

Board of General Ministries Survey Results November 2016

Section One: Responsibilities Outlined in the ABCUSA bylaws

The following set of items is drawn from the bylaws for ABCUSA. Each item below is currently listed as one of the corporate or individual responsibilities of the Board of General Ministries. The results show the perceived relative importance of each item as listed in descending order of importance.

TABLE ONE: Importance of Corporate Responsibilities Outlined in the ABCUSA bylaws									
		Item	Essen- tial	Very Impor- tant	Moder- ately Impor- tant	Some- what Impor- tant	Not Impor- tant	Why are we doing this?	Mean (Ave)
1	1	Seek the welfare of the whole	27	3	0	0	0	0	5.90
2	12	Elect General Secretary	25	5	0	0	0	0	5.83
3	10	Budget & appropriate funds	19	10	1	0	0	0	5.60
4	2	Set policy for ABCUSA	14	13	2	0	1	0	5.30
5	16	Regional ministries	15	12	1	1	0	1	5.27
6	11	Adopt & amend Standing rules	13	10	6	1	0	0	5.17
7	5	Determine ABCUSA functions	11	13	4	2	0	0	5.10
8	8	Support ABC funding & stewardship	12	14	1	1	1	1	5.07
9	3	Elect reps to rel & ecumenical	10	15	2	2	1	0	5.03
10	9	Review covenants	11	14	2	2	0	1	5.03
11	4	Elect committee officers	7	17	4	2	0	0	4.97
12	13	Oversee leadership pool	7	17	4	1	0	1	4.90
13	18	MSC and Mission Table	14	7	3	4	2	0	4.90
14	14	Attend to professional ministry	7	15	4	2	1	1	4.73
15	15	Treasury & other internal functions	5	16	5	2	1	1	4.63
16	7	Review corporation reports	4	12	10	2	2	0	4.47
17	6	Assess other ABC functions	4	9	8	3	1	5	3.90
18	17	AB Historical Society members	2	7	9	5	4	3	3.63

TABLE TWO: Importance of Individual Responsibilities Outlined in the ABCUSA bylaws									
		Item	Essen- tial	Very Impor- tant	Moder- ately Impor- tant	Some- what Impor- tant	Not Impor- tant	Why are we doing this?	Mean (Ave)
1	3	Affirmation and encouragement	19	7	2	1	1	0	5.40
2	4	Envisioning & creative input	16	11	2	0	1	0	5.37
3	5	Communication & constituencies	18	9	0	2	0	1	5.33
4	6	Financial stewardship	9	16	3	2	0	0	5.07
5	2	Evaluation and oversight	13	10	1	3	0	3	4.80
6	1	Responsibility for active learning	8	15	3	1	0	3	4.70

The following set of items is drawn from the bylaws for ABCUSA. Each item below is currently listed as one of the corporate or individual responsibilities of the Board of General Ministries. The results show the perceived relative effectiveness of each item as listed in descending order of effectiveness.

TABLE THREE: Effectiveness of Corporate Responsibilities Outlined in the ABCUSA bylaws									
		Item	Bright Spot	Very Effective	Adequate	Could do better	Could do much better	Woe fully inadequate	Mean (Ave)
1	3	Elect reps to religious & ecumenical	6	10	13	1	0	0	4.70
2	4	Elect committee officers	6	10	12	0	0	1	4.66
3	18	MSC and Mission Table	9	8	6	4	2	0	4.62
4	16	Regional ministries	9	6	8	3	2	1	4.48
5	12	Elect General Secretary	7	8	8	5	2	0	4.43
6	15	Treasury & other internal functions	4	13	8	3	1	1	4.43
7	10	Budget & appropriate funds	4	8	12	5	1	0	4.30
8	11	Adopt & amend Standing rules	4	7	14	4	1	0	4.30
9	5	Determine ABCUSA functions	5	3	15	5	1	1	4.10
10	17	AB Historical Society members	2	9	9	6	2	1	4.00
11	9	Review covenants	1	9	13	3	3	1	3.97
12	2	Set policy for ABCUSA	1	7	11	7	4	0	3.80
13	13	Oversee leadership pool	2	8	8	5	6	1	3.73
14	14	Attend to professional ministry	2	7	5	11	3	1	3.69
15	7	Review corporation reports	2	5	9	6	7	1	3.53
16	1	Seek the welfare of the whole	1	2	8	12	6	0	3.31
17	8	Support ABC funding & stewardship	2	1	9	12	4	2	3.30
18	6	Assess other ABC functions	1	2	6	12	4	5	3.00

TABLE FOUR: Effectiveness of Individual Responsibilities Outlined in the ABCUSA bylaws									
		Item	Bright Spot	Very Effective	Adequate	Could do better	Could do much better	Woe fully inadequate	Mean (Ave)
1	2	Evaluation and oversight	1	7	8	5	4	2	3.63
2	4	Envisioning & creative input	2	2	11	5	9	1	3.47
3	1	Responsibility for active learning	0	4	8	12	4	2	3.27
4	6	Financial stewardship	0	4	7	10	8	0	3.24
5	3	Affirmation and encouragement	1	3	7	10	7	2	3.17
6	5	Communication & constituencies	0	3	6	11	9	1	3.03

Section Two: Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards

In addition to fulfilling the specific responsibilities as outlined in the ABCUSA bylaws, there are certain tasks for which every nonprofit board should be responsible. The ratings of these tasks are listed below in four broad categories of mission, constituents, internal processes, and finances.

TABLE FIVE: Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards									
		Item	Strong-ly Agree	Agree	Some-what Agree	Some-what Dis-agree	Dis-agree	Strong-ly Dis-agree	Mean (Ave)
		Finances (Ranked #1)							4.31
1	14	I personally contribute to the work of our board and its ministries	13	8	5	1	1	0	5.11
3	15	My church has United Mission in its budget	15	3	4	1	3	2	4.71
5	16	I understand our various sources of income and how they affect us	9	8	6	2	2	1	4.61
11	13	I can clearly articulate the financial position of our organization	2	10	6	3	5	1	3.93
16	17	I help identify potential donors who might be willing to contribute	3	3	7	1	11	3	3.18
		Constituents (Ranked #2)							4.27
2	8	I work at understanding the diversity of our constituency	8	10	6	1	1	0	4.88
4	7	I share the highlights of our work following our board meetings	7	11	4	1	3	0	4.69
8	5	I regularly tell our mission story to others	5	9	8	3	2	0	4.44
17	6	I receive regular input from the people in my region	1	4	5	6	10	2	3.07
		Mission (Ranked #3)							4.10
7	3	Our board makes decisions that benefit the ABC family	5	9	7	2	4	0	4.48
9	4	I fully support the direction of our board	5	9	7	2	4	0	4.33
10	1	I fully understand the purpose of our board	2	12	8	2	2	2	4.14
14	2	Our board has a clear focus	0	7	7	6	5	2	3.44
		Internal Processes (Ranked #4)							3.78
6	9	The diversity of our board reflects the diversity throughout the ABC	6	11	7	2	1	1	4.57
12	10	I received an adequate orientation as a member of our board	2	10	6	2	1	6	3.70
13	12	Our board regularly provides learning opportunities for us	0	7	9	8	1	3	3.57
15	11	I have helped to identify and suggest board members	1	4	10	3	4	5	3.26

Section Three: Potential Pitfalls of Boards

No board is perfect and some boards are prone to pitfalls. A variety of potential pitfalls that nonprofit boards can fall into are listed below. The results reveal how much our board feels like this condition exists on our board.

TABLE SIX: Potential Pitfalls of Boards									
		Item	Definitely us	Very Strong	Present	Somewhat Present	Not Present	Could Never Be Us	Mean (Ave)
1	8	Resource poor – the board lacks resources to do its work	0	3	7	10	3	3	3.15
2	9	Individual dominated – a few voices dominate board discussions	0	1	6	15	5	1	3.04
3	1	Lack of direction – the board lacks purpose	1	0	4	14	7	2	2.86
4	7	Myopia – the board is unaware of external voices or opportunities	2	0	1	13	8	2	2.81
5	2	Complacency – board members are not engaged in the work	0	1	4	13	8	2	2.79
6	4	Scattered communication – constituents regularly hear multiple perspectives from the board	0	2	4	8	10	3	2.70
7	6	Lack of improvement – the board is not growing in knowledge, etc.	0	0	7	7	9	4	2.63
8	5	Micro-managing –members have a tendency to direct the staff	1	1	4	1	13	7	2.33
9	3	Misguided loyalty – members consistently favor other priorities	0	1	1	9	10	6	2.30
10	10	Fork in the road – the board seems torn between two options	0	1	1	8	10	6	2.27

Section Four: A Culture of Inquiry

One of the most positive characteristics that a board can display is a “culture of inquiry.” Aspects of this type of culture are shown below. The results show how much our board feels like this condition exists on our board.

TABLE SEVEN: Creating a Culture of Inquiry									
		Item	Definitely us	Very Strong	Present	Somewhat Present	Not Present	Could Never Be Us	Mean (Ave)
1	1	Our board members feel free to voice their concerns	3	9	14	1	1	0	4.43
2	3	Differences of opinion are encouraged rather than squelched	3	5	10	9	0	1	3.96
3	4	We regularly set aside time to get to know one another	3	6	6	10	3	0	3.86
4	2	All members speak at meetings	2	4	3	18	1	0	3.57
5	5	Our meetings offer opportunities for strategic thinking	2	4	6	11	5	0	3.54
6	6	We regularly conduct and distribute board evaluations	0	1	5	9	10	2	2.74
7	7	We conduct exit interviews of board members	0	0	0	5	13	4	2.05

Section Five: The Role of the General Secretary

Below you find a variety of roles engaged in by current and previous General Secretaries. The table shows the results of the perceived importance of each of these roles by the current board.

TABLE EIGHT: Importance of General Secretary Roles									
		Item	Essential	Very Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Why are we doing this?	Mean (Ave)
1	1	Harmonizer – help the whole accomplish more together	22	6	0	0	0	0	5.79
2	2	Convener – call groups together for dialogue and partnering	15	13	0	0	0	0	5.54
3	4	Denominational Pastor – network, with ABC clergy and laity	15	9	1	1	1	0	5.33
4	7	Communicator – be the primary communicator for ABC ministry	19	6	0	1	0	2	5.32
5	3	Head of Communion - interact with other religious groups	15	8	3	2	0	0	5.29
6	6	Goal setter – establish goals for participation by all ABC entities	9	10	4	3	0	2	4.68
7	5	Initiator – Initiate ministries not currently being addressed	7	10	4	2	2	4	4.21

Section Six: Our Board's Style

Just as every person has his or her own personality, so does every board. The results below relate to the personality that our board currently exhibits.

TABLE NINE: Our Board's Style									
		Item	Strong-ly Agree	Agree	Some-what Agree	Some-what Dis-agree	Dis-agree	Strong-ly Dis-agree	Mean (Ave)
		SF (Impact on people) Rank #1							5.23
1	5	The primary role of the board is to work together to on its mission.	19	8	0	1	0	0	5.61
8	4	I come to board meetings to connect with others	8	15	4	0	1	0	5.04
9	6	The board can best assist the General Secretary by telling our mission story to others.	12	9	5	0	2	0	5.04
		ST (Facts are important) Rank #2							5.15
3	3	The board can best assist the General Secretary by setting policy.	15	8	4	1	0	0	5.32
6	1	I come to board meetings looking for helpful information.	12	8	8	0	0	0	5.14
10	2	The primary role of the board is to make sound decisions.	8	12	8	0	0	0	5.00
		NT (Innovation of ideas) Rank #3							5.13
2	10	I come to board meetings looking for ways to improve our work.	15	11	2	0	0	0	5.46
7	12	The board can best assist the General Secretary by generating good ideas that lead to innovation.	10	13	3	2	0	0	5.11
12	11	The primary role of the board is to offer helpful suggestions.	6	13	7	2	0	0	4.82
		NF (Ownership of vision) Rank #4							5.08
4	9	The board can best assist the General Secretary by showing our commitment to the mission.	13	10	4	1	0	0	5.25
5	7	I come to board meetings to connect with our priorities.	12	10	5	1	0	0	5.18
11	8	The primary role of the board is to understand and ask questions.	7	11	8	2	0	0	4.82

Section Seven: Summary

Here is a brief summary of the results of the survey.

- We question the importance of several of the BGM tasks currently listed in our bylaws.
- There is a discrepancy between the perceived importance and the perceived effectiveness of several of the tasks listed in our bylaws.
- In terms of our “balanced scorecard” approach to effectiveness, we are doing well in the area of financial understanding, but need some work on our internal processes.
- We are doing well at creating a “culture of inquiry” although some items related to this scale could be improved.
- There are no major perceived cultural pitfalls though several individual members believe that there are some problems to address in these areas.
- The board feels most comfortable with the roles of “Harmonizer” and “Convener” for the General Secretary.
- The “personality” of our board reflects a desire to have an impact on people. Our weak spot in terms of board personality is “ownership of a vision.”

Respectfully Submitted
C. Jeff Woods
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