the average length (in years) of a club President's term in    office?

◯ 1

◯ 2

◯ 3

◯ 4

◯ 5+

* 26. Our club and/or club officials have received the following honors: (select all that apply)

☐ Distinguished Club

☐ Platinum Club

☐ Club of the Year

☐ Golf Digest Top 100

☐ General Manager of the Year

☐ President of the Year

☐ None of the above

27.Club size (Million of $) in total annual club revenue:

◯ 0-3

◯ 4-7

◯ 8-11

◯ 12-15

◯ 16+

28. Club  Location:

◯ East

◯ Midwest

◯ West

29. Club  Type:

☐ City

☐ Golf

☐ Tennis

☐ HOA

☐ Country Club

☐ If your club type is not listed, please specify type

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30. Number of GMs (or equivalent position answering to the Board) over the past 20 years

○ 1-2

○ 3-4

○ 5-6

○ 7-8

○ 9+

31. What is the predominant background of the club President?

☐ Corporate CEO

☐ Small Business Owner

☐ Entrepreneur

☐ Military

☐ Financial

☐ Sales and Marketing

☐ Physician

☐ Attorney

☐ Educator

☐ Other (please specify)

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32. Please write any additional  comments:

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Thank you for participating in this survey

**Appendix IV**

**Survey Results**

*Q 1. Is your club member-owned and governed by a member-comprised Board?*
575 surveys were initiated; 512 responded "Yes." This question was forced, in order to remove respondents who did not meet the baseline requirements: those who answered "Yes" proceeded automatically to the next question, while the 63 who answered "No" were sent to a page that thanked them for their participation and ended the survey. Of the 512 respondents who answered "Yes," 361 chose to continue with the survey.

*Q 2. Your position:*

62 respondents were "Members serving as the President or highest ranking club official" (President) and 299 were "Highest ranking paid employee" (hereinafter referred to as GM/COO). The definition of "highest ranking" pertains to the person to whom staff report, not necessarily the person with the highest income.

*Q 3. Please read the following descriptions and select the one that best describes the role of the club's highest ranking paid employee:*

> *Club Manager - facilitates the activities as directed by the BOD reporting directly to the president or BOD. Normally shares duties with other senior staff, such as the head Golf Professional and Golf Course Superintendent* **9.97% (36 respondents)**

> *GM/COO (CMAA Definition) - The General Manager/Chief Operating Officer (GM/COO) is hired by the Board of Directors, reports to the President or Executive Committee and is responsible for carrying out the Board's policies. The General Manager/Chief Operating Officer will be held accountable for all areas of the club and will ensure the synergism of all club activities. He/she becomes the Board's bridge to the staff and committees and enables a Board to avoid the intricacies and short-term focus that is the staff's responsibility. All department heads report to this position.* **82.83% (299 respondents)**

> *CEO - Typically, the CEO has responsibilities as a director, decision maker, leader, manager and executor. As leader of the company, the CEO advises the board of directors, motivates employees, drives change, and presides over the organizations day-to-day operations.*

**7.2% (26 respondents)**

*Q 4. Please use the drop-down menus to select the term that best describes the roles of the Board of Directors, Committee and Manager in relation to indicated areas of club governance listed below:*

*Definitions are:*

Administers - *executes a policy, plan or decision*
Approves - *final authority for others' to execute policy, plan or decision*
Develops - *creates policy, plan or decision for approval by others*
Establishes and Executes - *policy, plan or decision is created and executed by this person or group without formal approval by others*
No Role - *the party in questions plays no role in this area*
Input - *has informal influence in planning stages, but no formal authority for action or recommendation*
Recommends - *makes formal recommendation about policy, plans or decisions to others for actionable consideration*

|  | BOD | Committee | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bylaws | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| Policies | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| LT Strategic Goals | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| Day-to-Day Operations | No Role | Input | Establishes and Executes |
| Fees | Approves | Recommends | Administers |
| Staff Evaluations (Not Manager) | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| GM/COO Compensation | Approves | No Role | Input |
| Short Term Goals | Approves | Input | Develops |
| Budget | Approves | Input | Develops |
| Capital Purchases | Approves | Input | Develops |
| Renovations/Expansion | Approves | Develops | Administers |
| Emergency Repairs | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| Personnel Policy | Approves | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| Staff Hiring (Not GM) | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| Staff Development (Other than GM) | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| Staff Salaries (Other than GM) | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |
| GM/COO Hiring | Approves | Input | No Role |
| GM/COO Development | No Role | No Role | Establishes and Executes |

| GM/COO Evaluation | Establishes and Executes | No Role | Input |

*Q 5. Given the following definitions, what percentage of the Board of Director's club devoted time is spent in each area (the sum of the four answers must add to 100)?*

*Operational: daily functioning of service, golf course, food and beverage quality; specific member enjoyment activities; handling of complaints and compliments.*

*Fiduciary: ensures that the Club is faithful to its mission, accountable to performance standards, and compliant with laws and regulations.*

*Strategic: sets the Club's priorities and course.*

*Generative: thoughtfully frames the problem or situation at hand before moving to choose strategies, make decisions or develop solutions.*

The responses were as follows:

|  | President | GM/COO |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Operational | 20 | 12 |
| Fiduciary | 31 | 31 |
| Strategic | 27 | 34 |
| Generative | 22 | 24 |

*Q. 6 through Q. 10 are measured on a scale of 1 – 3 with 1 being "Very Unlikely" and 3 being "Very Likely"*

|  | President | GM/COO |
| --- | --- | --- |
| GM is an ambassador for the Club | 2.75 | 2.91 |
| GM should be highly engaged with the membership | 2.87 | 2.92 |
| I feel confident in the job security of the GM | 2.65 | 2.65 |
| I am confident that, if necessary, the president can manage the daily operations of the club | 1.63 | 1.25 |
| I would like the GM to have/take a stronger leadership role | 2.15 | 2.17 |

*Q. 11 When hiring or releasing senior level positions the GM must get formal approval from the president or BOD*

The responses below are in percentages responding "Yes."

|  | President | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|
| When hiring or releasing senior position the GM must get formal approval from the president or BOD | 69.23% | 47.64% |

*Q 12. Recalling a time when a manger left your club (or when you, as manager, left a club): how long before the actual departure were you aware that the GM was to be dismissed or intended to resign (or, if you yourself were the GM, did you become aware of your impending dismissal or first make the decision to resign)?*

|  | President | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|
| At time of departure | 44.19% (19) | 53.64% (118) |
| 6 month | 51.16% (22) | 41.36% (91) |
| 1 year | 4.65% (2) | 3.18% (7) |
| 2 years | 0 | 0.91% (2) |
| 3+ years | 0 | 0.91% (2) |

*Q 13 – Q 23. For the following, using the same scale as above, please indicate in the first row "How likely this would cause termination" (Termination). For example: an incompetent manager may be rated "3" being Highly Likely to cause termination. In the second row, "How likely is this to occur" (Occur) refers to how often you have been part of, witnessed, or heard from peers of the occurrence. Using the same example, if you witness incompetence that results in termination your response would be "3"; however, if it's very rare that you've witnessed incompetence resulting in termination then your rating would be "1".*

| | President | | GM/COO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Termination | Occur | Termination | Occur |
| Incompetence | 2.81 | 1.71 | 2.7 | 1.95 |
| Drinking or illegal drug use while at work | 2.92 | 1.42 | 2.77 | 1.9 |
| Theft or illegal activity | 2.9 | 1.42 | 2.82 | 1.9 |
| Staff Indiscretion | 2.5 | 1.42 | 2.46 | 1.83 |
| Member indiscretion | 2.31 | 1.43 | 2.24 | 1.74 |
| Failure to fit the "Club culture" | 2.35 | 1.65 | 2.32 | 1.98 |
| Failure to "get along" with the president | 1.85 | 1.56 | 2.3 | 2.01 |
| Failure to follow BOD directives | 2.67 | 1.58 | 2.57 | 2 |
| Insubordination | 2.67 | 1.49 | 2.54 | 1.81 |
| Failure to communicate effectively with BOD/Committees/Members | 2.25 | 1.6 | 2.19 | 1.88 |
| Inappropriate internet postings affecting person and club negatively | 2.56 | 1.35 | 2.38 | 1.63 |

*Q 24. Your highest completed level of education:*

| | President | GM/COO |
|---|---|---|
| High School | 2.08% (1) | 10.96% (25) |
| Two Year College Degree | 8.33% (4) | 21.49% (49) |
| Four Year College Degree | 43.75% (21) | 56.58% (129) |
| Masters Degree | 35.42% (17) | 7.02% (16) |
| JD | 4.17% (2) | 0.0% |
| Phd | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| MD | 2.08% (1) | 0.0% |
| Other | 4.17% (2) | 3.95% (9) |

*Q 25.   What is the average length (in years) of a club President's term in office?*

| # Years | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % | 41.3% | 42.03% | 8.7% | 2.54% | 5.43% |

*Q 26. Our club and/or club officials have received the following honors: (select all that apply)*

| Honor | % |
|---|---|
| Distinguished Club | 19.57% |
| Platinum Club | 25.36% |
| Club of the Year | 1.45% |
| Golf Digest Top 100 | 10.51% |
| General Manager of the Year | 5.8% |
| President of the Year | 3.62% |
| None of the above | 58.7% |

*Q 27. Club size (Millions of $) in total annual club revenue:*

| Size in Million $ | % |
|---|---|
| 0-3 | 17.03% |
| 4-7 | 44.2% |
| 8-11 | 21.01% |
| 12-15 | 9.78% |
| 16+ | 7.97% |

*Q 28. Club location:*

| Location | % |
|---|---|
| East | 54.21% |
| Midwest | 22.71% |
| West | 23.08% |

*Q 29.Club type:*

| Club Type | % |
|---|---|
| City | 5.8% |
| Golf | 13.04% |
| Tennis | 2.54% |
| HOA | 4.71% |
| Country Club | 69.57% |
| Not listed | 11.23% |

*Q 30. Number of GMs (or equivalent position answering to BOD) over the past 20 years*

| # GMs | % |
|---|---|
| 1-2 | 35.4% |
| 3-4 | 45.26% |
| 5-6 | 13.87% |
| 7-8 | 4.01% |
| 9+ | 1.46% |

*Q 31. What is the predominant background of the club President?*

| Background | % |
|---|---|
| Corporate CEO | 29.09% |
| Small Business Owner | 20.36% |
| Entrepreneur | 9.09% |
| Military | 0.73% |
| Financial | 20.36% |
| Sales and Marketing | 10.91% |
| Physician | 1.45% |
| Attorney | 18.18% |
| Educator | 0.36% |
| Other | 10.55% |

**Appendix V**

*The Ability to Lead*

In the club industry today, there are three basic types of club staff leadership: club manager, general manager/chief operating officer, and chief executive officer. Regardless of your title, this monograph should be beneficial for any who are attempting to influence and lead a club. One main objective of this monograph is to describe tactics and techniques that can help a manager influence the officials to establish best practices. If you're a successful manager at a club where best practices are part of the club culture, your interest may lie in techniques to keep the process in place.

Club management is very complex. Managers must be adept at a host of mannerisms in order to work effectively with directors and members. Though a complete list would be virtually endless, the following topics are covered in this section:

- Competency

- Open and positive communication

- Perspectives

- Awareness

- Emotional Control

- Group dynamics

- Illusion of knowledge

- Egocentrism bias

- Authority

- Group-think

**Competency**

According to our survey, the number one reason cited by presidents as cause for manager termination is incompetence. Sixty-four percent of the responding managers have four year or greater college degrees and twenty-one percent have two year degrees, so it appears that education is not the issue. Continuing education, however, is a must for any manager who hopes to be successful. The Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) has a very strong educational component and offers ample opportunity for professional networking. Remedial action can be taken to strengthen technical knowledge through CMAA classes, professional seminars, universities, networking, and many other options.

Researchers feel that *Displaying* competence through executive presence is nearly as important as actually *having* competence. (Hewlett, 2014) A "leading style" manager must be able to display competence through member interaction, work with committees, and Board participation. When working with members and club leaders, the best effort is a humble effort: the manager should allow leaders to express opinions, many of which will be excellent—and others, not so much. In either case, a technique that fosters goodwill is to allow the member to express his or her opinion, and then respond in a positive manner that demonstrates your understanding of the issue, without discounting the member's perspective. Agreeing with a member avoids creating negativity in the discussion, allowing for more understanding from both sides. Having expressed a measure of agreement, a manager may then pivot to a different alternative, while still allowing the member to feel positively engaged in the conversation. A term used in today's leadership is "Yes, and…"

**Open and Positive Communication**

Managers interviewed suggest that responding "Yes" to an issue immediately gives the person a positive feeling towards the conversation, allowing for open communication. The following "and" then

allows you to pivot in a different direction while maintaining the positive feelings from the Yes. For example:

 "We need to have our greens running at 14, all great clubs have very fast greens."

"Yes, that is a fantastic idea, and you're right, I hear Augusta runs at 14. I'm not sure, though, if Augusta has their greens at 14 all the time. I believe they speed them up for the tournament and then bring the speed back down. Greens at that speed take such a beating. I agree our members would like 14, but what if it causes us to lose turf because of the stress it places on the plant? You've seen those greens on the last day of the tournament, even on TV they look like they're about ready to go to dirt! Augusta has a pretty hefty budget. In order to cut so low, the mowers have special reels and bed knives that require daily sharpening. That would really add to our expenses."

Agreeing and then pivoting allows the manager to keep the conversation positive, but still offer a different perspective. This also allows the manager to demonstrate competence as he or she discusses the issue of green speed and the requirements for different levels.

Generally speaking, regardless of how minor, misguided, or stupid (!) the manager may think a member's statement is, the member thinks it is brilliant and very important; therefore, the responding manager needs to keep the member's perspective in mind.

**Perspectives**

We have all heard the phrase "Walk a mile in the other person's shoes," meaning that in order to understand someone we need to take their perspective. But suppose you're walking in their shoes… in the wrong direction? A significant problem with perspective-taking is that we are most likely guessing at the

person's perspective, making us prone to error. Thinking that we've taken another person's perspective gives us confidence in our judgment, but no evidence has been found that "taking" another's perspective actually increases the accuracy of a judgment. (Epley, 2015, p. 168)

But there is a simple solution. If you want to "get" someone's perspective: ask them. "Taking" someone's perspective is really guessing, while "getting" someone's perspective is actually asking, listening, and learning about someone's perspective. In order to do this well, you must be open to hearing others' views and ensure that they are able to express these views freely.

I had a situation where I was doing my usual member interaction during lunch, and came to a table where the member was physically shaking with anger. He immediately blurted out that we should be putting prices on all the dinner events we hold. I was astounded by this level of anger and wanted to know the reason. I said, "Wow, I can see you're angry about this, please tell me what you're thinking?" After listening closely, I learned that what this really boiled down to was that this fellow is getting older and more self-conscious about younger folks with perceived greater wealth; it was about his self-worth. Understanding his perspective gave me insight into how to help this fellow come to grips with his insecurities. I would never have guessed at the reasons behind his anger. *Asking* solved my problem, and it was *my* problem, not his. We agreed that prices would only be left off if it were due to market conditions. The solution was a fair and reasonable accommodation; he has been a supporter ever since. Getting the real perspective is important to finding a good solution.

Competence is complex and often may have less to do with technical competence and more with perceived competence. In reality, competence being the top reason for termination may not be from the

technical aspect, but of political nature. However, a manager needs to assess their technical competence and be aware of his or her abilities, always working towards a higher level. Self-awareness is very important in growth.

**Awareness**

Self-awareness is important because awareness allows a leader to see more clearly how he or she affects others. Leadership is not about the leader, it's about those the leader is trying to lead. Leading a group of hourly workers in the proper manner to serve an entrée is different from leading a group of business leaders in strategic positioning. In order for us to be leaders, we must be influential.  In order to be influential, we must really understand ourselves, or be very lucky. Self-awareness is important because awareness allows a leader to see more clearly how he or she affects others. Leadership is not about the leader, it's about those the leader is trying to lead.

**Emotional Control**

When something occurs to stir our emotions, most often our first, split-second reaction is outside our control. (Brooks, 2011) Only after years of deliberate work can we influence these initial emotions. However, we have no control over the immediate emotions of others, which is why managers need to be very careful of their actions after emotions have begun to surface. Often we will find ourselves so emotionally charged that decision-making becomes a knee-jerk reaction; seldom are great decisions made under these circumstances.   It's important to be mindful and to learn the triggers that cause emotional escalation. It's also helpful to understand that everyone has these emotional impulses, including your directors. Being aware of others' emotions can help prevent the situation from escalating, which may make the difference between heroic influence and being shown the door.

There are methods that can help keep your emotions from being hijacked. These require conscious effort and practice to make them available when we need them, and when we need them is generally when we are most vulnerable. According to psychologist Daniel Goleman (Goleman, Emotional Intelligence, 2006)*,* the best method for emotional control is to be mindful of the anger as it begins to stir, and then to regulate it once it has begun. In simpler terms: feel the anger and reframe the issue more positively - immediately. A cool-down period is exceptionally helpful, and sooner than later is better. Psychologist Dolf Zillman of The University of Alabama found that once anger turns to a high level of rage, there is no turning back: a person falls into "cognitive incapacitation," where they just can't think straight (Goleman, Emotional Intelligence, 2006). Therefore, it is imperative that the anger be caught soon, before escalation can occur. One popular technique that appears *not* to work is the catharsis, or "venting." Diane Tice of Case Western University found that, after venting, people actually felt worse and not better. The cooling-down period is a time of distraction from the issues, keeping a person occupied and not thinking about the causes of the anger. Cooling down allows the brain to think rather than react (Goleman, Emotional Intelligence, 2006).

Having emotional control is critical to working with directors: if we get lost in an emotion, we may give a response that would be better kept to ourselves. It will be a *problem* if an inappropriate response is made to a director, and catastrophic if it's made to a director in the presence of other members. At no time in the life of a manager is it a good thing to disrespect a director—and public disrespect will always be terminal.

**Group Dynamics**

Clubs are a group of like-minded people who then form smaller, more tightly-knit groups. The Board of Directors is just such a tightly-knit group. It's been proven that groups are highly protective of

their members. You may recall this group protection from childhood if you have a sibling or dealt with other families with siblings. It would be common for the older sibling to denigrate the younger, but if you, as a non-family member, took part in the denigration, there would be war! The same goes for the directors: one of them may well be out of line, or even a "rogue" director shunned by the others, but it will be disrespectful for the manager to point this out publicly and will not go well for the manager. There is a proper time for all things, and patience in the club business can be a virtue. Directors are part of an elite group of which the manager is most likely not involved. Most of us are recruited to the club and specifically paid to perform a job; we tend not to be in the same social circles as our members outside the club. For the minority—and an individual is normally the minority—to influence a majority, some form of acceptance is needed.

The natural existence of group bias effects the club environment, and necessitates certain strategies in order to be influential from the minority position. According to psychologist William D. Crano, "minority" is defined as the individual or group that has limited (or no) power to force acceptance of their positions  (Crano, 2012)  – which accurately describes the position of the manager relative to the directors. A significant role of the GM (minority or out-group) is to influence the directors (majority or in-group) in professionally operating the club. An astute GM will lead the board of directors, with the knowledge that they are leading from the minority position. Crano identifies several key factors in a minority influencing a majority: persistence, consistency, flexibility, unanimity, and objectivity. However, the most important overarching factor, critical to any hope of influence, is that the minority must be a legitimate part of the majority – there must be an "us" factor.

First, there must be the establishment of legitimate in-group status. A GM making a recommendation to the board may gain in-group status as one of this group of leaders, or through

gathering the prior support of a committee chair. As a fellow director with in-group status, the committee chair will allow the GM in-group status through association.

The message must be consistent, administered persistently, and yet flexible. Any confusion in the message from the minority will be met with skepticism by the majority and make it nearly impossible for the minority to be successful. Once the message has clarity and uniformity, it must be administered persistently. The message must be spoken about very often and to all who will listen (and to those who would prefer not to listen). In turn, those members will talk to other members. However, the majority rarely grants full agreement to the minorities' initial proposal – there is almost always some degree of negotiation. The minority must be flexible without giving up on the basic goal.

Hand in hand with consistency is unanimity. The minority must be unanimous in its proposal. A minority member who breaks with the group will derail the effort and success will be very difficult. Once the boardroom debate is complete and full discussion has allowed for a decision, the board of directors must present a united front.

Influence is more easily accomplished if the debate centers on objective facts rather than subjective opinion. It is easy to defend the fact that one formal chair being recommended cost $450 and the other not recommended costs $1,350, rather than defending the beauty of one chair over the other. Understanding group dynamics and the importance of gaining in-group status is critical to influencing directors.

**Illusion of Knowledge**

Directors feel peer pressure to know all the details of the club's operations and, unfortunately, are prone to answer questions whether they know the answer or not. This tendency is referred to by Hall, Arliss, et al. as the illusion of knowledge (Hall, Ariss, & and Todorov, 2007). Additionally, the illusion of

knowledge is the natural process whereby even though a person may not know something, they have confidence that they do (Atir, Dunning, & Rosenzweig, 2015). This illusion is very common and can contribute to problems at a club because rumors spread very fast. As we all have witnessed, any gaps in information will be filled by members, correctly or not – the illusion of knowledge is strong within the club environment.

A problem that pops up from this illusion of knowledge is that members will try to gain knowledge from virtually any source: the GM, a director, the bartender, assistant golf professional, bag boy, caddie, or any other staff person who spends a great deal of time in the service of members. It's interesting that in a small and unscientific survey of who the most influential people are at the club, we find that the bartender and outside service staff rank higher than the president, GM, or other senior staff. However, it's fairly rare that either the bartender or outside service staff have a full understanding of all the activities at the club.

Having non-supervisory staff members portrayed as expert can be problematic and virtually unstoppable. Members, including directors, will talk with staff and almost always segue into operational issues.

> One day I was walking through the locker room and heard a member in animated conversation about the condition of the greens. I stood out of sight and listened. The member was speaking to the locker room attendant – who doesn't speak English! Undaunted, the member spent a little over a minute on the greens issue. Finally, I came out of hiding and took up the conversation. The good news in this case was that the staff member couldn't give incorrect information, and I was able to give the member solid reasoning.

Early in his presidential tenure at University of Southern California, Steven B. Sample coined the phrase "Open communication with structured decision making." Everyone in the organization is free to communicate directly with everyone else in the organization, with the explicit caveat that any and all commitments, allocations, and decisions will be made strictly through the hierarchy. (Sample, 2003) An understanding such as this will help keep confusion to a minimum and allow the staff clarity in their roles.

Through interviews with top managers across the country, it has become clear that a primary way to combat the illusion of knowledge is through constant, consistent messaging to the leaders, members, *and* staff. Keeping the leaders in the loop of knowledge may also help to keep them out of the loop of activity. Often directors will want to accomplish something, but they are confused about what they should be doing. Rather than exhibiting patience, the peer pressure for them to show action will seduce them into falling back on whatever made them successful and often times that is to "get to work," delving into the details of operational work. A key to limiting this problem is setting the parameters of the director's work and having full agreement from all parties so that there is support when a director is "counseled" about delving into operational areas where they should stay clear.

To avoid the pitfalls created by the illusion of knowledge, we need to understand that the directors and members are both prone to this type of thinking, and to be self-aware concerning our own instances of over-confidence. A related problem at the opposite end of the spectrum is the "expert" problem. It's often difficult for an expert to understand that certain topics that are crystal clear in the expert's mind may not be so clear in another's mind. This problem can be minimized through patience and simplifying explanations. Explain issues as if the other person had no knowledge of that issue, and ask periodically if the person understands the explanation, perhaps by having them tell you what they understand it to be. However, it's important to avoid the appearance of condescension at all costs. Pay

close attention to the other person's responses—once they seem to grasp the issue, no further explanation is necessary.

**Egocentrism Bias**

Similar to the illusion of knowledge is the *egocentrism bias*: we think of the world through our own perspective too much and fail to realize that others may not share our perspective. This is often related to our self-perception that we are smarter than we may actually be and, unfortunately, that people like us more than they do. (Epley, 2015) An example of these issues would be failing to "read the room" at a Board meeting. The manager leaves the meeting thinking, "I really nailed that presentation." Once the manager has left the room, however, the president turns to the vice president and says, "Our manager just doesn't get it." A failure due to egocentrism can be devastating. To avoid these issues, ask for feedback at the time of the event. As we discussed earlier, attempting to predict how people feel about you, or taking their perspective are risky tactics: just ask! At the same time, however, keep in mind that egocentrism bias is inherent in all of us, directors included, and that this bias will also inflect the feedback we solicit from others. Patience and understanding will help work through these issues.

**Authority**

Our natural adherence to authority will affect our relationship with the president and directors. The manager will naturally defer to the higher authority, often regardless of the issue under discussion. Stanley Milgram performed experiments clearly showing how a person of authority can influence those in subordinate positions. (Milgram, 1974)

The problem with automatically deferring to authority is that a president, due to the illusion of knowledge, may be making decisions based on less than perfect information. For example, clubs are ripe for *expansive representation of one*: the natural tendency to believe that one-member opinion represents

the majority and requires immediate full attention of the leadership. This in itself is a natural driving force for club leaders who want to solve their friend's issues with a firm, fast hand. The prevalence of texts and emails makes this issue all the more prevalent; a president can get an emotional plea at a party, become engaged in the effort, text or email fellow directors, and begin a process of over-engagement before much thought has been given to the issue. A scenario such as this can cause snap decisions to be made.

**Group-think**

When directors are so comfortable with one another that they readily and freely communicate, it can often result in group-think, a problem that occurs when a small group makes decisions based on cohesion and a striving for unanimity over realistic appraisal of other alternative solutions. The internal persuasiveness of group-think is not confined to clubs: major events such as the Bay of Pigs, the Vietnam War, Watergate, and the war in Iraq may all have roots in group-think.

Through interviews, GM's have reported witnessing firsthand many decisions by Boards that appeared to result from group-think; these decisions were either reversed at the next opportunity, or implemented with unapproved modifications to make them workable, or simply implemented with flaws and tolerated for years.

Prevention of group-think is easy in theory and difficult in practice. There are several keys to disarming group-think (Janis, 1982):

1. Someone needs to be the Devil's Advocate – this is a person assigned the role of taking the opposite side. Assigning a person will limit the negative or hard feelings that are associated with the "rogue" person. However, the manager must be adept at reading the room: if the manager is always the Devil's Advocate, he or she may become perceived as difficult and negative. Assigning the role will eliminate this stigma.

2.  Leaders should try to present all aspects of a problem impartially, rather than stating the expected outcome first. This is very difficult in practice, because it's normal for the presenter to be biased towards the proposal. Having a standard format for presentation may help to limit this presentation bias.

3.  Assign the same issue to different teams for deliberation, then bring them together for full board discussion. Club boards are usually less than 15 in number, so teams can be as small as two or three.

4.  Board members should independently review the proposal with trusted peers to get an outsider's view of the proposal. But rumors abound in the club world, so the confidant must be trustworthy.

5.  Once consensus appears to have been met, hold a "second chance" discussion where members can express any lingering doubts. Board meetings can run over time, and many are very concerned about the 1 ½ hour target meeting, so "another bite at the apple" can sometimes be seen as redundant or tedious. However, review of a significant proposal may allow the board one last chance to unearth some unintended consequence.

Managers interviewed suggest that requiring at least two meetings on a proposal before final vote (with exceptions for an emergency issue) is a useful safeguard against making hasty decisions. Having a "first reading" allows the directors to consider the proposal for a period of time, as well as allowing them to play the proposal out in the club environment. There is a good possibility that this trial period will bring to light any unintended consequences of the policy.

A board falling into the quagmire of group-think may not realize what is happening. Using the tools listed above may help to keep the board viable, productive, and able to make decisions based on the membership's best interests.

**Summary:**

- Be competent and display that competence in a humble manner

- Use "Yes, and" to keep communication open and positive

- Get the other's perspective, try not to "take" it

- Be self-aware

- Control emotions and understand that others have them as well

- Understand group dynamics and how to be influential as a minority

- Be conscious of the illusion of knowledge and how it affects the leaders

- Be aware of our egocentrism bias and how to minimize its affect

- Be aware of the natural tendency of obedience to authority

- Be prepared to combat group-think

**Appendix VI**

*Establishing a Workable Governance Model*

Establishing an agreed-upon governance model is essential to the continuity of management. This model allows the manager to perform his or her duties consistently and without confusing staff. There must be an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the three leadership parties: manager, committee, and directors. It will be exceptionally difficult to maintain continuity and momentum if each year there are different rules of engagement or different governance routines according to the whim of the new president or committee chair. Agreement on any model is important: even a poor working model that everyone agrees upon is better than a perfect model that is not supported by everyone. Once this initial agreement is accomplished, the manager can go to work influencing the directors to improve the model to incorporate best practices and eliminate confusion.

In order to accomplish this, we want to create an environment of collaboration between the expert manager, directors, committees, and members at large. This collaboration relies on putting together a team: namely, the board of directors. J. Richard Hackman suggests that there are six enabling conditions in creating collaborative teams (Hackman, Collaborative Intelligence, 2011):

1. Create a real team

2. Specify a compelling team purpose

3. Put the right people on the team

4. Establish clear norms of conduct

5. Provide organizational supports for teamwork

6. Provide well-timed coaching

For our purposes, 1 and 3 are combined because these pertain to the selection process.

**Creating a Real Team and Putting the Right People on the Team**

The Nominating Committee (NC) is normally charged with assembling members for election to the Board of Directors. The NC is arguably the most important committee in the club, influencing the direction of the club by selecting its potential leaders. Managers interviewed have found that too often the committee leaves its task to the last minute (even when Bylaws are clear on its establishment criteria) and ends up soliciting "anyone with a pulse." Early establishment of the NC allows for a thoughtful process that should yield the best candidates for the director openings.

It has been generally accepted as best practice for the slate of nominees to equal the number of director openings. The members should also have the ability to petition for inclusion, thereby allowing anyone qualified to run for office.

Managers and presidents interviewed suggest that the selection criteria should include, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

- Members who will work together to accomplish common goals

- Members who are neither too similar nor too different from each other

- Mix of men and women (Woolley & Malone, 2011)

- Cross section of interest groups

- Previous committee experience

- Should *not* bring personal agenda(s)

Though the manager is usually not directly involved with the selection process, he or she should be able to assist the NC in its selection. Often the manager will be well informed about a broader base of

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candidates than the NC, and can help direct these potential candidates to the committee, or alert the committee to good candidates. Leadership and skills of influence will come into play here: it's important that the selection not simply be dictated by whom the NC happens to know, but that it takes into consideration who will best fill the roles and meet the true needs of the board. Most terms are for multiple years, so a poor decision at the outset will only have increasing consequences over time. The manager needs to carefully use his or her influence to promote excellent candidates without seeming biased or self-interested. Be careful to recognize egocentrism bias in this issue: it's important to understand how much influence it is appropriate to exert. Appearing to interfere with the process too much will alienate the NC members, causing them to distrust the manager's suggestions.

**Defining a Compelling Purpose**

A strategic plan is a document used to communicate the organizations goals, the action needed to achieve those goals, and all of the other critical elements developed during the planning exercise.

Strategic planning is very difficult and very few amateurs are able to create a viable strategic plan: most plans end up on the shelf despite all the pain and suffering it took to piece them together. There are a number of consultants available who can, for a modest sum, assist in professionally creating a plan.

If your Board prefers to take this task upon themselves, there are a few steps to follow (Five Steps to a Strategic Plan, 2011):

1. Determine where you are. Be careful not to consider where you *want* to be, but where you actually are

2. Identify what's important; focus on where the organization needs to be over time

3. Clearly define objectives and what needs to be achieved to attain them, a form of analysis known as "the Gap Analysis." The Gap refers to the difference of where you are today to where you want to be in the future.

4. Determine who will be held accountable for each aspect of the plan

5. Establish timelines for completion

6. Review the planning document for relevance on an annual basis. The plan is a "living" document. It is important that the BOD reaffirms and updates this document annually.

Enlisting a professional to help craft your strategy, however, is almost always preferable to leaving this task to the Board. The strategic plan is the foundation of the club's direction and sets the tone for success; as such, its creation deserves an extraordinary amount of time and effort. Very few people have the necessary skills to build their own home without a professional architect. Likewise, the strategic plan is of such importance that it should be designed with professional guidance.

It is also important that the manager play a key role in the creation of and subsequent adherence to the strategic plan. Though professionals will be well informed about how to craft a workable plan, and many members may have strategic backgrounds, it is usually the manager who has the on-the-ground expertise that ensures the plan is actually implementable. This expertise should not go to waste; it's incumbent on the manager to be part of this critical document.

**Establishing Clear Norms of Conduct**

Jerry McCoy produced a thorough model for the Premier Club Services of the Club Managers Association America entitled *The Directors Guide for Understanding Club Governance,* as well as its associated *Governance Checklist*. This information can be used to produce a simplified, but very useful, matrix for establishing roles and responsibilities, such as that shown in the Survey. An optimal Board

Policy Manual (BPM) details the roles and responsibilities of the leadership groups, along with any other important issues. Terra S. H. Waldron, CCM, CCE GM/COO of Desert Highlands Association, said that it took her two years to create the BPM. Her good relationship with the president allowed her to convince the president of the value that the BPM would bring to the club. (Waldron, 2014)

Managers interviewed suggest that even without a formal BPM, however, there should, at the very least, be agreement on the roles and responsibilities of the directors, committees, and GM/COO. If we cannot refer back to an agreed-upon policy to assess performance, club leadership will become very difficult, which may contribute to the high turnover rates for the club GM.

The first step is to outline the best practices. This can be done through a simple statement, a listing of roles and responsibilities, or the ideal Board Policy Manual. This first step addresses what a well-functioning leadership model looks and acts like. For Not For Profit (NFP) leadership, there are generally three modes: Fiduciary, Strategic, and Generative (Chait, Ryan, & Taylor, 2005); because of the natural relationship of the Members and activities of the clubs, I have also added the mode of Operational.

*Fiduciary* is the work of the board that cannot be abdicated to staff. It is the work of good stewardship, ensuring that the Club is faithful to its mission, accountable to performance standards, and compliant with laws and regulations. *Strategic* work is shared between the board and staff. This is the work of setting the course of the club, the 30,000-foot view. *Generative* is the work shared by board and staff, whereby issues are thoughtfully framed before moving to choose strategies, make decisions, or develop solutions. (Albert Einstein once quipped that, given an hour to solve a problem, he'd spend 55 minutes defining the problem and five minutes thinking about the solution). (If I Had an Hour to Solve a Problem, 2015) *Operational* is the daily functioning of service, golf course, food and beverage quality; specific member enjoyment activities, as well as the handling of complaints and compliments. While Operational is not one of the modes prescribed, we felt that it has a place in club management.

A well-functioning NFP leadership team is a collaborative team in which the board and manager share in generative and strategic modes, and maintain distance on fiduciary and operational. The GM and BOD should share leadership in a collaborative manner, adhering to the best practices described above, and supporting each other in their respective roles. However, the majority of the managers interviewed during the process and responding to the survey either do not follow the best practices, or find themselves in situations where best practices are not being followed by others, causing issues to arise.

Influence and leadership are required to establish a good model. The process may take years, and it may be necessary to accomplish it in pieces. Getting involved in the process at the beginning is the key, and using techniques of influence is part of this strategy. It will be easier to achieve a complete model once the work has started.

**Provide Organizational Supports (OS) for Teamwork**

Organizational support is an area where the manager can gain tremendous credibility and demonstrate competence. OS has four distinct aspects: (Hackman, Collaborative Intelligence, 2011)

1. Access to information

    The manager is in the perfect position to supply information that is necessary to good decision-making. The manager should be able to anticipate the issues and have pertinent information prepared. Having this information available prior to being asked will go a very long way in establishing credibility with directors.

2. Educational and technical resources

    The manager and staff are positioned to gain credibility through their association with professional experts who can be called upon to help clarify topics of interest. For example, the United States Golf Association staff agronomists may be called upon for

expertise in green and grounds issues. Managers can provide professional publications, links and blogs for reference all in an effort to help directors understand and make good decisions.

3.  Material resources

    The manager should ensure access to any physical resources that help the directors perform their duties. These resources can range from a meeting room with amenities that promote good thought, to pads of paper and pencil.

4.  External recognition and reinforcement

    A manager can offer praise and support to the leadership, though the manager should be careful not to be viewed as disingenuous (brown-noser!) Highlighting the good work of the leadership in the monthly newsletter is a simple form of recognition: members love to recognize other members' accomplishments on behalf of the club. The appropriate committee and chairperson should be recognized at the conclusion of a successful event – even though their input may have been negligible, graciously share the goodwill that goes along with a great event.

**Provide Well-Timed Coaching**

An annual retreat is the normal venue for discussing governance. Many clubs host retreats to promote inter-directorship bonding and learning. These are often held off-site over the course of one or several days. These retreats are usually moderated by a professional, but clubs may also choose to run their own programs. If the club is self-moderating, the manager will assume the most responsibility, and thus has the opportunity to guide the format, topics, and discussion. It's often helpful to have social activities interspersed among the seminars and sessions.

Another venue for learning is a group gathering that includes neighboring club leaders. A president, manager, and committee chair meeting may include half a day of discussion focusing on a topic of interest, followed by social activities and golf. These events are excellent for networking and peer-to-peer coaching. Directors love comparing their clubs, and these group meetings are excellent for networking. However, managers have found that the sharing of information at these meetings can be less than forthright and accurate—perhaps a bit of puffery is taking place!

Generally speaking, coaching can occur any time that there may be confusion about roles and responsibilities. These instances of confusion constitute a "teachable moment," and such opportunities are perfect for information sharing. People are often most receptive to gaining new understanding at a time when they are asking for help or advice (as opposed to when they are offered it unsolicited). These moments occur randomly, and should be exploited immediately.

The most critical time for using tools of influence is when the manager senses that there are misunderstandings about roles and responsibilities. It is during this critical time that relationships can get frayed or destroyed. A manager who senses misunderstanding needs to rely on an ally to help bring the topic to light, and must work diligently to reach an agreement. This point cannot be overstressed. The genesis of incompetence may come from a misunderstanding in the area of roles and responsibilities. Care must be taken to use the tools of influence to correct any misunderstandings about who is responsible for what. Outside coaches can help immensely in working with directors to clarify these issues.

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