

Monitoring and Assessment to Empower Your Governance

Presented by Unity Consulting
Unitarian Universalist General Assembly
June 25, 2010

Agenda

Key Monitoring Principles
Examples
Brief Discussion with Partner
Q&A

Background Only

Nine Principles of Policy Governance® for Congregations

In Policy Governance®, congregation Boards:

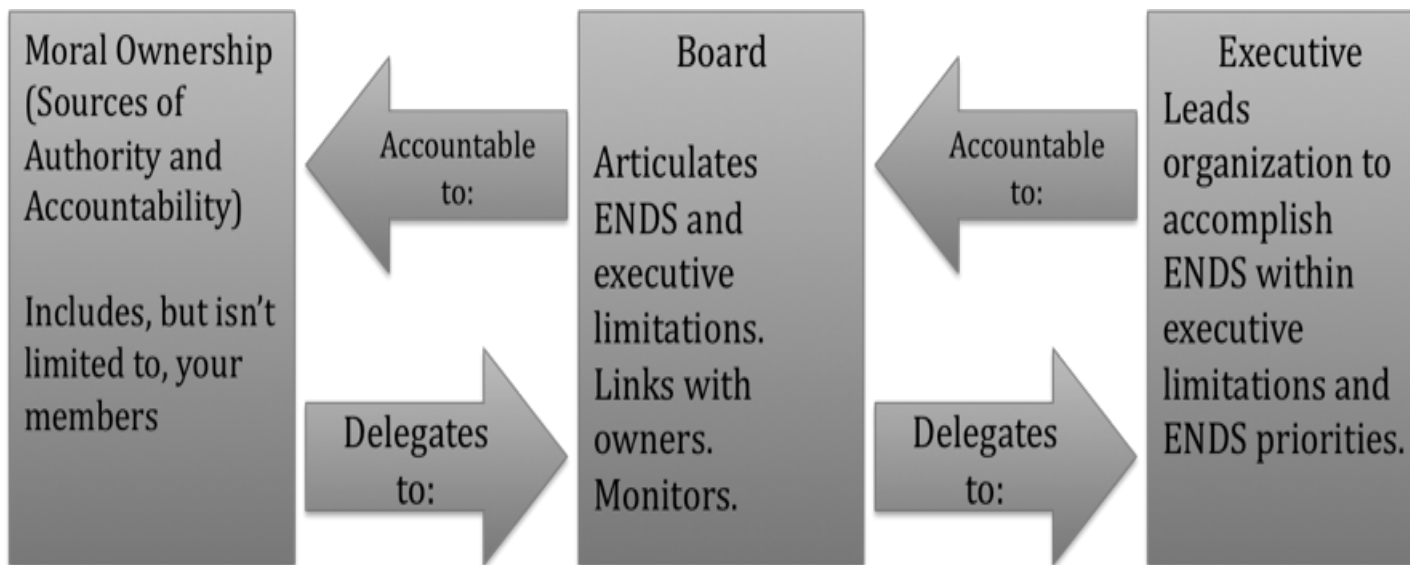
1. Govern on behalf of a moral ownership that is not seated at the table.
The primary relationship the board must establish, maintain, clarify, and protect is its relationship with its 'owners,' keeping in contact with them, and hearing their voices. (John Carver, *Basic Principles of Policy Governance*)
2. Speak as a Board with one voice or not at all.
3. Govern primarily through policy.
 - Ends policies
 - Executive Limitation policies
 - Governance Process policies
 - Board-Executive Relationship policies.
4. Delegate exclusively to the Executive Leader.
5. Distinguish Ends from Means.
Ends answer three questions:
 1. What difference do we want to make?
 2. For which people?
 3. At what cost or priority?Everything else is means.
Answering the three Ends questions is the primary work of the Board.
6. Control Means through Executive Limitations.
The Board's best control over operational means is to limit, not prescribe.
7. Develop policies as nested sets.
Boards :
 1. Formulate policy by determining the broadest values before progressing to the more detailed level.
 2. Ensure that the large policy contains all smaller related policies in a logical containment that omits nothing.
 3. Cautiously and intentionally choose to deal with smaller issues only after the broadest policy has been determined.

8. Monitor Executive performance effectively.
Boards need to evaluate Executive performance:
 1. Against the Executive Leader's approved interpretation of the Board's policy words.
 2. On how effectively the Executive Leader accomplishes the Ends without violating the executive limitations.
 3. Using data.

9. Commit to Board discipline.
Board members commit to be responsible for:
 1. The work of the board.
 2. Orienting and developing board members.
 3. Ensuring the integrity of the board's process and the assurance that board policy is not being violated.

Governance Process policies articulate these responsibilities.

Note: Policy Governance® is the registered service mark of John Carver; the authoritative website for the Policy Governance® model can be found at www.carvergovernance.com.



Background Only Policy Governance® Glossary

Board-Executive Relationship Policies:

One of the four types of policies the board writes, these policies clarify how the board delegates authority to the executive, and how it will evaluate executive performance in relation to the ends and the executive limitations.

Ends:

One of the four types of policies that the board writes, ends define what long-term, mission-related results are to be achieved, for whom, and at what cost or priority. Determining ends, and avoiding involvement in means, is a pivotal board duty in Policy Governance® that frees both the board and the executive leader to concentrate on what matters most.

Executive Limitations:

One of the four types of policies that the board writes, executive limitations define what the executive leader may NOT do as they work to accomplish the ends. While this approach may seem negative, executive limitations are, in practice, very liberating, as they allow the staff the fullest possible range of their creativity. They can do anything they want to make the ends become reality, provided they do NOT do the few things spelled out in the executive limitations.

Governance Process Policies:

One of the four types of policies that the board writes, board governance process policies identify the board's philosophy, its accountability and the specifics of its own job.

Linkage:

If the board's primary responsibility is to write high-level policies on behalf of its moral ownership, the board needs a way to connect with its owners, to hear what they have to say and to represent them effectively. This process of connecting and listening to the organization's moral owners is called linkage.

Means:

Actions needed to accomplish the ends or to protect the operations that produce the ends. Notice how policy governance intentionally gives the executive leader full responsibility for determining what means they'll use to accomplish the ends and how they'll stay within the executive limitations. This is why Policy Governance® works so well to release staff creativity and frees board time to focus on the long-range planning issues that matter most.

Monitoring:

The processes and tools boards use to evaluate organizational performance. Specifically, the board uses regular monitoring to track whether the executive is accomplishing the ends and staying within the executive limitations and to evaluate whether the board is faithful to its governance process policies. "If you haven't said how it ought to be, don't ask how it is," is the monitoring principle that forces boards to think carefully about what they want, what means they won't accept in getting it, and then to spell it out in written policies so they and the executive know what will be expected and monitored. Monitoring can be obtained three ways: internal reports from the executive leader, direct inspection by board teams, or external reports from professional experts.

Moral Ownership:

The people not at the board table on whose behalf the board governs and to whom the board is accountable. Determining who your organization's ownership is, who gives the board authority and accountability, isn't always easy. Often, you'll have owners that aren't legal owners. For this reason, Policy Governance® uses the term "moral ownership" to include all owners, in both a moral and a legal sense. Another term for this is "sources of accountability and authority."

Policies:

Written statements that completely embody the board's beliefs, commitments, values, and vision. There are four policy categories boards must address: ends, executive limitations, board governance style, and board/executive relationship.

Staff

Any person, whether paid or volunteer, who is working on behalf of the congregation to achieve its ends.

Monitoring Principles

Effective Monitoring in Congregations:

- Evaluates the ministry we share and its impact in our lives and in our world
- Focuses on results, not people or activities
- Takes the time it needs
- Intentionally evolves
- Adds value

Example 1: Sample End Policy and Interpretation

End Policy Statement

All who come to Our City Congregation feel welcome.

Executive Interpretation

- “All who come to Our City Congregation” includes anyone who comes to our congregation, whether a member or a visitor, whether for worship, a meeting, business, or any event. It includes people in all their diversity, including people of diverse:
 - Spiritual beliefs and practices from all religions
 - Backgrounds, including the life experiences that come from living in different geographic locations from local neighborhoods to global communities, living in different family configurations, working in different occupations, volunteering for different organizations, and all the other different life experiences that shape us into unique human beings.
 - Identities including but not limited to identities of race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, politics and education.
- “feel welcome” means that all the people described above:
 - Experience Our City Congregation as a safe place to express their unique identity, and to share their gifts and their wounds.
 - See themselves and their unique backgrounds and identities acknowledged and respected by all who participate in church life, in all the programs and activities of our congregation, including worship, religious education, the work of our outreach and affinity groups, and the day-to-day operations of the congregation.

Metrics and Indicators – how compliance will be demonstrated:

We would know that we were achieving this end through data obtained in our congregational survey. We ask whether respondents to the survey strongly agree (6), agree (5), somewhat agree (4), somewhat disagree (3), disagree (2), or strongly disagree (1) with:

- I feel welcome at Our City Congregation.
- I experience Our City Congregation as a safe place to express my unique identity.
- I see my unique background and identity acknowledged and respected by everyone at Our City Congregation.

In addition, the congregational survey asks some questions about background, identity, and participation in church life, including respondents’ gender identity

and age, so that we can make some correlations between respondents' background and identities and respondents' sense of welcome.

Based on experience with this survey (see chart below), and considering our congregation's aspirations to welcome ever-more diversity to our congregation, compliance will be demonstrated when we achieve a score of 5.3 on all three of these survey questions, within the demographic and participation categories on the survey. This would show that we've made significant progress towards successfully welcoming the people who are already here, and would indicate we've built a solid foundation to work on welcoming people who are not yet here.

Rationale:

A survey is the appropriate metric to use for this end because we want to know welcome from the perspective of the people we're serving and the best way to find that out is to ask them.

Evidence of compliance:

The chart below shows the average score for each statement above over the last three years.

Question	2007	2008	2009
I feel welcome at Our City Congregation	5.0 average Lower scores: parents of young children (4.9), young adults (4.8).	5.1 average Lower scores: parents of young children (4.9), young adults (4.7)	5.3 average Lower score: young adults (5.0). Parents of young children now at 5.2
I experience Our City Congregation as a safe place to express my unique identity	4.9 average Three comments saying that it's not safe to express all political views, one comment that it's not safe to show same-gender affection, one comment about having to talk the right way to fit in, several comments about this being the only place they felt	4.9 average One comment about political views not all welcome; one comment from a transgendered individual not feeling safe; one comment about not being able to be "dumb" here, several comments about this being the only place they felt safe to be themselves.	5.1 average One comment about political views not all welcome; one comment about only being able to express their "college graduate identity" here, several comments about this being the only place they felt safe to be themselves.

I experience Our City Congregation as a safe place to express my unique identity	4.9 average Three comments saying that it's not safe to express all political views, one comment that it's not safe to show same-gender affection, one comment about having to talk the right way to fit in, several comments about this being the only place they felt safe to be themselves.	4.9 average One comment about political views not all welcome; one comment from a transgendered individual not feeling safe; one comment about not being able to be "dumb" here, several comments about this being the only place they felt safe to be themselves.	5.1 average One comment about political views not all welcome; one comment about only being able to express their "college graduate identity" here, several comments about this being the only place they felt safe to be themselves.
I see my unique	5.2 average Several comments	5.2 average Several suggestions	5.3 average Several suggestions

I report partial compliance. Despite progress over these three years, we still have some work to do so that young adults and parents of young children feel welcome, and some work to do making our congregation a safe place for all to express their unique identity. Our annual work plan will include specific programs to target these needs. In addition, our data is not a complete assessment of our welcome, since we don't know what welcome visitors, former congregants, community partners, and other people who come to our church experience. Next year's monitoring report will include this data, and I particularly expect our conversations with community partners to inform a deeper statement of our congregation's commitment to anti-racism.

Example 2: Sample Executive Limitation and Interpretation

Executive Limitation Policy – *Treatment of Staff*

II. B. With respect to treatment of staff and volunteers, the executive may not cause or allow conditions that are inhumane, unfair, or unprofessional.

Accordingly, the executive may not:

1. Discriminate among existing or potential staff/volunteers on other than clearly job-related criteria, individual performance, or individual qualifications.
2. Subject staff or volunteers to unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
3. Withhold from staff a due-process internal grievance procedure.
4. Prevent staff from grieving to the board when:
 - a. internal grievance procedures have been exhausted and
 - b. the employee alleges either that
 - i. board policy has been violated to the employee's detriment, or
 - ii. board policy does not adequately protect the employee's human rights.

Sample Monitoring Report

Policy Statement II.B.

With respect to treatment of staff and volunteers, the executive may not cause or allow conditions that are inhumane, unfair, or unprofessional.

Executive Interpretation:

I interpret:

- “Staff and volunteers” to mean any person, whether paid or unpaid, who in any capacity serves the operations and ministries of the congregation, including all administrative functions, and ministry programs, activities and events.
- “Cause or allow conditions” to mean situations or circumstances brought about by actions or inactions of any staff, including the executive, or volunteer.
- “Inhumane, unfair, or unprofessional” to mean conditions that could cause physical or emotional harm or distress, violate personal dignity, or violate standards of treatment of people expressed in the codes of professional practice from Unitarian Universalist professional associations, congregational behavioral covenants, and congregational personnel policies.

Metrics and Indicators – how compliance will be demonstrated:

In addition to metrics and indicators described under subpolicies II.B.1 to 4, compliance with this policy will be demonstrated through an annual survey of all staff and volunteers who are or have been employed by or worked for the church over the past 12 months. In order to assure confidentiality and encourage honest responses from respondents, either the board or an outside consultant administers the survey and

compiles the data so that it doesn't identify respondents unless they request a response. The survey includes a cover letter reminding respondents of our congregation's grievance procedure and the survey itself asks staff and volunteers whether in the past year they have:

1. Been treated humanely, fairly, and professionally.
2. Been discriminated against.
3. Experienced unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
4. Been prevented from using established, internal complaint procedures.
5. Been prevented from grieving to the board.

Compliance is demonstrated when BOTH:

- a) at least 50% of the potential annual staff and volunteer survey respondents actually respond and, of those responses, 95% say they have been treated as the policy directs; and
- b) documentation of all identifiable or formal complaints under this policy show humane, fair, and professional resolution.

Rationale:

We need at least 50% of potential respondents to actually respond in order for the survey to have enough data to be meaningful in terms of representation of the staff and volunteer base.

According to consultant Jannice Moore in her booklet Meaningful Monitoring, workplace studies have shown that at least 5-10% of staff will complain of ill-treatment by their organization regardless of the actual working conditions. Showing that complaints have been resolved humanely, fairly and professionally will demonstrate the responsiveness of the organization to complaints or circumstances of ill-treatment, without dictating the appropriate means for resolution of all cases.

Evidence of compliance:

I report compliance based on the results of the survey. Percentage of potential respondents actually responding to survey: 57%

Question	% Saying Been Treated as Policy Directs	Comments
Been treated humanely, fairly, and professionally.	97%	No identifiable complaints from the survey to resolve. No formal complaints either.

Been discriminated against.	96%	One identifiable complaint from a congregant who was not chosen to be a Worship Associate. He felt he was not chosen because he was an atheist. See attached resolution. Minister met with the person and he agreed he was not able to meet the time commitment required.
Experienced unsafe or unhealthy conditions.	96%	No identifiable complaints from the survey to resolve. No formal complaints either.
Been prevented from using established, internal complaint procedures.	100%	No formal complaints.
Been prevented from grieving to the board.	100%	No formal complaints.

Policy statement II.B.1

Accordingly, the executive may not:

- 1. Discriminate among existing or potential staff/volunteers on other than clearly job-related criteria, individual performance, or individual qualifications.**

Executive interpretation:

- I interpret “Discriminate” to mean prejudicial treatment taken toward or against any staff member or volunteer for any reason other than the reasons stated in the policy.
- I interpret “existing or potential staff/volunteers” to mean any person, whether paid or unpaid, who serves in any capacity or formally applies to serve the operations and ministries of the congregation, including all administrative functions, and ministry programs, activities and events.
- I interpret “job-related criteria” to mean judgment based on specific skills, experience, certification/licensing, or personal qualities required to satisfactorily perform the job including but not limited to computer/technical skills, specific training, prior work experience, and in specific limited circumstances, age (for example, according to church child & youth protection policy, a person must be at least 25 years old to serve as a high school youth advisor and at least 18 to serve as a nursery worker).
- I interpret “individual performance” to mean for any particular staff person or volunteer, judgment based on the results and effects of their job-related work including their effects on group performance and their humane, fair, and professional treatment of persons they encounter in the performance of their job.

- I interpret “individual qualifications” to mean for any particular staff person or volunteer, judgment based upon their job-related personal skills, training, certification/licensing, work experience.

Metrics and Indicators – how compliance will be demonstrated:

Compliance with this policy will primarily be demonstrated through an annual survey of all staff and volunteers who are or have been employed by or worked for the church over the past 12 months. In the survey staff and volunteers are asked whether in the past year they have been discriminated against. Additionally, all formal complaints of discrimination will be documented and reported to the Board.

Compliance is demonstrated when BOTH:

- a) at least 50% of the potential annual staff and volunteer survey respondents actually respond and, of those responses, 95% say they have been treated as the policy directs; and
- b) documentation of all identifiable or formal complaints under this policy show humane, fair, and professional resolution.

Rationale:

We need at least 50% of potential respondents to actually respond in order for the survey to have enough data to be meaningful in terms of representation of the staff and volunteer base.

According to consultant Jannice Moore in her booklet Meaningful Monitoring, workplace studies have shown that at approximately 5% of staff will complain of discrimination in their organization regardless of the actual working conditions. Showing that complaints have been resolved humanly, fairly and professionally will demonstrate the appropriate responsiveness of the organization to complaints of discrimination, without pre-judging those involved or dictating the appropriate means for resolution of all cases.

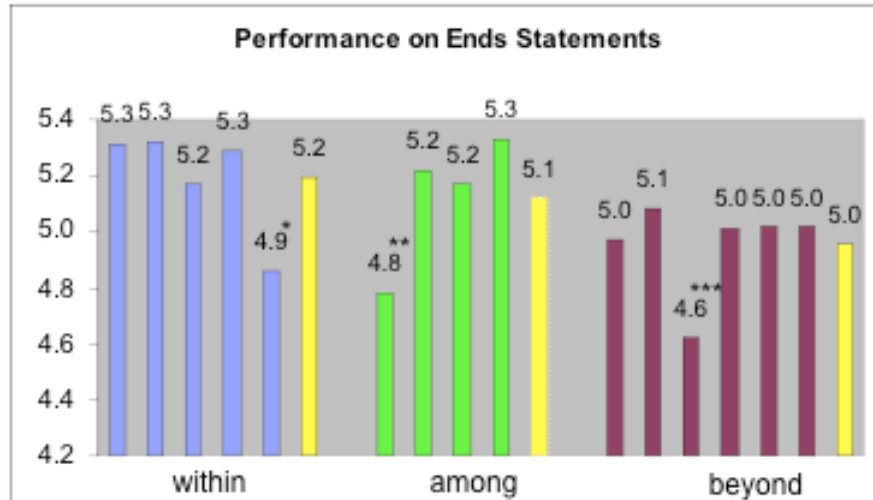
Evidence of compliance:

I report compliance. See above results for question #2.

Example 3: the Congregational Survey

How did we do? – Ends Statements

Yellow bars indicate average for each area. While differences aren't great the averages have the following pattern: within (5.2) > among (5.1) > beyond (5.0)



* Knowledge of UCU and UU history
** People of all ages feel welcome and connected across identities including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, politics, and education
*** Proclaiming the transforming power of our faith

Since our Ends statements are new this year there are no comparable benchmarks; however the average score assigned across all previous ES in '08 was 4.69 – a number clearly below an average computed across all our new ES. 13

Link to download Unity Church–Unitarian’s 2009 congregational survey and a PowerPoint discussing its results: <http://unityunitarian.org/governing.htm>.

Other monitoring resources:

Meaningful Monitoring, by Jannice Moore, available from the consultant directly at www.governancecoach.com

Reinventing Your Board: A Step-By-Step Guide to Implementing Policy Governance by John Carver and Miriam Mayhew Carver. (Jossey-Bass, 2nd edition, 2006)

To see another application of monitoring in the different setting of the UUA’s governance, attend the UUA Board’s workshop during the next workshop slot:

Friday June 25
4:30 to 5:45 p.m.
Convention Center 101 ABC

To discuss issues of monitoring further, come to a discussion group:

Saturday June 26
1:00 to 2:00 p.m.
Hilton Marquette II