

John Carver's ten Policy Governance® ground 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.