

# P&A Board Master Class

## Recruiting Board Members

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NATIONAL  
**DISABILITY RIGHTS**  
NETWORK

Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities



# Training Overview

- Foundation Blocks: P&A Mission, Vision, & Values
- Commitment to Diversity—Broadly Defined
- Identifying Your Board's Needs
- Assessing Board Candidates
- Preparing New Recruits for Service
- Maintaining Excellence

# Foundation Blocks

## P&A Mission, Vision, & Values:

- Your P&A's mission is the fundamental guiding statement of your organization. Everything you do—every decision you make—must lead back to a fidelity to the mission of your P&A.
- Your P&A's vision—or how it sees the future—is founded on the mission and takes your organization view of what could be if you are successful.
- Your P&A's values are your organization's moral compass and are fundamental to how you operate and carry out your services.

# Foundation Blocks

## P&A Values:

- People with disabilities are full and equal under the law and are entitled to equal access to the opportunities afforded to all members of society.
- They are entitled to be free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, and isolation, and to be treated with respect and dignity.
- They have access to age appropriate services that are shaped by the unique needs and preferences of each individual that foster independent, productive and integrated community life.
- They have the right to make choices about all aspects of their life including daily routines and major life events.

# P&A Principles

## **EQUALITY, EQUITY, & FAIRNESS:**

- People with disabilities are full and equal citizens under the law.
- They are entitled to equal access to the opportunities afforded to all members of the society.
- People with disabilities are entitled to be free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, and isolation, and to be treated with respect and dignity.

# P&A Principles

## SUPPORTS & PARTICIPATION

- Services and supports are shaped by the unique needs and preferences of each individual, and assure opportunities for integration in all aspects of life.
- Services are age appropriate and premised on the fact that people with disabilities, continue to learn, grow and develop throughout their lives.
- For children, such growth is best accomplished within families, and for adults, in integrated communities rather than institutions.

# P&A Principles

## INDEPENDENCE

- Services are based on equal access, peer support and self-determination to be achieved through individual, professional and system advocacy.
- Services must maximize leadership, independence, productivity and integration of individuals with disabilities.

# P&A Principles

## MEANINGFUL CHOICE & EMPOWERMENT

- People, regardless of age, type and level of disability have the right to make choices with respect to daily routines and major life events.

## CULTURAL COMPETENCY

- Services reflect, and are responsive to, the diverse cultural, ethnic and racial composition of society.
- Services must maximize leadership, independence, productivity and integration of individuals with disabilities.



# Commitment to Diversity

## What is Diversity?

- Diversity is a “mutual acceptance and value placed on differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and other human attributes.” — James Davis, [www.DiversityWorking.com](http://www.DiversityWorking.com)
  - Creating a diverse Board is the act of turning this theory into practice.

*Does the make-up of your Board reflect the diversity of your state?*

*Do you have a policy about diversity?*

# Why Diversity Matters

## Side Effects of a Diverse Board:

- **Fostering Understanding:** interacting with people from different backgrounds, experiences, and cultural values expands your knowledge.
- **Better Connection:** a diverse Board better represents your diverse clients and allows for more authentic interactions across your state.
- **Robust Debate:** different viewpoints and opinions often brings about rich discussions and creative solutions to problems.
- **Increased Productivity:** studies have shown that diversity in groups increases productivity, problem solving, and communication.

# Identifying Your Board's Needs

## Create a Matrix:

- Identify all of the “categories” of individuals you would like to include on your Board to help you identify what is lacking:
  - Disability
  - Geography
  - Race, Gender, Age, Sexual Orientation
  - Political Ideology
  - Professional & Governance Experience
  - Fundraising Experience

# Targeting Your Process

## Using the Matrix:

- Once you have identified what your Board lacks, make a plan to fill those vacant spots.
- Have generative conversations that include the entire Board focusing on the areas that you need to fill.
- Seek advice from the CEO and the Management Team (if appropriate) about individuals who may be a good fit.
- Reach out to professional associations when looking for individuals with particular skills.

# Assessing Board Candidates

- It is important to get a well rounded picture of prospective Board members.
- Create an application process that asks them to fill out a questionnaire in addition to submitting their resume and profile.
- Ask them to identify their commitment to disability rights work and the mission and values of the P&A.
- Have at least one interview with each candidate before asking them to attend a whole Board interview. This can be done by the Board Chair and the CEO, for example.
- Check references before asking them to join the Board.

# Preparing New Recruits

## Onboarding Essentials:

- Board Job Description: describes briefly their duties.
- Mission Statement, Vision, Values: teaches them the P&A's core values.
- P&A Priorities: teaches them the Network's priorities and values.
- P&A Standards: teaches them what the P&A does.
- Bylaws: describes the governing rules of the Board.
- Financial Documents: gives them the financial picture.
- P&A Programs: teaches them about the funding and programs.
- Case Information: prepares them on the biggest cases in motion.

# Maintaining Excellence

## Ongoing Activities:

- Continually strive for professional excellence and encourage professional development as it relates to their Board leadership—encourage each other to participate in these P&A Board Master Classes!!!
- Annually conduct Governance Check-ups.
- Constantly Recruit! Just because you don't have vacancies at the moment doesn't mean you won't soon. If you meet someone that would be a good fit, begin the engagement process NOW!

# Thank You!

***I appreciate your attention & participation!***



*If you would like to talk about how I can help you govern better, please contact me!*

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