



How Can a Geographically -Challenged Board Hold Meetings?

How should you handle board meetings with members spread across the nation?

Q: How can we conduct the business of our organization when our board members live in different parts of the country? Our founders formed the organization this way.

*Shanon,
Cape Cod, Massachusetts*

A: Most groups with geographic challenges meet once or twice a year for a full day and have phone conferences in between. Because of the expense involved, such organizations usually have fewer meetings. Thus, the meetings must be longer and more intense, and board members must be very well prepared.

Other ways to meet include phone and video conferences. Some groups are experimenting with chat rooms with mixed success. ■

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Nonprofit or Not-for-Profit — What's the Difference?

Q: In most of your articles, you use the word “nonprofit.” One of your articles, however (“Is Profit a Dirty Word?”, Vol. 12, No. 1), calls “not-for-profit” the correct “technical term.” What’s the proper terminology?

A: The IRS uses the term “tax-exempt” as well as “not-for-profit,” as do many (but not all) state corporate statutes. “Nonprofit” is more commonly used by funders, the press, and the public.

Internationally, nonprofits are called NGOs or non-governmental organizations. That’s another misleading term. After all, Dell Computer is not a governmental

organization, but it’s not a charity either.

The great pity about all this semantic confusion is that all these labels focus on what the sector is *not* primarily intended to do and, by inference, what many think it shouldn’t do at all—make money.

A much better term would be “community service organization.” I would love to see that adopted worldwide, as it speaks to what we *are*, not what we *aren’t*. ■

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