

"This small book is destined to become the 'bible' of nonprofit managers, boards, and students.

Corbett makes the case for nonprofit self-regulation feasible and accessible. Using 33 principles of self regulation proposed by Independent Sector, Corbett elicits them, demonstrates how to apply them, and shows their interconnections. This is a major contribution to the fields of ethics and nonprofit management."

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"Chris Corbett's book provides a highly useful guide to people new to serving on nonprofit boards as well as those with many years of experience. He brings key principles to life with tangible suggestions for how they can be incorporated into the organization's by-laws."

—JAMES R. COOK, Associate Professor of Psychology, UNC Charlotte, and President-Elect, Society for Community Research and Action

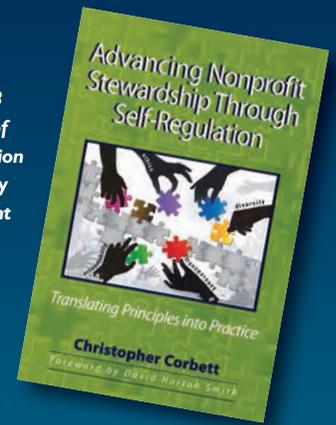
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The go-to guide of self-regulation for nonprofit and voluntary organizations.

Uses the 33 principles of self-regulation proposed by Independent Sector.



Core issues within non-profit and voluntary organizations:

- Board member qualifications, nomination, and disqualification standards
- Board member composition, diversity, size, and structure
- Executive compensation
- Performance/Program evaluations
- Individual and full board self-assessments

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About the Book

In *Advancing Nonprofit Stewardship Through Self-Regulation*, Chris Corbett uses Independent Sector's 33 Principles of Self Regulation to formulate a step-by-step process that all nonprofit and voluntary organizations can use to improve their self-regulation.

In reviewing each of the Principles of Self Regulation, Corbett identifies **core issues** that the principles point to. He then takes each principle, lists the core issue and maps out specific, economically feasible strategies to incorporate into their practice.

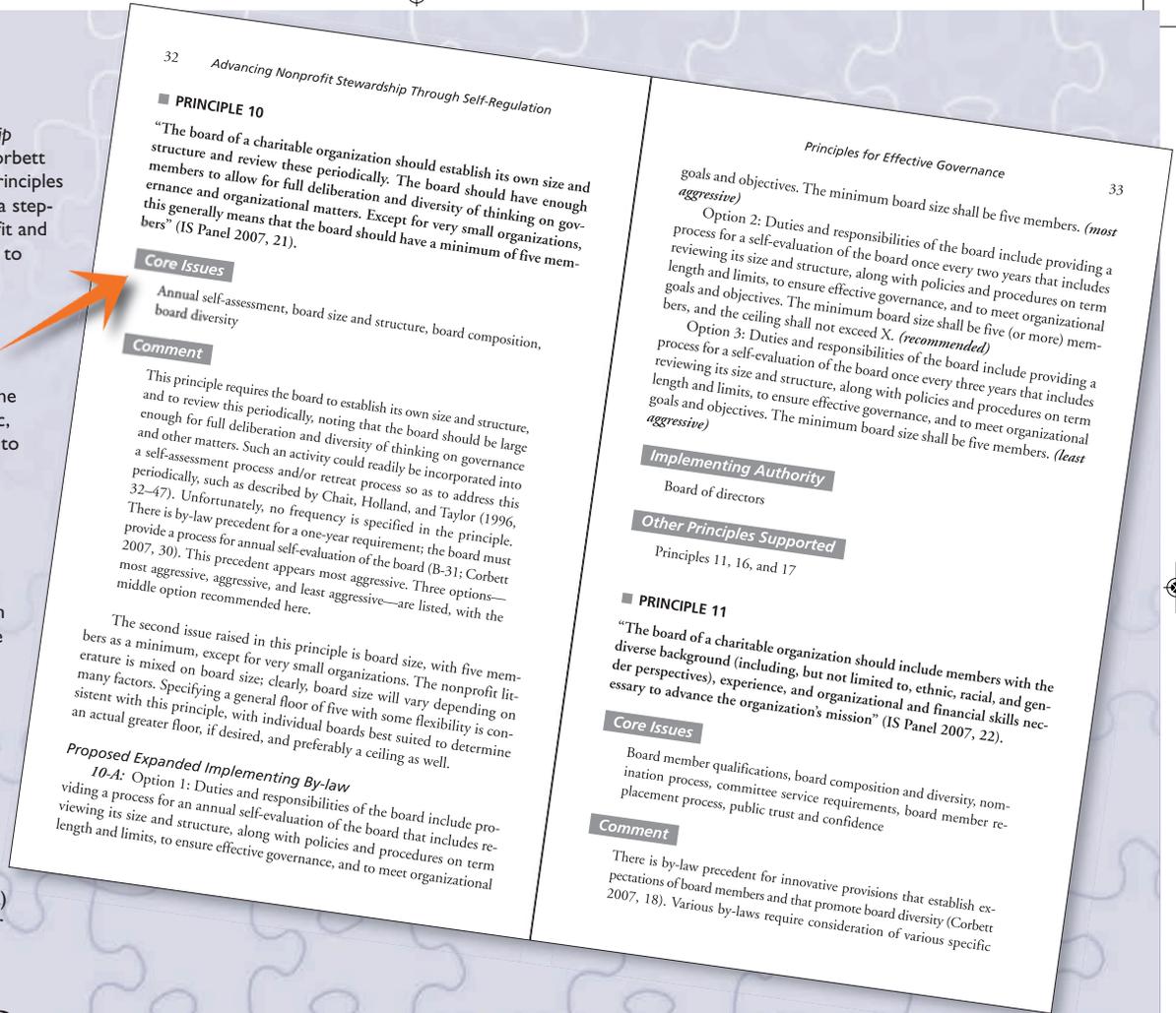
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About the Author

CHRISTOPHER CORBETT has been an independent researcher since 2006 with a focus on applying community psychology principles to the nonprofit sector. He is an active member of the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA, Div. 27 American Psychological Association), the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) and the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR).

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32 *Advancing Nonprofit Stewardship Through Self-Regulation*

PRINCIPLE 10

"The board of a charitable organization should establish its own size and structure and review these periodically. The board should have enough members to allow for full deliberation and diversity of thinking on governance and organizational matters. Except for very small organizations, this generally means that the board should have a minimum of five members" (IS Panel 2007, 21).

Core Issues

Annual self-assessment, board size and structure, board composition, board diversity

Comment

This principle requires the board to establish its own size and structure, and to review this periodically, noting that the board should be large enough for full deliberation and diversity of thinking on governance and other matters. Such an activity could readily be incorporated into a self-assessment process and/or retreat process so as to address this periodically, such as described by Chait, Holland, and Taylor (1996, 32-47). Unfortunately, no frequency is specified in the principle. There is by-law precedent for a one-year requirement; the board must provide a process for annual self-evaluation of the board (B-31; Corbett 2007, 30). This precedent appears most aggressive. Three options—most aggressive, aggressive, and least aggressive—are listed, with the middle option recommended here.

The second issue raised in this principle is board size, with five members as a minimum, except for very small organizations. The nonprofit literature is mixed on board size; clearly, board size will vary depending on many factors. Specifying a general floor of five with some flexibility is consistent with this principle, with individual boards best suited to determine an actual greater floor, if desired, and preferably a ceiling as well.

Proposed Expanded Implementing By-law

10-A: Option 1: Duties and responsibilities of the board include providing a process for an annual self-evaluation of the board that includes reviewing its size and structure, along with policies and procedures on term length and limits, to ensure effective governance, and to meet organizational

Principles for Effective Governance

goals and objectives. The minimum board size shall be five members. (*most aggressive*)

Option 2: Duties and responsibilities of the board include providing a process for a self-evaluation of the board once every two years that includes reviewing its size and structure, along with policies and procedures on term length and limits, to ensure effective governance, and to meet organizational goals and objectives. The minimum board size shall be five (or more) members, and the ceiling shall not exceed X. (*recommended*)

Option 3: Duties and responsibilities of the board include providing a process for a self-evaluation of the board once every three years that includes reviewing its size and structure, along with policies and procedures on term length and limits, to ensure effective governance, and to meet organizational goals and objectives. The minimum board size shall be five members. (*least aggressive*)

Implementing Authority

Board of directors

Other Principles Supported

Principles 11, 16, and 17

PRINCIPLE 11

"The board of a charitable organization should include members with the diverse background (including, but not limited to, ethnic, racial, and gender perspectives), experience, and organizational and financial skills necessary to advance the organization's mission" (IS Panel 2007, 22).

Core Issues

Board member qualifications, board composition and diversity, nomination process, committee service requirements, board member replacement process, public trust and confidence

Comment

There is by-law precedent for innovative provisions that establish expectations of board members and that promote board diversity (Corbett 2007, 18). Various by-laws require consideration of various specific