

Great boards ask great questions. They challenge assumptions, explore possibilities, and engage in the kind of generative thinking that transforms organizations and communities. Transform your board meetings from routine reporting sessions into dynamic strategy conversations with these powerful questions. Print this list and keep it handy for your next board meeting!



Choose one question from different categories for each board meeting. Allow 20 minutes for generative discussion without any pressure to reach a decision. These conversations often lead to breakthrough insights and innovative solutions.

GENERATIVE QUESTIONS FOR BOARD MEETINGS

Mission and Impact Questions

- What evidence do we have that our programs are creating meaningful change?
- How might we measure impact differently to better understand our effectiveness?
- What would success look like three years from now, and how will we know when we've achieved it?
- Which of our programs or services should we be most proud of, and why?
- What would happen if we stopped doing our least effective activity?

Strategic Thinking Questions

- What trends in our community or sector should be shaping our strategic priorities?
- Where do we see the greatest opportunities for increased impact?
- What partnerships or collaborations could amplify our mission?
- How might we better leverage our unique strengths and positioning?
- What would we do if we had unlimited resources? What would we do with half our current resources?

Governance and Leadership Questions

- How effectively are we balancing oversight with strategic guidance?
- What governance practices should we start, stop, or modify?
- How can we better support our CEO/Executive Director's success?
- What expertise or perspectives are missing from our board?
- How might we improve our board meeting effectiveness?

GENERATIVE QUESTIONS FOR BOARD MEETINGS

Financial Sustainability Questions

- Beyond traditional fundraising, how else might we generate revenue?
- What does financial sustainability look like for our organization?
- How can we better communicate our financial story to stakeholders?
- What investments would best position us for long-term success?
- How might we reduce our dependence on any single funding source?

Community and Stakeholder Questions

- How effectively are we listening to the communities we serve?
- What would our beneficiaries say about our programs if we asked them?
- How can we better engage our stakeholders in our mission?
- What role should we play in addressing broader community challenges?
- How might we strengthen our organization's reputation and visibility?

Innovation and Adaptation Questions

- What assumptions about our work should we be questioning?
- How might we pilot new approaches to achieving our mission?
- What would we do if we were starting this organization today?
- How can we better embrace failure as a learning opportunity?
- What technology or systems could enhance our effectiveness?



Strong board governance is the foundation of every thriving nonprofit organization. Effective boards don't just oversee operations—they actively champion the mission, ensure accountability, and drive strategic vision. These generative questions are based on BoardSource's recommendations but adapted for our nonprofits by Cielo Strategy Group. Our consultants are proud to be BoardSource certified in Nonprofit Board Governance - committing to Purpose-Driven Board Leadership as the highest level of nonprofit Board excellence. We are here to walk with you and your Board through strategic planning, board training, organizational assessments, and coaching.

