

# Get on Board Exercise – Core competencies and skills of members of public bodies

Whether the role is described as board member, trustee, non-executive director or governor, the range of general experience, competencies and skills required is broadly similar. Working in small groups, use this checklist and the associated questions to assess your own capacity to participate at this level. **Think in particular about what you do as a trade unionist.**

## Experience

### Committee Experience

Already holding a public appointment, or currently involved in bodies at a local or regional level e.g. **trade unions**, Community Health Councils, Single Regeneration Board, Learning and Skills Council, Regional Development Agencies, church/temple councils, tenants' management committees, voluntary organisations etc.

- What committee experience do you have?
- What was your personal role on the committee?
- Describe an achievement that you are most proud of

### Community Participation

Actively participating in voluntary activities e.g. **trade union representatives**, school governors, councillors, board members of housing trusts, Chambers of Commerce, environmental groups, local pressure groups, faith groups, charity work, Justice of the Peace etc.

- Describe the community groups or bodies you are already involved in
- Outline your personal role
- What was your motivation for joining the group?
- What have you done to motivate others?
- Were you responsible for instigating any activities/work?

### Professional Experience

Training and/or background in a particular field e.g. law, medicine, human resources, finance, management. **Don't forget trade union education courses.**

- List your professional skills (if applicable)
- How have you applied your professional skills?
- When have you looked for better ways to do things?
- Where have you sought new ways to broaden understanding of wider issues?
- How have you built and maintained a network of useful contacts?

### Technical and Practical Experience

Background and involvement at a responsible level in getting things **done e.g. management, trustees**, trade union representative, budgets, customer service etc.

- Do you have experience that would be recognised as a specific skill?
- How have these skills been used in projects?
- Where have you had to give consideration to corporate and/or external influences when making decisions?
- When have you generated novel ideas with practical applications?

## Qualities

### Commitment

Do you have the motivation to make the time to devote a few days each month to a public appointment and an interest in making a difference?

- When have you wanted to make a difference and why?
- How have you overcome obstacles to achieve your aims?
- When have you been responsible for a groundbreaking activity that led to a positive outcome?

## Catalyst

Can you look beyond the detail, do you have a vision and can you ask challenging questions and look at things from the user perspective. Are you motivated with drive and energy to be a catalyst for change?

- Where have you contributed to the development of a vision?
- Where have you remained focused on the results to be achieved, despite other pressures?
- When have you challenged traditional assumptions or ways of doing things?

## Communications

Good interpersonal communications skills and ability to negotiate and influence. Seeking clarification in assessing the implications of proposals.

- Can you adapt your communication style to suit all audiences?
- Are you easily understood when giving instructions or providing information?
- When have you communicated clearly and convincingly to win people over to your point of view?
- How have you influenced others?
- When have you acted as a mediator, reconciling and influencing others?

## Courage

Speaking confidently at meetings and a willingness and ability to challenge constructively. Asking questions that no one else has asked or querying why a certain approach is being recommended.

- When have you challenged traditional ways of delivering services?
- When have you questioned traditional assumptions
- When have you been able to prioritise and make difficult decisions
- When have you been able to state your case and positively accept a consensus decision, even when it is different to your own?

## Common Sense

The ability to work as part of a team in reaching and implementing decisions, and be able to work with experts and specialists. Assessing the impact of proposals on the community and on individuals and bringing an independent view to discussions.

- When have you found common ground with others to take things forward?
- When have you been flexible and/or pragmatic in your approach?
- Are you able to get the best out of specialists and experts?
- Explain when have you had to distil key facts and the essentials of the problem?