

Principles of Association Volunteer and Staff Leadership

Association volunteer and staff leaders think strategically and are visionary, seeing the big picture to advance the organization's mission and goals. Associations are guided by the "board governs and staff manages" principle, placing governance oversight in the hands of the Board of Directors and responsibility for personnel management and operations to the Association Executive. Each association defines the parameters of this principle based on their unique volunteer leadership engagement and staffing resources as guided by their strategic plan. In addition:

1. Association leaders rely on clear, open, and honest communication with other members of the leadership and staff team to foster and maintain strong and effective partnerships. They work closely, partner, support, collaborate and communicate effectively with each other to enhance opportunities for success.
2. Association leaders maintain professional and collegial relationships, taking care to avoid personal relationships with each other. They support and encourage an environment free from harassment.
3. As ambassadors for the association, leaders conduct themselves professionally and ethically in their business, on social media and at association events, and represent the association with respect and integrity.
4. Association leaders respect the positions within the organization and interact professionally with those in such positions. Personal relationships, opinions, and impressions are set aside while working together on behalf of the association.
5. Association leaders continually look to the strategic plan as a roadmap that guides the priorities and initiatives that are to be implemented. Leaders are adaptable to the challenges and obstacles that may arise during the year. Adjusting, pausing, or eliminating objectives may be required for the greater good of the association and the current environment.
6. Association leaders are knowledgeable about the governance of the organization and assist members in understanding how they can best contribute to the association.
7. Association leaders actively listen to their leadership partners, members, association staff and elected officials.
8. Association volunteer leaders receive orientation and training from the association staff, so they are effectively prepared to lead during their leadership term.
9. Association leaders continuously identify, recruit and mentor future leaders to ensure the association's sustainability.
10. All association leaders respect their fiduciary duties and respect confidentiality.