

CHAPTER 13 – Board Training

Dedicated, engaged board members are absolutely essential to successful economic development organizations. They set the tone for how your organization interacts with your community and provide the support base for the economic development professional.

-Carol Goodman, Executive Director CCJDA

Board Training Formats

Serving as a member of an economic development organization in your community provides a wonderful opportunity to be a part of a shared vision. The collective expertise of community leaders who serve on the boards provides the foundation for economic development success and also supports the work of the professional executive director. Success will not be achieved if a board of directors is not fully engaged, doesn't understand the community vision or if there are divisions within the leadership structure, none of which make the job of the executive director any easier.

Economic development is a complex, long-term effort. A famous saying within the North Dakota economic development network is that "it's a **process**, not an **event**." The process is guided by each community's strategic plan, trained leadership and a desire to make a difference. Regular training sessions for board members serve to continually expand their knowledge of the forces and trends that impact economic and community development. The

sessions also help board members become a cohesive group and to be more comfortable with offering opinions and ideas.

The Cavalier County Job Development Authority has used several different formats for board training over the past several years. In the past 15 or so years, we have:

- Scheduled two day-long assessments of Cavalier County situations and resources facilitated by utility community developers.
- Produced the Cavalier County Comprehensive Strategic Plan, a 3-month effort in cooperation with a consultant.
- Conducted a community assessment for the learning facility project at the Langdon NDSU Research Extension Center. The assessment provided the foundation for the concept paper for the project.
- Sponsored and/or attended several regional meetings that combined board members from four separate economic development organizations.
- Scheduled a value-added visioning session assisted by NDSU Research & Extension personnel.
- Arranged for personnel from Northeast TrainND to work with board members using the “A Board of Leaders” model. No CCJDA employees attended this session.
- Scheduled extra time for review of the Strategic Plan following regular board meetings.
- Worked with the creation of the Devils Lake Region Ag Strategic Plan along with our regional economic development partners, using the Appreciative Inquiry model.

Board Training Resources

We are fortunate in North Dakota to have numerous resources for board and leadership training as well as a variety of extensive information for communities of all sizes. Any of the resources below can be used when developing training for a board of directors.

A Board of Leaders – NE TrainND

www.ccjda.org/boardleadeshiptraining.htm

Non-profit leadership training

<http://managementhelp.org/boards/index.htm>

North Dakota State University Extension Service – Center for Community Vitality

www.ag.ndsu.edu/ccv/

<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/ext-employees/advisory-boards-councils-and-committees>

North Dakota State University Rural Leadership ND

www.ag.ndsu.edu/rind

North Dakota League of Cities

www.ndlc.org (Note Training & Events)

North Dakota Association of Counties

www.ndaco.org

Emotional Intelligence

www.talentsmart.com

Business Retention & Expansion International

www.brei.org

National Development Council

www.nationaldevelopmentcouncil.org

International Economic Development Council

www.iedconline.org

North Dakota Planning Association

www.ndplanning.org

American Planning Association

www.planning.org

Rural Assistance Center

www.raconline.org