

# Leadership 200: Becoming a Leader

## Pre-course Materials

In preparation for attending the upcoming session, you are asked to complete the following pre-course preparation. Your time spent completing this pre-course work will enable you to gain more from the activities and workshops you'll participate in.

1. View the video [What is Good Governance?](#) (2:48)\*
2. Read the following materials which will be covered in the session:
  - Staff and Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities
  - Responsibilities of Attendees
  - Effective Discussion and Debate
  - Guidelines for Building Consensus



A hard copy of the attached materials will be provided for you in the course, so you need not print them. You may choose instead to review them electronically. If you have any questions about the course, please contact the program coordinator.

## Course Overview

This intermediate course is for leaders of all kinds – volunteers, board members, and association staff. This course is designed to help you develop strong strategic planning skills, manage risk and gain confidence in your role as a leader. You'll also learn how to participate effectively in meetings and work to build group consensus.

## Objectives

By the end of this program, you will be able to:

1. Understand many of the elements of good governance
2. Clarify staff and volunteer roles to avoid conflicts
3. Participate effectively in meetings
4. Build consensus within groups
5. Assess your leadership skills

\*If the link does not work, the video is available at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTyE5BRuokU&index=20&list=PLfOcx0HCeYoua\\_DczmAhvS3U7FGXkbRA4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTyE5BRuokU&index=20&list=PLfOcx0HCeYoua_DczmAhvS3U7FGXkbRA4)

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# Staff and Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

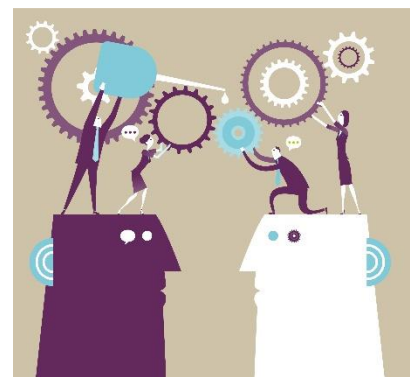
Effective association management calls for a partnership between volunteers and staff. The nature of the partnership varies from association to association. Volunteers and staff must share a commitment to the mission and goals of the association and continuously pursue the best interests of the association and the members it serves.

Conflict between volunteers and paid employees most often results from a lack of understanding of the responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities that fall to each party.

Although this partnership varies tremendously from association to association, many associations split their responsibilities as listed below. If this is not the case at your association, it's important to make sure that you do have clear distribution of duties. Here are some examples:

## ■ Board of Directors

- Implement and document a governance process
- Establish job descriptions for the board of directors, board chairs and members
- Establish job descriptions for all committees, committee chairs and members
- Agree on a job description for the chief staff executive /association executive (AE)
- Adhere to governance model and job descriptions
- Ensure association conducts financial audit, review or compilation, depending on revenues
- Create a strategic or business plan including advocacy and consumer outreach goals.



*Teamwork divides the task  
and doubles the success*

## ■ Board of Directors and Staff

- Listen to each other and respect differing points of view
- Collaborate on strategic initiatives to gain from diverse perspectives
- Ensure the association's mission is top of mind in decision-making processes
- Promote efficient and effective use of volunteer and paid resources
- Ensure association complies with NAR Core Standards

## ■ AE / Chief Staff Executive (CSE) or Senior Staff

- Provide the directors with information on governance
- Provide the directors with information on trends, demographics and policy, to keep them focused on the big picture
- Offer effective management and advice to the directors
- Establish job descriptions for all employees
- Provide mechanisms to recruit, train, retain and recognize volunteers
- Be open, honest and straightforward in all association communication

# Participating in Meetings

Responsibilities of the attendees at a meeting include:

1. Prepare for the meeting by reading all of the material distributed. It is inappropriate to be opening the meeting package for the first time at the meeting.
2. Follow the legal instructions of the chair.
3. Avoid idle chatter, especially when another attendee is speaking.
4. Actively follow the meeting, and speak and vote as appropriate.
5. Abide by the meeting rules.
6. Be courteous and respectful of other attendees and avoid extreme remarks, especially those directed at another attendee.
7. Raise a point of order if the meeting rules are being broken.
8. Appeal a ruling of the chair, if you believe the chair is incorrect in the ruling. This should not be done lightly and the attendee should be sure of the correct ruling.
9. Support the decisions of the board. Do not relate a disagreement with any decisions outside of the meeting. Disagreement with decisions may be made inside the meeting or at another meeting by moving to rescind a motion or reconsider the motion.
10. Maintain confidentiality when and where required. The group must speak with one voice when the meeting concludes. Voicing inconsistent opinions that are contrary to decisions made during the meeting creates a lack of unity among attendees.

If part of the meeting is held in executive session (a closed part of the meeting), the attendee may not discuss any part of what transpired in the in-, unless the chairperson has given instructions for what is to be repeated outside of the meeting.



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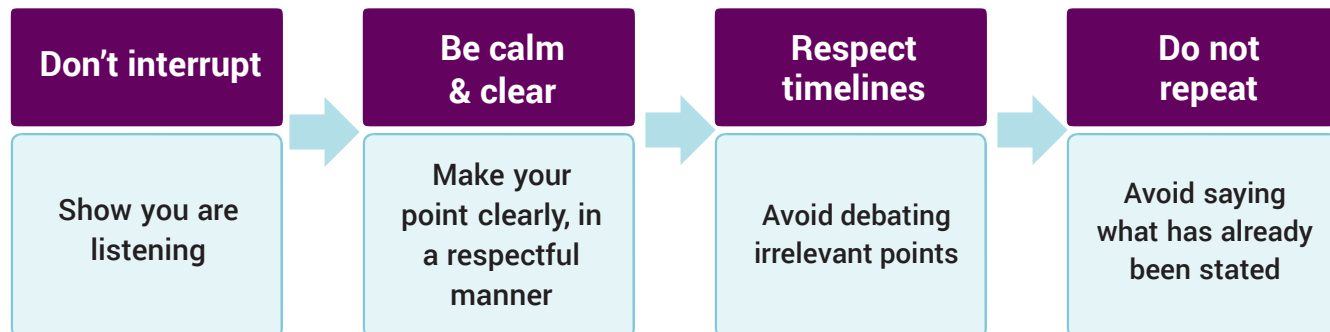
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## Effective Discussion and Debate

The agenda for a meeting will contain items that can be quickly discussed and a decision reached. Occasionally in a meeting, there are some items on the agenda that are controversial. So how do you contribute to the discussion and make your opinion understood without causing people to become divided and defensive?

The words “discussion” and “debate” are very often used interchangeably, although discussion is the preferred word. Attendees at the meeting present their opinions, explain their position, and listen to what other attendees have to say.



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***Take the attitude of a student. Never be too big to ask questions.  
Never know too much to learn something new.***

- Og Mandino

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# Building Consensus

Consensus is a decision making process in which each person's opinion and contribution to the discussion is heard and valued. Instead of a simple majority vote on an item, a group works to find a solution that works for all stakeholders. The solution that the group thinks is the most positive gets chosen, unless a member of the group finds the solution totally unacceptable. Consensus is based on compromise and the ability to find common ground.

Consensus is achieved when everyone says, *"I can live with that."*

## Guidelines for Building Consensus

1. <b>Present your position as coherently and logically as possible.</b>	Listen to the reactions of others and consider them carefully before you press your point. Avoid arguing solely for your own ideas.
2. <b>Do not automatically take a win/lose approach when discussion reaches stalemate.</b>	Instead look for an alternative that will work for all individuals.
3. <b>Do not change your opinion simply to avoid conflict.</b>	Explore the reasons and be sure that everyone accepts the solution for similar or complementary reasons. Support only the positions that have objective, logically sound foundations.
4. <b>Involve everyone in the decision process.</b>	Everyone adds to the value of the discussion. Seek out various perspectives. Disagreements can help the group's decision because with a wide range of information and opinions, there is a greater chance the group will hit on more adequate solutions.
5. <b>Remember that consensus is about empowering versus overpowering.</b>	It involves discussion and the sharing of viewpoints as opposed to power struggles. The process of consensus is what you put into it as an individual and as a member of the group.
6. <b>Enter into thoughtful discussion..</b>	Think before you speak; listen before you object. Through participating in the consensus process, one can gain insight into not only others but also oneself

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*Consensus is a decision making process that works creatively to include all persons making the decision. It is the most powerful decision process as all individuals agree to the final decision.*

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