

ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

Leadership is always a challenge. It requires the ability to set expectations, comply with expected behaviors, and still have the personal fortitude to require standards that require concentration on the “things” that matter during group/board gatherings. No one said it is/would be easy—it just is worth it!

Organizational Standards are the rules of engagement in a corporation. You can liken it to the national pledge at the beginning of each meeting. The organizational standards provide the same consistent directive and commitment. By requiring a verbal reading of such expected behavior by a different member at each meeting, it reminds all members of the reason for their attendance. Rotating the reading assures that every member consistently understands and commits to their group/board responsibilities. It is psychology in action!

Organizational Standards have three main parts:

1. Philosophy Statement (stating the belief of the organization related to existence)
2. Purpose, Mission Statement (stating the why the organization exists)
3. Goal(s) and Objectives (stating the long term/terminal reason(s) for existence as a goal(s) and the short time/incremental happenings as an objective(s) that help reach the terminal goal(s).

Remember the Rule of Three from last week’s newspaper article? The use of the idea of three is based on the principle that when things come in threes, it provides more satisfying or effective outcomes than other numbers, and it increases memory, brevity, and rhythm. Therefore, we have three main parts to the organizational standards of an organization.

The problem is that many organizations are inconsistent or do not practice consistency in reminding members of groups/boards of their roles, performance expectations, and requirements for being members.

Entropy is a universal concept of psychodynamics that moves all things and even relationships toward randomness. Things become different and indiscernible over time. Only through our intended constant efforts (like Organizational Standards) will all predetermined and agreed-upon “things” and situations remain constant. Therefore, the importance of written and reiterated standards at every organizational meeting rotates between members for verbal reading to the entire membership—perhaps post the allegiance to the US flag.

Once written and administratively approved, the standards receive board review/approval and are perhaps updated occasionally as set forth by policy. They are printed, framed, hung on the wall, stated again and again in total or incrementally as reminders (due to entropy), and shared with community members (recipients of a group/board’s decisions) regularly and in a printed manner—perhaps attached to mailings or bills.

I hear and sometimes read selected standards picked and randomly presented to individuals. Time to change—organizational standards are to be firmly in place and maintained in the minds of all those who participate and are recipients of its legend! They are best represented in their entirety (not piecemeal), even if only one standard is meant to be identified. Importance is emphasized when placed boldly on the first pages of each board member’s folder and read by a different board member at each meeting.

Leaders are measured by organizational success, which occurs by organizational standard maintenance. It is the legend of leader success and compliance.

An organization's policies are in addition to organizational standards and are a post-development of established and approved organizational standards. Performance standards/job descriptions for all administrative staff and board members are necessary. A statement of all work expectations (performance standards/job descriptions) and evaluations are according to policy and approved by organizational leadership to prevent entropy.

Such attention to detail for a corporation indeed takes time and effort. However, it is something like baking a cake—with the right ingredients, it turns out divine!

Carolyn Taylor, Ed.D. M.N. R.N.