

John Carver's Ten Universal Policy Governance® Rules

NOTE: *Violating any of these criteria in adapting the model does not mean that your application of these principles is not valid or important, just that it is not Policy Governance®.*

1. Govern proactively through explicit statements of values, rather than reactively or through event-specific decisions. Boards must be at least as disciplined as they expect their staffs to be.

2. Using four categories, address values about:

- **Ends** - what results/benefits/changes for which people/needs are worth what cost
- **Staff Means** - unacceptable practices and circumstances
- **Board-Staff Linkage** - how power is passed and accountability evaluated
- **Board Process** - how the board will govern and on whose behalf.

3. Spend most board time addressing **Ends** with a long term perspective. This is the board's major contribution to long range planning.

4. Address **Staff Means** only in a negative or constraining way in order to leave maximum freedom, but within clear limits.

5. Always **resolve value issues starting from the largest**, granting the Chief Executive authority to decide all further (smaller) issues.

6. The **board's job** contributions or products *must* include:

- Linkage with the ownership
- Explicit governing values (policies)
- Assurance of executive performance

7. The **Chief Executive** position exists *solely* to accomplish Ends without violating the constraints on Staff Means.

8. Routinize the **monitoring** of staff performance against all board policies on Ends and Staff Means, recognizing this measurement as *the* evaluation of Executive performance.

9. Official board committees, if any, are there to help with the board's job, never with the staff's. Their best contribution is to prepare policy options (with implications) for board deliberation.

10. Use board time to **create the future** more than to review the past, to stimulate debate on Ends rather than Means, and to look beyond the organization more than within.