

Illinois Association of Housing Authorities  
Board Relations: Developing Strong Partnerships for Effective Agency Operations

**Board Relations**

*Developing Strong Partnerships for Effective Agency Operations*

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**What is a Partnership?**

- A relationship resembling a legal partnership and usually involving close cooperation between parties having specified and joint rights and responsibilities

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**Rewards of Effective Partnering**

- Helps achieve your goals faster
- Overcome your lack of resources
- Increase your opportunities to learn

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### Effective Partnering Process

- Identify specific individuals, businesses, or organizations
- Recruit
- Utilize

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### Identifying Good Partners

- Avoid 'red flags' in potential partners
  - Lack of integrity
  - Easily angered
  - Foolishness
  - "Too good to be true"
  - Excessive flattery
  - Inclination to gossip and exaggerate
  - Disregard for rules and regulations

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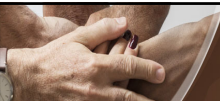
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### Identifying Good Partners

- Do your due diligence
- Assess yourself/Agency strengths and weaknesses
- Identify what you need in a partner
- High ethics and morals

**REMEMBER CHARACTER COUNTS!**

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**Identifying Good Partners**

- Positive or negative?
- Natural drives and gifts...avoid obstructionists
- Shares the same vision
- Willing to be committed to vision

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**Recruiting Good Partners**

- Create a list of possible partners
- Write down status of current relationship with each one
- Write down everything you know about them
- Research everything you can regarding potential partners

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**Recruiting Good Partners**

- If there is not a current relationship with them, is there someone you have in common?
- Prepare your presentation to potential partner
- Make the contact and set up meeting

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**Building Strong Partnerships**

- Bring honor
- Be encouraging
- Infuse security and safety
- Communicate respect and admiration

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**Building Strong Partnerships**

- Develop effective communication techniques
- Quickly address and resolve conflicts
- Reduce criticism

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**BOARD RESPONSIBILITY  
VS.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
RESPONSIBILITY**

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**Board By-Laws**

- Rules governing the activity of the Board and the PHA
- Articles of Incorporation and Board By-Laws shall be adopted based on Federal Regulations and State Laws
  - State Housing Authority Acts

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**Board By-Laws**

- Duties of Chairperson, Vice-Chair and Secretary
- Elections/appointments process
- Type and frequency of meetings
- Order of Business

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**Board By-Laws**

- Manner of voting
- Special Meetings
- Executive Session
- Other
  - Additional info varies from Board to Board

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### Duties of Board Chairperson

- Decides on issues of governance
- Guide Board on own rules and those from outside Agency
- Responsible for the integrity of the governing process
- Authority to make decisions covered by Board policy, except where authority has been delegated to others

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### Duties of Vice-Chair

- Covers the Chairperson's duties in the absence of that officer
  - Some Boards choose to rotate Vice-Chair duties

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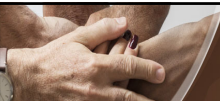
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### Duties of Board Secretary

- Generally the Executive Director
  - Non-voting member
- Financial Officer
- Responsible for Board documents

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### Duties of Board Secretary

- Record keeping
- Generally prepares:
  - Board Minutes
  - Staff Reports
  - Committee Reports
  - Financial Reports
  - Annual Report

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### Duties of Board Secretary

- Preparing Agency Five-Year and Annual Plan
- Working with Board on Budget
- Preparing for required meetings and public hearings
- Coordinating agenda times and presentations

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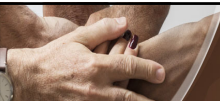
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### The Role of the Board

- Governance Body
- No single commissioner or committee can act for the Authority
- Only the Board, by majority action, acts for the Authority

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**Responsibilities of the Board**

- Approving By-Laws, Resolutions and Policies
- Selecting qualified Executive Directors
- Establishing and adopting PHA policies
- Reviewing and monitoring budgets and other financial document for compliance
- Approving policies for internal and external monitoring controls

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**Responsibilities of the Board**

- Approving policies to detect and prevent fraud, waste, mismanagement and abuse
- Ensuring PHA is acting legally and with integrity
- Approving grant applications

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**Responsibilities of the Board**

- Approving Annual Plan, 5-Year Plan and Budget
- Monitoring Agency performance
- Appointing Contracting Officer and limits
  - Approving contract and purchases over Contracting Officer limit

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**Responsibilities of the Board**

- Representing the Agency in the community
- Seeking community support and partnerships
- Public speaking

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**Responsibilities of the Board**

- Review independent audits and HUD reviews
- Establishing accountability standards
- Establishing performance criteria for Executive Director
  - Performing evaluation of Executive Director

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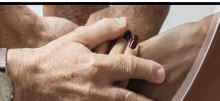
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**Responsibilities of the Board**

- Establishing personnel selection and evaluation policies
- Establishing performance criteria for all positions
- Visiting the properties

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**Responsibilities of the Individual Board Member**

- Be informed
- Be a positive representative
- Supporting the Executive Director
- Actively recruit partnerships and resources for the Agency

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**Responsibilities of the Executive Director**

- Ex-Officio member of the Board
- Secretary of Board
- Accountable to Board for the proper conduct of Agency business
- Primary advisor to Board

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**Responsibilities of the Executive Director**

- Staffing
- Maintaining compliance with laws, regulations, notices, and policies
- Monitoring operations

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### Responsibilities of the Executive Director

- Admissions and Continued Occupancy
- Maintaining units
- Systems Administration
- Agency Finances

**THE BUCK STARTS AND STOPS WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR!**

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### The Board and The Executive Director

- Trust and confidence between the Board and the Director is essential!
- Requires:
  - Policy Setting
  - Working Together
  - Understanding

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### THE BOARD PACKET

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**The Board Packet**

- Agenda
- Minutes of previous meeting
- Listing of Unfinished Business
- Listing of New Business

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**The Board Packet**

- Executive Director Report
- Other Reports
- Other Business, not requiring Board action
- Training Opportunities

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**CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

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### What is Conflict?

- Random House Dictionary defines conflict as:
  - “to come into collision or disagreement; be contradictory, at variance, or in opposition; clash”

***Great ideas often receive violent opposition from mediocre minds.***

*~ Albert Einstein*

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### True or False?

- Conflict is always negative
- Conflict is always violent
- Conflict is inevitable
- Anyone can experience conflict

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### What is Conflict Resolution?

- Simply put....how you resolve conflicts
- Common terms include:
  - Mediation
  - Mediator
  - Dispute
  - Apparent Conflict
  - Hidden Conflict

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### Conflict Resolution Styles with TKI

- Collaborating
- Competing
- Compromising
- Accommodating
- Avoiding

*Pick battles big enough to matter, small enough to win.*  
~ Jonathan Kozol

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### Collaborating

- Appropriate when:
  - Situation is not urgent
  - Important decision needs to be made
  - Conflict involves a large number of people
  - Previous resolution attempts have failed

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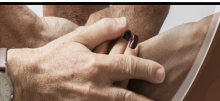
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### Collaborating

- Not appropriate when:
  - Decision is urgent
  - Matter is trivial

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**Competing**

- Appropriate when:
  - Need quick decision
  - Unpopular decision needs to be made
  - Someone is trying to take advantage of a situation

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**Competing**

- Not appropriate when:
  - Sensitive feelings about the conflict
  - Situation is not urgent

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**Compromising**

- Appropriate when:
  - Decision needs to be sooner rather than later
  - Resolving conflict is more important than have an individual “win”
  - Power in conflict is equal

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**Compromising**

- Not appropriate when:
  - Variety of needs must be met
  - Situation is extremely urgent
  - One person holds more power

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**Accommodating**

- Appropriate when:
  - Relationship is more important than winning
  - Issue is important to one person but not the other

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**Accommodating**

- Not appropriate when:
  - Issue is important to you
  - Will not permanently solve the problem

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**Avoiding**

- Appropriate when:
  - Issue is trivial
  - Conflict will soon resolve itself

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**Avoiding**

- Not appropriate when:
  - Issue is important to you
  - Conflict will continue to get worse

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**6 Phases of the Conflict Resolution Process**

- I. Create an Effective Atmosphere
- II. Create a Mutual Understanding
- III. Focus on Individual and Shared Needs
- IV. Get to the Root Cause
- V. Generate Options
- VI. Build a Solution

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**Phase I – Create an Effective Atmosphere**

- Neutralize Emotions
- Set Ground Rules
- Set the Time and Place

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**Phase II – Create a Mutual Understanding**

- What do *I* want?
- What do *They* want?
- What do *We* want?
- Difference between Wants and Needs
- What is the Ideal Resolution and what is the Realistic Resolution?

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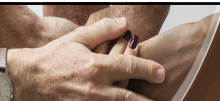
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**Phase III – Focus on Individual & Shared Needs**

- Find Common Ground
- Build Positive Energy and Goodwill
- Strengthen the Partnership

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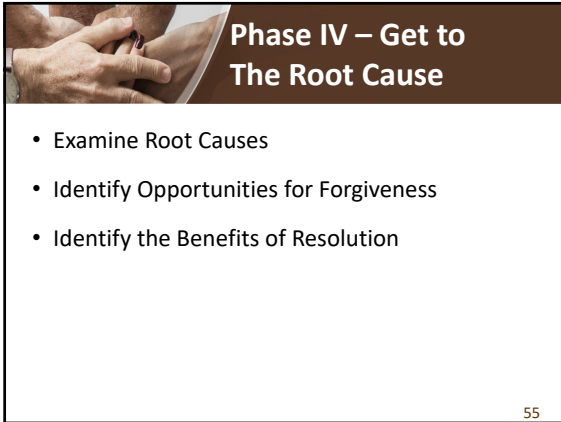
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**Phase IV – Get to The Root Cause**

- Examine Root Causes
- Identify Opportunities for Forgiveness
- Identify the Benefits of Resolution

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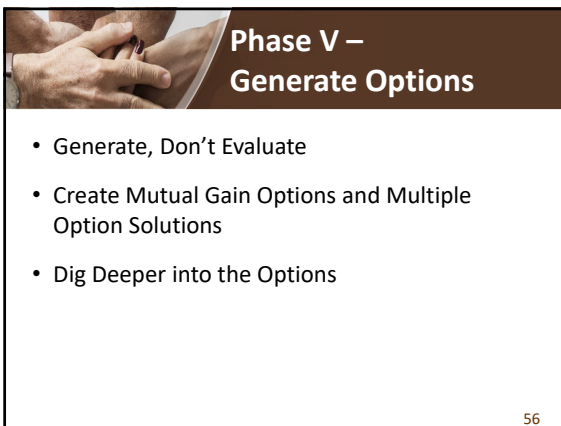
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**Phase V – Generate Options**

- Generate, Don't Evaluate
- Create Mutual Gain Options and Multiple Option Solutions
- Dig Deeper into the Options

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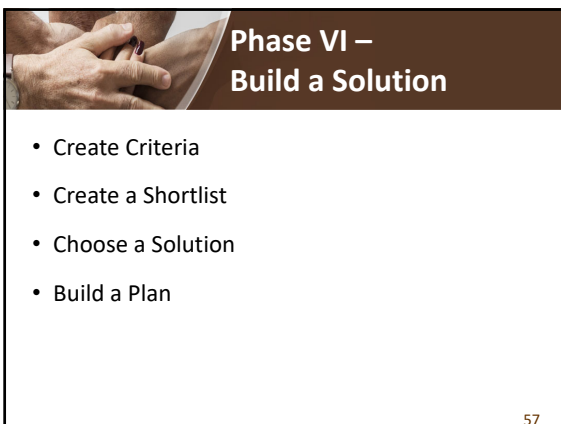
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**Phase VI – Build a Solution**

- Create Criteria
- Create a Shortlist
- Choose a Solution
- Build a Plan

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### Asking Open Questions

- Who?
- Where?
- What?
- Why?
- When?
- How?

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### Additional Stress and Anger=Management Tools

- Deep Breathing
- Coping Thoughts
- Take Breaks
- Talk About It
- Agreement Frame

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### Combine the Conflict Resolution Steps

- Evaluate the Situation
- Choose Your Steps
- Create an Action Plan
- Use Other Stress and Management Tools

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**Words from the Wise**

Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage. The human spirit is to grow strong by conflict.  
*~ William Ellery Channing*

Conflict is the beginning of consciousness.  
*~ M. Esther Harding*

They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.  
*~ Carl W. Buech*

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION & PARTICIPATION!**

**Janice Gibbons**  
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