

# Five Good Ideas®

## for greater governance - making bad boards better

**Owen Charters, CEO, BGC Canada  
(formerly Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada)**

Monday, October 25, 2021 - 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

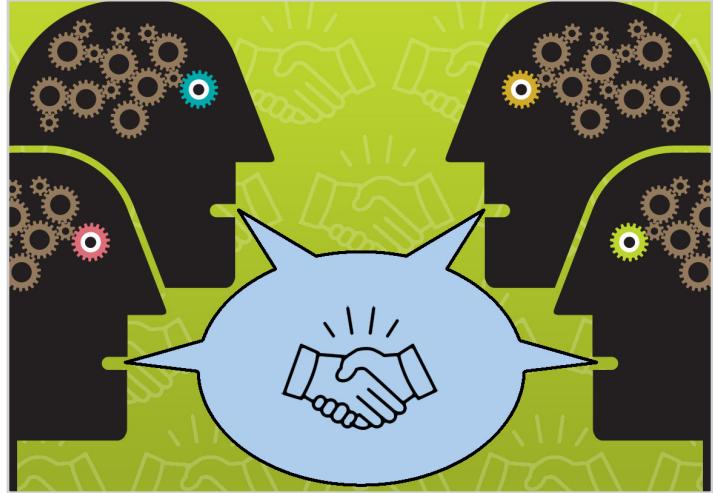
They say strategy starts with the board, but is that really true, and should it be? Whether you're an executive director or CEO (including an aspiring one), managing a board is a skill that's rarely taught, yet vital to any senior non-profit leader. In this Five Good Ideas session with Owen Charters, President & CEO of BGC Canada, find out how a board can be better. What should it focus on, and what should it ignore? Build a great board so that governance adds real value to you and your organization. Learn what and how to present issues to your board. Discover five good ideas (and a few bad ones to avoid) to keep your board on track, ensuring they are a partner in guiding your organization on the toughest decisions, and uncover whether they really should be the seat of organizational strategy.



**Owen Charters** is CEO of BGC Canada (formerly Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada). He serves on the advisory board of Common Good, a retirement plan for nonprofit sector employees, the Advisory Committee for the School for Advanced Studies in the Arts and Humanities at Western University, and the board of the National Alliance for Children and Youth. Former Chair of Imagine Canada and the Human Resources Council on the Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector, Owen is also faculty for the Social Sector Leadership MBA at York University's Schulich School of Business. He is interested in pushing for a stronger nonprofit sector voice in Canadian policy, as well as better working conditions for sector employees.

### Five Good Ideas

1. Guide and shape the work of the board in three key areas: policy, strategy, and generative governance; but remember, boards don't DO strategy.
2. Boards manage and evaluate CEOs; but CEOs need to take the initiative to shape this work.
3. Boards should be diverse, but most importantly must be reflective of the community.
4. Boards need to be engaged – committees, education programs, mission connection, and as alumni.
5. Look to other sectors – there are good practices that we can emulate in the corporate sector around accountability and shaping the work of the board.



### Resources

- Muttart Foundation – Board Development Workbooks (<https://muttart.org/publications/board-development-workbooks/>)
- *Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Boards*. An excellent book by Dr. Richard Chait, Mr. William Ryan, and Ms. Barbara Taylor. (<https://boardsource.org/product/governance-leadership-reframing-work-nonprofit-boards/>)
- Leading with Intent: BoardSource Index of Nonprofit Board Practices – access free and paid materials (<https://boardsource.org>)
- Deloitte – The Effective Not-for-Profit Board: A value-driving force (<https://www2.deloitte.com/ca/en/pages/public-sector/articles/effective-not-for-profit-board.html>)
- Owen Charters' article "Board Governance in Practice" (chapter 8) in *Intersections and Innovations: Change for Canada's Voluntary and Nonprofit Sector*, published by the Muttart Foundation and Carleton University (<https://muttart.org/intersections/>)



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GOOD IDEAS**

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Edited by ALAN BROADBENT AND RATNA OMIDVAR

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