



# Board Policy Template

## for Churches



from the Governance  
Excellence Model (GEM)

# SAMPLE

STRIVE! is a private company devoted to helping maximize the effectiveness of people and organizations through leadership development. The team of professionals provides training, facilitation, coaching and consulting services throughout Canada and the United States.

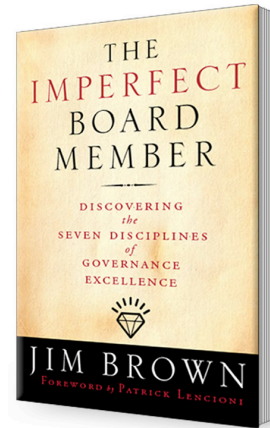
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## How to Use this Document

STRIVE!'s Board Policy Template provides a set of policies that a governing board would develop to guide the organization's systems and work. The structure and content of these policies are built upon the GEM (Governance Excellence Model) that has been developed by STRIVE! and introduced in the best-selling book, *The Imperfect Board Member*. This version is specifically tailored with policies and terminology that applies to the church board situation. It is not intended that these sample policies be adopted "as is" by any board, but rather that they serve as a starting point. They should be changed or deleted, and others added, to develop a set of policies appropriate to the organization. STRIVE! acknowledges John Carver, whose body of work has contributed to these policies.



This template is a one-time use purchase for a single organization, not to be shared, sold, or otherwise distributed. The GEM is the intellectual property of STRIVE!, who holds first publishing rights on the model and its seven disciplines (*The Imperfect Board Member*, 2006). Please direct any questions regarding usage and permissions to [team@strive.com](mailto:team@strive.com).

# SAMPLE

# General Board Governance Policy

The board of Open Arms Community Church is a governing board operating within the Bylaws, focussing on leadership by planning and policy setting and delegating the implementation to the staff through the Senior Pastor.

The board policies clarify expectations in regard to each of the seven disciplines of governance excellence.

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## I – Connect . . . For Healthy Board Relations

Original Date	Reviewed/ Revisited
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### General Board Directive

Board members will connect with each other by clarifying expectations of board members, communicating thoroughly, and developing an effective team dynamic.

#### Con-1 **Board Leadership**

The board is responsible to operate as a unified community of servants with each person stewarding his or her spiritual gifts to benefit God's kingdom.

Con-1.1 The board commits itself to Biblical, lawful, and efficient conduct. Board members will function in an ethical manner, contribute to the work of the board, support the decisions of the board, and respect the confidentiality of privileged information.

Con-1.2 The board will speak with one voice. All board members will support all board decisions outside of board meetings.

Con-1.3 Board members will make every effort to attend and participate in all meetings and be properly prepared for board deliberation.

Con-1.4 Board members will treat other board members and the Senior Pastor with respect and professionalism. When differences of opinion exist, the commitment will be to challenge the issues but never attack or defame the person.

Con-1.5 Board members may not exercise individual authority over the church, staff, or members except as explicitly directed by the board through a duly passed motion. Board members will not judge the performance of personnel outside of the official board process.

Con-1.6 The board will annually monitor its own effectiveness and take actions to excel in its role by completing the GEM Assessment for Boards.

Con-1.7 The board will annually conduct an assessment of each board member's individual performance.

Con-2      **Board Meetings**

The board will meet a minimum of 5 times per year.

Con-2.1      The board will establish a schedule of regular meeting times at the first meeting after the annual meeting.

Con-2.2      The Chair or a majority of board members may call for a special meeting to deal with urgent issues.

Con-2.3      Board members will notify the Chair, or the staff person who makes arrangements for board meetings, if unable to attend a meeting.

Con-3      **Board Meeting Process**

Meetings will follow a customized process for our board.

Con-3.1      The preference is to build consensus leading to decision making. The Chair has the responsibility to manage the discussion and discern when the group is ready to make a decision. Decisions will be formalized by a vote on a motion duly moved and seconded.

Con-3.2      The will of the majority must be carried out while hearing the minority and protecting their rights.

Con-3.3      All board members are expected to participate in the meetings. Each board member is to be regarded as having rights and power equal to every other board member and is expected to voice an opinion.

Con-3.4      Only one topic or motion will be considered at a time.

Con-3.5      On meeting matters not specifically covered by bylaws or policies, Robert's Rules of Order will be followed.

Con-4      **Board Meeting Agenda**

The board will set the agenda for its meetings. Every board member will receive a draft agenda in advance of each meeting.

Con-4.1      The Chair of the board will develop a draft agenda for every board meeting in advance.

More policies  
under "Connect"  
in full product.

### Monitoring Schedule - Board Performance

Report Section	Method	Frequency	Schedule	Policy Reference
Connecting for Healthy Board Relations	Board Inspection	Annually	9 <sup>th</sup> month of fiscal year	Con
Directing for Organizational Performance	Board Inspection	Annually	9 <sup>th</sup> month of fiscal year	Dir
Protect in the Interests of the Owners	Board Inspection	Annually	9 <sup>th</sup> month of fiscal year	Pro-1
Respecting Owners' Expectations	Board Inspection	Annually	9 <sup>th</sup> month of fiscal year	Res
Reflecting on Organizational Results	Board Inspection	Annually	9 <sup>th</sup> month of fiscal year	Ref
Selecting Prominent Leadership	Board Inspection	Annually	9 <sup>th</sup> month of fiscal year	Sel
Expecting Great Board-Management Interaction	Board Inspection	Annually	9 <sup>th</sup> month of fiscal year	Exp-1 Exp-2 Exp-5

Monitoring  
Schedule for  
each discipline.

# SAMPLE