

# GOVERNANCE

## Phase III: Evolving Governance



## Activity 16: Succession Planning

### Goals

1. Identify critical positions within your organization
2. Identify future staffing needs
3. Identify people with the skills and potentials to perform future roles
4. Develop action plans for individuals to assume those positions

### Prerequisites

[Activity: Position Descriptions for Elected Leaders](#)

### Who Should Participate?

Current Governance representatives, Program management (if supervising staff), HR Administrators (if affiliated with an organizational home)

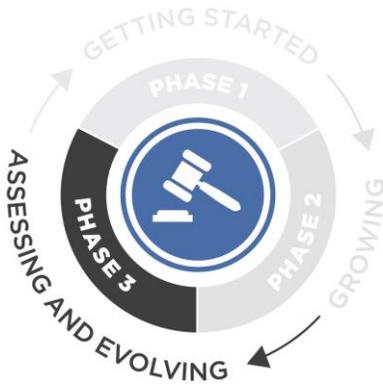
### Length

60-120 minutes

### Activity Instructions

Follow the [Succession Planning Toolkit](#) developed by the University of Washington Department of Professional and Organizational Development.

This exercise is hosted by the rights holder, University of Washington. At their request, we have not created a derivative version for use with the *It Takes a Village Toolkit*. For the most up-to-date version of this exercise, please visit [Succession Planning Toolkit](#)



# GOVERNANCE

## Phase III: Evolving Governance



### Activity 17: Continuing Education

#### Goals

1. Determine what information is necessary for Board members to feel invested, informed and engaged
2. Identify topics that inform Board discussions and decisions
3. Create a continuing education plan (schedule and content) based on those topics for Board members

#### Prerequisites

[Activity: Position Descriptions for Elected Leaders](#) or equivalent

#### Who Should Participate?

Current Governance participants, Program management (tactical thinkers)

#### Length

60-90 minutes

#### Background

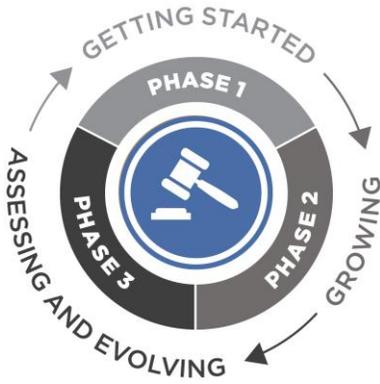
With more mature programs, governing boards frequently have a mix of participants with a range of backgrounds and experience. Those who have been on the board for some time may feel like the time to ask questions has passed, while those new to the program may be reluctant to ask questions in front of other, more experienced members.

#### Pre-work

1. Poll current and outgoing board members on what they would have found helpful
2. Poll current and incoming board members on what they would like to know
3. Distribute poll results to activity participants
4. Participants should review existing board position descriptions to review information needed to carry out their duties and make decisions

#### Activity Instructions

1. As a group, develop a top-level outline of topics important for board members
2. Consider methods to help onboard or provide continuing education for these topics (e.g. for financial oversight, perhaps an overview of how to read financial reports, etc.)
3. Prioritize the topics (if necessary, vote on topics to prioritize)
4. Turn outline into a continuing education plan, which includes:
  - a. Preferred delivery method - live webinar, short, recorded video, one-pager, etc.
  - b. A schedule that works for your audience and their needs (for example annual orientation, semi-annual topical deep dives, etc.)
  - c. Assign responsibilities for developing/recording/hosting the content
  - d. Include timelines for review and maintenance of the plan such as making updates and adding new content



# GOVERNANCE

## Phases I, II, and III



## Activity: Catastrophizing

### Goals

1. Understand how the program's current governance model (or decision making) works with unexpected issues
2. Understand if the model works well or has gaps
3. Identify and document issues that need to be solved

### Prerequisites

None

### Who Should Participate?

Current Governance participants, Community representatives

### Length

60-90 minutes

### Governance Definition

"A governance model describes the roles that project participants can take on and the process for strategic and tactical decision making within the project. In addition, it describes the ground rules for participation in the project and the processes for communicating and sharing within the project team and community."

- Ross Gardler and Gabriel Hanganu, [OSS Watch Governance Models](#)

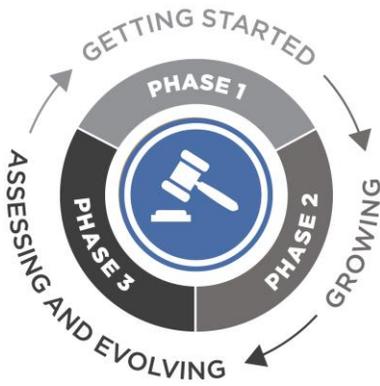
In simpler terms – it can be considered "how decisions get made."

### Activity Instructions

1. Brainstorm a list of "catastrophes" that would have a significant impact on your program's ability to fulfill its mission (could impact governance, technology, community, or resources).
2. Prioritize list of catastrophes
3. For the top 2-3, discuss the response to catastrophes within the current governance structure. You don't need to solve the catastrophe; you just need to know who would decide how to solve the problem.
4. Identify gaps
5. Identify issues that may be causing these gaps
6. Consider if the current governance structure needs to be modified to better address gaps
7. Document governance policies or decision-making process as necessary
  - a. If this process has surfaced decision making processes that are not clear or documented, take the opportunity to document them.

### Outputs

- A shared sense of potential gaps in current governance
- A shared sense of potential problems that can be used for future activities



# GOVERNANCE

## Phases I, II, and III



### Activity: Catastrophizing

#### Facilitator Guide

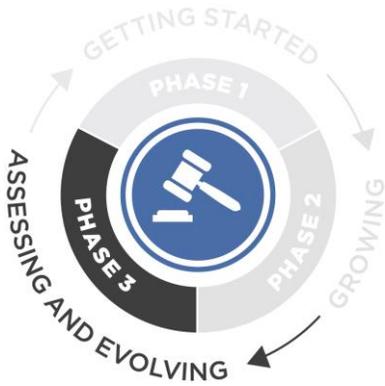
- Facilitate the group in brainstorming a list of “catastrophes” that would have a significant impact on your program’s ability to fulfill its mission.
- During the brainstorming, there are no “wrong” answers. The suggestions can be outlandish. They may be fiscal or technical disasters. The idea is to understand how governance responds and handles the catastrophe and helps identify gaps in the model.
- If no immediate suggestions are given, you can “seed” they discussion with examples (or categories of examples) such as:
  - What if a key person (program director; board chair) won the lottery and moved to Tahiti?
  - What if a key element of your technology stack was discontinued?
  - What if a pivotal partner organization dissolved or stepped away?
- Make sure to encourage broad suggestions from the entire group.
- One way to prioritize (in person) is to use a sticker vote. In a sticker vote, each participant is assigned a number of stickers - these can be physical stickers in an in-person event or a specified piece of text (e.g., +1) in a virtual environment. Participants place their stickers or text alongside the options they’re voting for, according to the parameters of the exercise (e.g., most important, most likely, most interesting, etc.).
- Help participants move through the discussion and highlight the potential gaps in their current governance. This can set up next steps of how to address those gaps.

#### Potential Considerations

1. Why do some catastrophes resonate more than others?
2. Are some issues more emotional?
3. Is there a theme in the gaps (e.g., lack of partners, resources, etc.)

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Activity adapted from: Kaner, Sam, and Lenny Lind. 2007. Facilitator’s guide to participatory decision-making. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons/Jossey-Bass.



# GOVERNANCE

## Phase III: Evolving Governance



### Activity 19: Representative Governance Assessment Checklist

#### Goals

1. Evaluate if governance structure is representative
2. Prioritize gaps
3. Document/revise governance policies or decision-making process
4. Devise plan to make change to practice

#### Prerequisites

[Activity: Who Is Your Community?](#)

#### Who Should Participate?

Those currently serving on governance; those you want to be more involved in governance.

#### Length

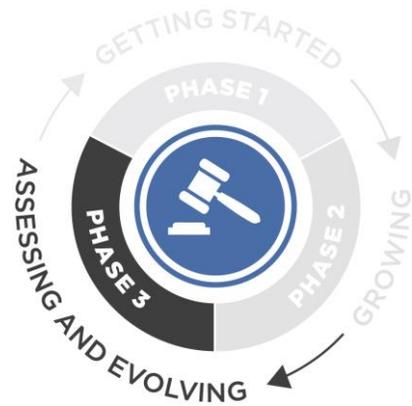
45 minutes

#### Pre-work

1. Download the [Representative Governance Assessment Checklist](#).
2. Form a subgroup with 2-3 governance representatives. Having 2-3 people do it initially ensures that there is broader discussion and knowledge at an early level so later discussions are less likely to be bogged down by simple oversights.
3. The subgroup completes the checklist together. For those components in the checklist that are missing or in progress, rank their priority for completion on a scale of 1-5, with 1 denoting “low priority” and 5 “high priority.”
4. When considering Stakeholders, go back to the [Activity: Who is Your Community?](#) results to ensure the subgroup is considering different stakeholder groups.
5. After completion, submit the initial review to the larger group in advance so there is time to absorb ahead of the meeting.

#### Activity Instructions

1. As a group, review the submitted checklist. Does everyone agree or not? Are there elements not included in this assessment?
2. Once general consensus on rankings is achieved, identify what components the group considers necessary to work on, then prioritize them.
  - a. A sticker vote can be useful tool for prioritizing. In a sticker vote, each participant is assigned a number of stickers - these can be physical stickers in an in-person event or a specified piece of text (e.g., +1) in a virtual environment. Participants place their stickers or text alongside the options they’re voting for, according to the parameters of the exercise (e.g., most important, most likely, most interesting, etc.).
3. Update governance policies to be more inclusive.
4. Implement changes to governance policies and practices.



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## Phase III: Evolving Governance

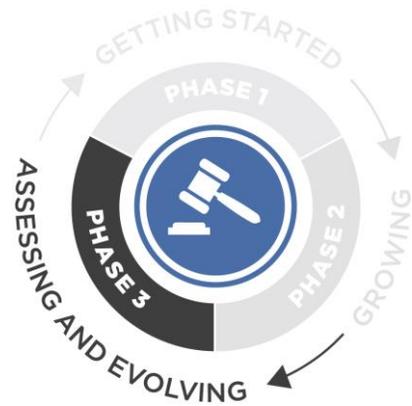


### Activity 19: Representative Governance Assessment Checklist

Please fill out the following checklist to the best of your ability. For those components in the checklist that are a “No” or “In Progress,” rank their priority for completion on a scale of 1-5, with 1 denoting “low priority” and 5 “high priority.”

The community/organization’s governance provides community stakeholders with decision-making roles and responsibilities	Yes	No	In Progress	Don’t Know	N/A	Rank
1. Do you engage elected/appointed representatives from community stakeholder groups in the official, decision-making governing body? <i>Possible evidence: Bylaws or other formal, legal governance documentation names and describes the role of this governing body</i>						
2. Do you require that major decisions about the community/organization that affect stakeholders (especially decisions about its organizational form, ownership, and pricing) be approved by this official, decision-making governing body? <i>Possible evidence: Bylaws or other formal, legal governance documentation that describe decision-making protocols</i>						

The community/organization’s governance encourages participation and input from community stakeholders	Yes	No	In Progress	Don’t Know	N/A	Rank
3. Do you make governance meeting agendas, minutes, and official decisions openly available to community stakeholders? <i>Possible Evidence: Documentation accessible by community stakeholders</i>						
4. Do you have an openly documented process for soliciting/resolving community stakeholder concerns and/or objections about governance decisions? <i>Possible evidence: Process clearly described on the Website or another publicly available location</i>						



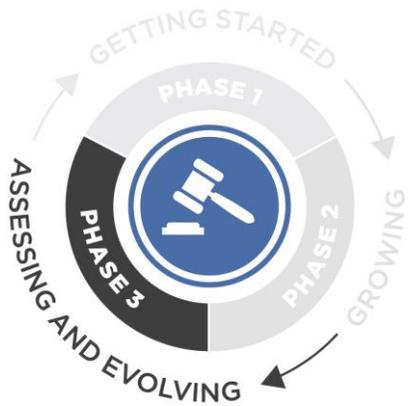
# GOVERNANCE

## Phase III: Evolving Governance



### Activity 19: Representative Governance Assessment Checklist

	Yes	No	In Progress	Don't Know	N/A	Rank
5. Do you officially involve stakeholder community representatives in reviewing and amending the governance system? <i>Possible evidence: Bylaws, evidence of participation in a review/amendment process</i>						
6. Do community stakeholders give input into governing body appointments/elections? <i>Possible Evidence: Solicitation process, election process documentation</i>						
<b>The community/organization's governance officially engages representatives from active stakeholder communities in fiduciary oversight and management accountability</b>						
7. Does a governance body that includes stakeholder representatives protect the organization's assets and members' investments? <i>Possible evidence: Documented role in overseeing the creation and approval of the annual budget, financial quarterly close reports, annual fiscal reporting, annual audit/review</i>						
8. Does a governance body that includes stakeholder representatives recruit, hire, and oversee the director/manager/CEO? <i>Possible evidence: Bylaws, evidence of annual reviews, evidence of participation in recruitment and hiring of the director</i>						
9. Does a governance body that includes stakeholder representatives provide direction for the organization? <i>Possible evidence: Bylaws, Policy setting evidence, Strategic planning evidence</i>						



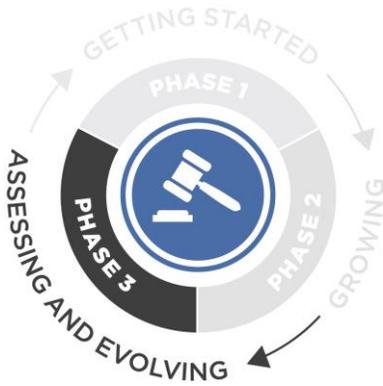
# GOVERNANCE

## Phase III: Evolving Governance



### Activity 19: Representative Governance Assessment Checklist

The community/organization ensures that representative voices change over time	Yes	No	In Progress	Don't Know	N/A	Rank
10. Do you set and enforce term limits for representatives? <i>Possible evidence: Bylaws, Minutes from governance meetings, elections, number of representatives that change over time</i>						
11. Do you have a process for stakeholders to express concerns or objections regarding who is serving as their representative? <i>Possible evidence: Process clearly documented in the Bylaws, on the Website or in another publicly available location</i>						



# GOVERNANCE

## Phase III: Evolving Governance



### Activity 20: Developing a Plan to Expand Community Participation in Governance

#### Goals

1. Develop a plan to expand community participation in governance

#### Prerequisites

[Activity: Who Is Your Community?](#)

[Activity: Succession Planning](#)

#### Who Should Participate?

Current Governance participants; Community representatives

#### Length

60-90 minutes

#### Pre-work

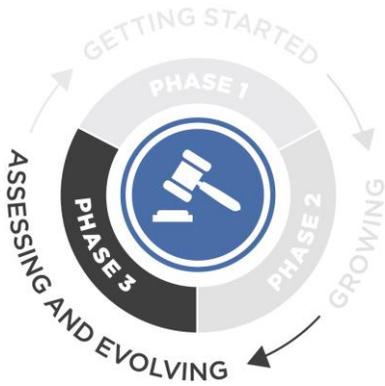
1. Select a few of the high-priority skills identified during the Succession Planning activity.
2. Group breaks into sub-groups with 2-3 representatives each
3. Each subgroup picks a skill to evaluate using the questionnaire on page 2
4. Submit the initial review to the larger group in advance so there is time to absorb ahead of the meeting

#### Activity instructions

1. As a group, review the questions below for 2-3 of the skills
2. Reach agreement on conclusion
3. Create action plan based on conclusion
4. Identify who will take on which of the specific tasks are outlined in the plan (e.g., draft communication, recruit new members, etc.)

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Activity adapted from <https://www.everyday-democracy.org/tips/how-recruit-dialogue-participants>



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## Phase III: Evolving Governance



### Activity 20: Developing a Plan to Expand Community Participation in Governance

#### Questionnaire

1. How many people do we want to recruit to bring about the improved skills coverage we are looking for?
2. What roles do those people currently hold at their home organizations?
3. Why would people from these groups want to participate? What might keep them from participating?
  - a. Consider results from [Activity: Recognition and Contributions](#) here.
  - b. How do we facilitate equitable representation – consider gender, geographic representation
  - c. Are there ways to alleviate barriers – can work be done remotely, asynchronously? Can the program support travel? Are global time zones a consideration? Can the program support people from a range of time zones?
  - d. Are there ways to support levels of participation – some lighter, smaller building blocks to participation that can provide pathways to longer, deeper participation?
4. What does the invitation to participate look like? How do we explain the roles/responsibilities we're asking someone to take on, and why it's important?
5. What is our outreach strategy?
  - a. In person / personal invitation
  - b. General outreach tools (website, mailing lists)
6. Who will be responsible for reaching out? Provide specific assignments to existing members of governance.
7. How can we use this opportunity to increase the diversity and equity of our governance?