

Governance or Support? (Activity)

Help volunteers understand how moving from Executive Committees to Trustee Boards will change how we do things.

Activity Outcomes

- Trustees feel confident on some of the key activities and tasks that form part of effective governance.
- Trustees identify wider support activities and tasks that are beyond the focus and purpose of Trustee Boards.

Activity Details

- Duration: 14-30 minutes
- Location: Indoors, outdoors, in person or online
- Audience: Trustees

You'll Need

- Activity cards and answers table (one set of cards for each discussion group)
- Trustee Board team description
- Pens
- Scissors

Before you Begin

- Print and cut out the activity cards. You might consider printing more copies if you have a larger group.
- Print the answers table.
- You might consider asking someone outside of your usual teams to join the activity (e.g. someone from a nearby Group, District or County team) who can help lead the activity, share a different perspective or provide some guidance or support.
- To help you get prepared for the discussion, read the team descriptions and understand how we're transforming our volunteer experience.

The Activity

- Explain that moving from Executive Committees to Trustee Boards will change how we do things. Trustees are responsible for governance tasks. Support tasks will be the responsibility of wider teams, usually either the Group Leadership Team or the District/County Support Team (as appropriate). Trustees might want to 'volunteer twice' to do support tasks as well as their governance tasks, but they're not expected to. As such, it's important that we have a shared understanding about what is a 'governance task' and what is a 'support task'.
- Split your team into groups of ideally 4-6 people for the card sort activity. Smaller groups are better to give everyone a chance to be involved and to raise comments and questions. These can be fed into the bigger group discussion.
- Once in small groups, give each a pile of the task cards. They should sort them so that 'governance tasks' are on one side and 'support tasks' are in the other side.

Allow 10 minutes for this, which will involve some questions or discussion time in the small groups.

- After each small group has sorted their cards, bring the whole team back together. Some questions to consider together are:
 - Why were some of the tasks easier to sort?
 - Were there any tasks which the groups put in different places?
 - What do the 'governance tasks' have in common?
 - What opportunities are there to organise how the 'support tasks' are done differently now or in the future?

Activity Variations

- This can be done as a short reflection activity, to start off a team meeting or as a longer team review exercise. The duration of the activity depends on the size of your team and the time given over to reflection.
- If done online, the facilitator can either display the prompt cards on the shared screen or email to the Team Members beforehand.
- This activity can also be done on your own, for self-reflection.

Reflection

This activity asks us to reflect on what activities are the key focus of an effective Trustee Board.

It also invites us to think about how we can best share both governance and support activities across our teams in the future.

For trustees who've been used to doing support work in the past, is it easy or difficult to focus on governance? Why's that? And where it's a challenge, what'll it take to make it easier?

Change the Level of Challenge

- Add in additional examples of activities or tasks based on your own team's experiences and responsibilities to extend the challenge.
- To simplify the challenge, share the cards in pairs or smaller groups.

Make it Accessible

- Discuss first some of the language used in relation to governance and ways you might break this down for volunteers new to being a trustee.

Take it Further

- The next steps following this activity are likely to include some actions for your Trustee Board or for your Chair and Lead Volunteer / Commissioner to discuss how to share tasks and activities between Trustees and wider teams.