

# Tool Kit

## Committee Management

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Committees play an integral role in advancing the work of an association. Participation on a committee is a rewarding and an important responsibility. Committee involvement is often the catalyst for other leadership roles.

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## The Role of Committees

Committees supplement the work of the Board of Directors. They provide knowledge, time and resources that the Board and staff may not have.

Some of the most successful associations rely on committees to develop educational programs, research, fund raising and more.

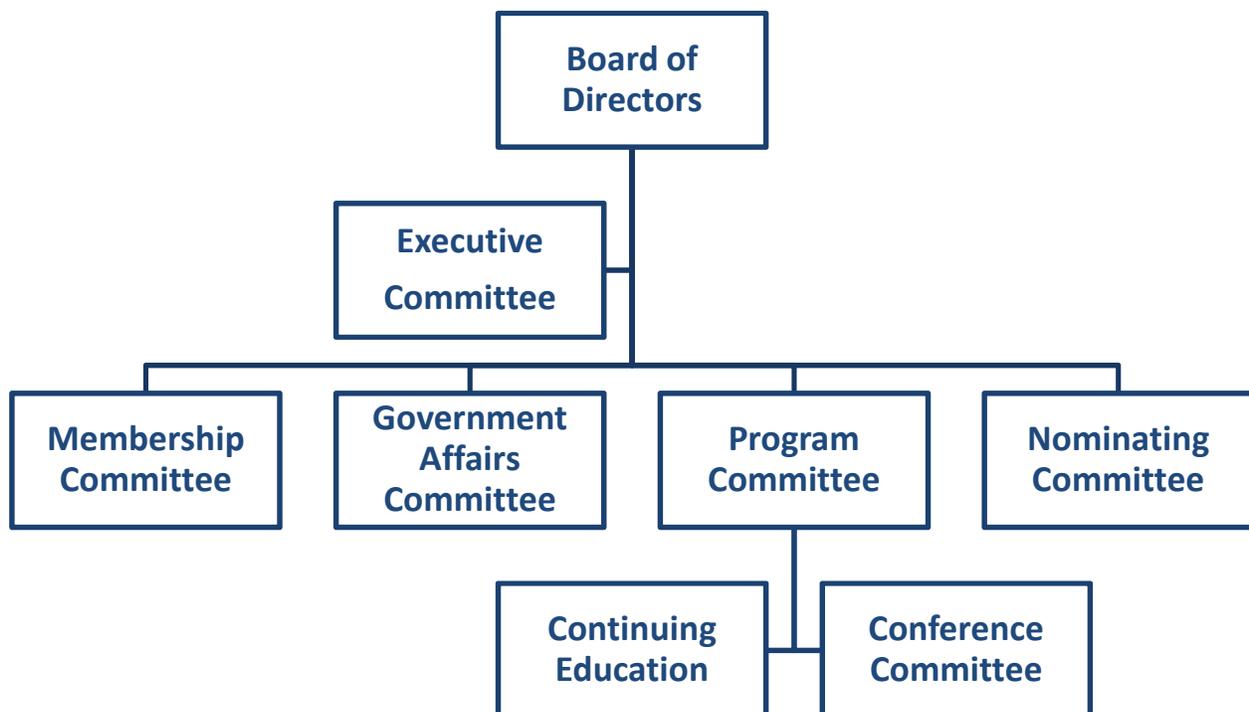
Committees are a way to engage members and thus increase their understanding and development as leaders.



## Committees and their Position in the Organization

Committees get their *authority* from the governing documents; and their *assignments* from the board of directors.

They are linked to the organization through channels of communication. The chart depicts the placement of committees and their relationship to the board of directors. Many organizations have a policy that committees *do not have authority* to contract or speak for the board without a specific mandate.



## Precautions

While committees are an asset, there are some concerns with unwieldy committee management.

- Too many committees.
- Poor committee leadership.
- Committees that exist but have minimal value or purpose.
- Lack of alignment between committees and the strategic plan.
- Disconnect between the board and committees.
- Wasted time.
- Exceeding authority.
- Board rehashing committee results at the board table.
- Keeping committees because they've always existed.

## Types of Committees

There are different kinds of committees, often identified in the bylaws. They serve different purposes.

**Standing committees** are usually named in the bylaws and serve the duration of the term of the chief elected officer. They are assumed to continuously function.

**Task forces** or **ad hoc committees** are appointed for a specific purpose and disband when the work is done. To accommodate busy volunteers many organizations prefer task forces over standing committees.

Other committee-like entities include **subcommittees** used to break up tasks into smaller work groups. **Councils and special interest groups (SIGs)** are often made of members with similar interests, such as ethnicity, practice setting or specialty.

It is advisable to periodically review the committee structure to determine if changes are warranted, possibly eliminating or merging committees that have outlived their usefulness.

## Composition

The committee composition should reflect the organization's membership, including striving for diversity. Committees are a good way to engage members and thus should avoid being composed exclusively of board members.

It may be that the board appoints the committee members. Or, the board only appoints the committee chairs --- and he or she in turn invites persons to join the committee. A call for committee volunteers is a way to identify member interest.

## Purpose Statements and Assignments

Each committee should have a clear, concise purpose statement or mission. Purpose statements are likely to remain unchanged from year to year.



After the appointment of the committee chairs comes an assignment of tasks or current year charges.

It is the committee’s responsibility to advance its mission and complete its assignments. In some cases, if the work of the committee is not completed in a year it may roll over as a task for the ensuing year. (Well drafted reports and minutes will allow next year’s committee to build off this year’s committee accomplishments.)

Sample committee charge for 12 months:

Committee	Mission/Purpose Statement	Assignments – Tasks - Charges
Membership	The mission is to recruit new members by developing a sustainable growth plan, and at the same time to monitor retention. The committee should monitor member needs and the value of membership; adjusting benefits and services accordingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> quarter – focus on student members and increase by 10%</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter – create a campaign where board members can approach prospects.</li> <li>• Overall – ensure that retention remains above 85%.</li> </ul>

## Committee Liaisons

Liaisons keep open communications between the board and the committee, and serve as an advocate. A **board liaison** is a member of the board who is assigned to assist and report on committee progress. A **staff liaison** is assigned to serve as a resource and promote progress. Liaisons do not replace the authority of a committee chair.

## Committee Reports and Minutes

Minutes help keep the board and staff informed of committee progress and needs; they do not have to be formal so long as they properly document the meeting. Minutes should be submitted to staff or the board president. The IRS asks on Form 990, (the

annual Information Return), “Does the organization document the meetings held for each committee with authority to act on behalf of the governing body?”

Include in the minutes and reports:

- Committee Name
- Date and Time
- Attendees
- Actions and Decisions
- Adjournment
- Financial Impact

Using technology it is possible to provide committees with their own password protected website so that minutes and reports can be archived and retrieved for collaborative efforts.

### Distinction between the Committee Chair and the Members

The appointed chair, and possibly a vice chair, have responsibility for managing the efforts and ensuring progress. This chart compares the roles of the committee chair to the members.

Responsibility	Committee Chair	Committee Member
Before the Meeting	The chair sets the time and prepares an agenda, envisioning what must be accomplished at the meeting.	Members need to make time for the meeting and prepare by reading or completing reports.
At the Meeting	The chair ensures a quorum is present and follows the set agenda, monitoring the time.	Members are engaged in discussions, asking questions and potentially making motions.
After the Meeting	The chair ensures that a report is submitted to the board in a timely manner describing how the committee is advancing the mission and assignments.	Members may have accountability following the meeting for the tasks for which they volunteered.

### Rules of Order and Agendas

Committee meetings should rely on an agenda. Members will appreciate that an agenda was crafted to guide the discussions and to achieve results. It is a responsibility of the committee chair, assisted by staff or committee liaisons to draft or approve an agenda.

Rules of order help to manage discussions. While they do not have to be cumbersome, it is expected that motions will be made, seconded and recorded.

## Meeting Guidelines

The committee chair may want to develop guidelines so that committee members know what to expect. For example:

- An agenda will be distributed at least 10 days in advance; it will frame our discussions; avoid meeting distractions and sidebar conversations.
- Prepare for meetings by reviewing advance materials.
- Meetings will start and end on time.
- Turn off digital distractions.
- If you arrive late, please refrain from voting until the next agenda item so as not to interrupt the flow of discussion of those who arrived on time.
- Minutes will document decisions and actions of the committee.
- Decisions of the committee shall stand; expressing dissenting opinions after the meeting is inappropriate.
- Respect new ideas and new people on the committee.

## Risk Management

While it is unlikely the committee will cause risk for the association, it is important to avoid potential risks.

Violating state or federal antitrust laws carries significant penalties. Avoid discussions of prices, rates, discounts, competitive practices and boycotts that might lead to agreement or collusion. Some committees start each meeting by reading an antitrust avoidance statement or including the statement on a committee sign in sheet and/or on the agenda.

The committee should not violate any copyright laws by using materials that are protected by licenses and copyrights. It should be clear that the work of the committee is the intellectual property of the association.

The committee does not have authority other than that identified in the association's governing documents and specifically assigned by the board or chief elected officer. Committees should not usurp the authority of the board, nor sign contracts.

## Appendix

### Committee Mission Statements

By maintaining a consistent mission statement for each committee, the incoming chair and members understand how their work fits within the mission of the association.

Examples:

**Conference Committee** – The purpose is to plan, organize and conduct the annual conference. The committee reviews prior conference strengths and weaknesses and makes recommendations for educational tracks and speakers. The committee does not select the site nor plan the details or logistics.

**Budget Committee** – The mission of the budget committee is to oversee the budgetary process by preparing an annual budget for approval by the board of directors and monitoring income and expenses throughout the year.

**Ethics Committee** – The mission is to encourage ethical conduct of the members by providing informal non-binding ethics opinions, and to recommend and/or review proposed changes to the Code of Standards.

**Finance Committee** – The mission is to prepare the annual budget, monitor the budget and ensures that reports are presented to the board and reflected in the meeting minutes. The committee is most often chaired by the Treasure. Their concerns may expand as the organization seeks to diversify income sources.

**Government Affairs Committee** – The mission is to ensure that there is adequate monitoring, lobbying and oversight on state legislative and regulatory issues that could affect the association and members. And make recommendations to the board on official positions.

**Membership Committee** - The mission is to recruit new members be developing a sustainable growth plan, and at the same time to monitor retention. The committee should continually monitor member needs and the value of membership; adjusting benefits and services accordingly.

**Mentoring Task Force** – The mission shall be to study, evaluate and make recommendations concerning whether mentoring of members is desirable and cost effective. The task force should consider liability, member needs and use of technology.

**Nominations Committee** – The committee has a long-term influence on the association. It is their responsibility to identify and recommend future leaders to the Board of Directors.

**Past Chairs Council** - The mission is to provide direction for work suggested by the board president. The Council may undertake special tasks and fund raising projects not in the purview of other committees.

**Program Committee** - The committee is responsible for developing and ensuring the highest quality of events and education offered to members and non-members. They may work with other committees such as Education, Conference and Publicity. They should strive to continually be aware of industry trends and members' needs.

**Publicity Committee** – The mission shall be to improve understanding of the profession and the association through a variety of public outreach efforts, marketing and public relations.

## Charging the Committees - Sample

Existing Committee Mission/Purpose	Current Year Charges – Tasks- Metrics
<p><b>Government Affairs Committee</b> – The mission is to ensure that there is adequate monitoring, lobbying and oversight on state legislative and regulatory issues that could affect the association and members. And make recommendations to the board on official positions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the state Legislature for issues impacting the profession and report to the Board.</li> <li>• Identify groups with which to collaborate or join forces to increase our clout.</li> <li>• Develop position papers on issues identified by the board.</li> <li>• Plan and promote attendance at our annual Day on the Hill.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Finance Committee</b> – The mission is to prepare the annual budget, monitor the budget and ensures that reports are presented to the board and reflected in the meeting minutes. The committee is most often chaired by the Treasurer. Their concerns may expand as the organization seeks to diversify income sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create the annual budget and present to the board at least 90 days prior to the start of the fiscal year.</li> <li>• Ensure the financial reports are in a form acceptable to a CPA.</li> <li>• Research and recommend non-dues income sources that can supplement income by at least 5 percent this fiscal year.</li> <li>• Develop a policy for reserve funds and savings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Membership Committee</b> - The mission is to recruit new members by developing a sustainable growth plan, and at the same time to monitor retention. The committee should continually monitor member needs and the value of membership; adjusting benefits and services accordingly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realizing the current benchmark for our market share of potential members is 55%, it is our aim to increase it to 60%.</li> <li>• Survey members’ needs and satisfaction in a professional manner.</li> <li>• Reach out to college faculty and students.</li> <li>• Maintain retention rate of at least 85%.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program Committee</b> - The committee is responsible for developing and ensuring the highest quality of events and education offered to members and non-members. They may work with other committees such as Education, Conference and Publicity. They should strive to continually be aware of industry trends and members’ needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the prior year of programs for return on investment and member value, making recommendations for the year ahead.</li> <li>• Develop one signature program incorporating a nationally recognized speaker and an opportunity to draw from other professions.</li> <li>• Collaborate with publicity committee to improve member awareness of programs.</li> <li>• Develop a master calendar of programs and events.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Nominations Committee</b> – The committee has a long-term influence on the association. It is their responsibility to identify and recommend future leaders to the Board of Directors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the strengths and weaknesses of our current board.</li> <li>• Follow the bylaws in announcing nominations, making recommendations to the board of directors, and preparing the slate of nominees.</li> <li>• Vet candidates by discussing our conflict of interest statement and board duties.</li> <li>• Assist with the board orientation process.</li> </ul>

## Call for Committee Volunteers - Sample

### Committee Volunteer Form

If you are interested in serving on a committee, please complete this form.

Committee appointments are one year in duration in accordance with the bylaws. Some committees may be shorter ad hoc and task forces. It is recommended that committee members, in accepting appointments, commit themselves to attending the mid-year and annual meetings, since many meetings are normally held at these times.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name, Title, Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Mailing Address (if different) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Work \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Committee Preferences (Please rank areas of interest)

- \_\_\_ Professional Awards and Scholarships
- \_\_\_ Membership – Recruitment and Retention
- \_\_\_ Member Benefits and Services
- \_\_\_ Government Relations
- \_\_\_ Nominations and Leadership Development
- \_\_\_ Technology
- \_\_\_ Professional Development and Education
- \_\_\_ Finance and Audit Committee
- \_\_\_ Chapter Relations and Development

Can you attend the Midyear and Annual Conference? Yes  No

Do you have computer access to be able to do committee work on line? Yes  No

Numbers of years as a member of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have e-mail and check it daily? Yes  No  Access to Internet? Yes  No

List any Committees on which you have served, and dates of service:

List relevant background experience for committee assignment:

**Thank you for your willingness to serve on a Committee.**

**Note:** Any original works created by the committee will transfer to the intellectual property of the association.

Committee Volunteer Form Sample 3-12.doc

## Committee Agenda - Sample

<b>Committee Agenda</b> <i>(sample for Education Committee)</i>				
Committee: _____				
Chair: _____ Vice-Chair: _____				
Meeting Date: _____ Meeting Time: _____				
Meeting Location: _____				
Committee Members Present: <input type="checkbox"/> Sign-in Sheet attached or listed on back.				
<b>Agenda:</b>				
✓	Agenda Item	Action-Status-Outcome	Assigned To	Due Date
✓	Call to Order.	Roll call or sign in sheet.	Chairman	n/a
	Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes.			
	Next Month's Education Program			
	Compensating Speakers – Economic Issues			
	Interface with the Conference Committee – Education Program Needs			
	Expanding the Committee to Include More Members			
	Unfinished Business			
	New Business			
	Adjournment			
<b>Recommendations to Board of Directors or Staff (If any):</b>				
* * *				
Name Of Person Completing This Form: _____			Submission Date: _____	
Committee Agenda Sample 4-12.doc				



## Committee Evaluation Tool - Sample

<b>Committee Meeting Evaluation</b> Self-Evaluation & Meeting Feedback <sup>1</sup>					
<b>Feedback and Input to Improve Governance and Board Meetings</b>	Very Comfortable	Somewhat Comfortable	Somewhat Uncomfortable	Very Uncomfortable	Not Sure N/A
1. Meeting agendas and room set ups are conducive to achieving meaningful results.					
Comments					
2. Committee focuses on goals that support the mission statement.					
Comments					
3. Chairman encourages and respects diverse viewpoints and new ideas.					
Comments					
4. Lines of authority and responsibility are clearly distinct between the committee, board and staff (staff is utilized as a valued resource.)					
Comments					
5. Outcomes are relevant to members and advance the mission statement.					
Comments					
6. Discussions focus on the future solutions rather than discussions of the past.					
Comments					

Committee Meeting Evaluation 11-09

<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the feedback form is to make steady improvements in our committee work. Thank you for your time and feedback. If you'd prefer your comments be confidential, please return your survey to the committee chair.