



Proposed Board Decision Making Checklist for Critical Conversations

- Has the conversation started in a timely fashion to allow for processing, information gathering, etc.?
- Are materials ready far enough advance of meetings so that members have time to prepare?
- Are the materials developed in plain English, minimizing bureaucratic language/ideas?
- Is everyone clear about what decision needs to be made?
- Do I have a conflict of interest that I need to consider/disclose prior to entering into the discussion?
- Are the diverse interests of the community well represented in the discussion? Which viewpoints are missing? Can I help bring these into the discussion?
- Am I able to represent my community's/constituency's views, or do I need to conduct outreach?
 - If I need community input, I should discuss this with the CEO in advance.
- Do I understand the issue(s)?
- Do I have questions?
- Have my questions been sufficiently answered?
- Have I voiced any concerns I have?
- Have I brought any information or data that would impact the discussion to the table?
- When I make my decision, am I focusing on the impact on the organization and community, rather than my own organization?
- Am I listening to what others have to say in case this informs my position?
- Can I live with the consensus, even if I disagree?
- Am I able to communicate the decision to the community?
- Are there other opportunities to create greater leverage in this situation?
- What needs to be communicated?



Suggestions for a Communications Plan

- Develop a timeline, list of possible activities (including board decisions that need to be made and when, when/where will members report back, and whether a committee(s) will be working on this or the whole board?)
- Clarify how many and which types of meetings you want to hold to get to a recommendation
- Create a list of who you want to reach (what types of organizations/populations), who you already have engaged, and ask members to help fill the gaps
- Create a shorter list of those who must be consulted
- Develop a list of possible concerns and whether there are factors in the design effort to mitigate these
- Determine what types of meetings are needed (town halls, one-on-one, small group) for which audiences
- Assign people (staff, board members, partners) to meetings
- Create a common “packet”
 - Elevator speech
 - Overview of the current state (in plain English)
 - Talking points
 - Key questions to be asked/answered
 - Timeline for decision making
 - Options for additional input
 - Report out “guide” – what do you need to know from each meeting?