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This is number 11 of a series of articles aimed at achieving that goal

“The way a club plays as a whole determines its success”. – Babe Ruth

Continuity and growth is a primary responsibility of the Association or Club Board or Executive.

When you volunteer to serve on the executive of your association or club, you are accepting the responsibility for helping to ensure the long-term survival, health and growth of the organization. You are also accepting responsibility for ensuring that the articles of organization, mission statement and bylaws are followed. (If they don't reflect the current organization, then they need to be changed.)

The board/exec is responsible for managing every aspect of the club's operations and for asking the tough questions:

- Is the organization financially solvent?
- Are we running things as efficiently as we could?
- Are we using our limited resources to best effect?
- Are we doing everything we can reasonably do with the available resources?
- Are we meeting the needs of our members?
- Are we using technology effectively?

Sometimes, the answer to one or more of these questions is "No". In some cases, the board/exec has been elected specifically to implement change, perhaps to revive the organization or to upgrade its technology.

Change is a two-edged sword. Do it too quickly and the club is no longer the club that most people originally joined, and you might end up with more defections than you were expecting. But if there are structural problems and you don't address them quickly enough, you risk the club closing because it cannot fund its operations or because members see no point in renewing their membership.

Change needs to be measured and be accompanied by careful thought and discussion among board members and other interested parties. *The board needs to welcome new blood who will bring in new ideas and skills.* This is an especially good way to encourage younger people to get involved, preparing them to be the next group of club leaders.

If you've ever served as a club President or Captain, you know that begging for volunteers in some general way almost never works. *People don't step forward without having a specific task that needs to be done and that interests them.* So the best way to get more people involved is to start by building a database of skills. Then, when you need something done, find people in the database and ask them to help with that specific task.

Hook them with a small task, and then reel them in by building a web of contacts and friendships, which make people more willing to participate. And always remember to thank them and acknowledge the work they have done.

Successful organizations have active programs to bring in new people. They have committees to share the workload, led by a board member with a formal charge to share the workload and get input from multiple people. Committees also get more people familiar with the organization and how it works; they move people around to different portfolios and move them up the hierarchy.

But committees need to be focused on doing rather than on talking. Spend too much time debating and people will quickly get bored and leave.

Board of Directors/Executive

Clubs and associations should periodically examine the structure and organization of their board of directors, to confirm that it still reflects the group's needs.

- Has the board become large and unwieldy?
- Are responsibilities properly spread around?
- Are there parts of the club's operations that are not specifically assigned to a board position? (For example, many clubs don't have someone specifically assigned to manage the web site and email communications.)
- Are some positions no longer needed?
- How does information flow around the club (For example, when a new membership arrives in the mail with a cheque, who collects the mail, who enters the details into the database, where does the check go, and who contacts the member to welcome him or her to the club? In some clubs, this is four separate people!)

I don't believe in "at-large" positions. *People should be on a board of directors for a reason, with specific, defined responsibilities.* Besides the Captain, Vice-Captain, Secretary, and Treasurer, other members should have specific portfolios related to the operations of the club, including membership, programs and communications.

Boards should be small and focused. If the structure of your club or association requires a larger executive (for example, if every district in an association has a board position) then define an executive committee that is authorized to make certain types of decisions, and commit the club up to a defined spending limit. As noted above, use committees in general to get the work done.

For some clubs, it makes sense to have separate positions for newsletter, publicity and web site. For other clubs, it may make more sense to have a 'Communications' board position, with a communications committee that handles the newsletter, publicity and the website.

Remember that the board /executive is elected by the members to run the club. Boards have a lot of power and autonomy to make decisions and execute them, without having to come back to the members for permission for every little thing. If the members don't like what you're doing, they will vote you out of office.

And most importantly, let automation handle the menial tasks. People will be more willing to volunteer if they can do creative and challenging tasks instead of sitting in a room stuffing envelopes. Allow directors to focus on creating a richer experience for members and on growing the club with the limited time they have available.

(Reference: Building Strong Clubs: Dan Ehrmann)

And finally, remember to **Always Promote Shooting As a Positive Sport.**

ASAPS