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## Great Board Decisions

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**Q:** As you look back over your last 3 board meetings, what is the best decision you made in those meetings?

**A:** How we measure "best decisions" is a great barometer for what your board is really accomplishing. And if your board is Community-Driven - holding itself accountable for creating the future of your community - you will know what to measure "best decisions" against!

Boards spend so much time in meetings. If your average board meeting is 90 minutes long, you spent 4 ½ hours in board meetings over your last 3 meetings.

Think back over that 4 ½ hours (or more?) to answer these questions:

- Would you be proud to have a newspaper reporter cover your discussions? If so, what would you be proud of? If not, why not?
- What specifically are you proud of about those meetings? Was it a particular topic you handled, or the way it was handled? And what role did you personally play in whatever it is you are proud of? (And if you are not proud of those meetings, what role did you personally play in what you are NOT proud of?)

Sometimes boards tell us, "There's really nothing that stands out. We just meet and discuss things." If that is the case, you might consider whether there are things you SHOULD be discussing, that are not currently on the table. Here are some further thought-starters to see if that is the case:

- What was the best decision your board made in its last 3 meetings?
- What made it the best decision?
  - Did that decision take steps towards making the community a better place to live?
  - Did that decision take steps towards making your clients' lives better?
  - Did that decision take steps towards making your employees more excited about working for your organization? Will it make them more productive?

In other words, how will your decision make people's lives better? And whose lives?

If your decisions are not making your community better, and are not making the lives of individual people better (your clients / patrons or your employees), then what makes those the "best" decisions? And again, would you want the local paper doing a story that claimed "This decision is the best of the year!"

Here's one more set of questions to consider:

- How many decisions did you make in the last 12 months, that encouraged your organization to work closely with other organizations that also do what you do?

The bottom line for a Community Benefit Organization is just that - community benefit. We can't make our communities better places to live unless the discussions of our boards of directors - the folks who are entrusted with guiding and leading our organizations - are consciously aimed at creating that community benefit.

**So check your agenda, and ask yourselves:**

Are there things we should be discussing, that will make our employees' lives better,

our clients' lives better, our community better?


**And here's our guarantee:**

If you begin having more of those discussions at your board table, meeting attendance and board recruitment problems will become a thing of the past. Why? Because you will have found the key to making the lives of your board members better as well.

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN INSTITUTE

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