

How NSHBA Works

What Is NSHBA? A nonprofit trade association charged to improve the home building industry. It is composed of a Board of Directors, Executive Committee and various committees and councils and members.

The Board of Directors defines the mission statement and what the organization is in broad goal statements. The Strategic Plan further refines the goal statements by answering questions concerning what the organization wants to become in three to five years. The Board of Directors in turn adopts an Annual Program of Work & Budget, as proposed by the officers, which determines the specific “*what*” is to be done for the year.

The Executive Committee takes the Program of Work and determines the “*when*” and “*who*” thereby tasking each of the Committees and Councils with their charge for the year.

The Committees and Councils in turn determine exactly “*how*” and “*where*” the event will be carried out.

This spirit of *teamwork* is how the association goes about realizing its goals. The Board of Directors provides guidance by adopting a strategic plan and the annual program of work & budget. The BOD does not manage or oversee the activities of committees and councils. Rather the executive leadership is responsible to use the annual program of work & budget much like a script or sheet music to enlist, guide and manage volunteers as they use the committee and council structure to accomplish the activities.

The Executive Committee sets the annual calendar and appoints the chairs of the committees and councils and coordinates and monitors their work. In turn the respective committee and council plans and decides *how* and *where* it is to be accomplished.

Because **teamwork** is important to the success of the association, the basic charge of the Senior Officers is two fold.

- ◆ Keep the group together, and
- ◆ Get the job done

The leadership skills used by the Senior Officers must always seek *keep the group together* by finding and emphasizing cooperation, shared common interests and consensus decision making. Avoiding the brash leadership styles of confrontation, making decisions for everyone and or pushing a personal agenda is a must.

Positive leadership skills to *get the job done* focus on fitting the volunteer with the right job so they are confident and positive about doing the job asked of them. Using pressure tactics and shame & intimidation of volunteers is simply a non-starter.

The Leadership Partnership: The key to a successful Presidency is the understanding that it is a “partnership”, with your committee & council chairs, your officers and the Executive Officer and staff. You must build and develop an open working relationship, built on trust, mutual respect and a shared understanding of each other’s roles and responsibilities.

Your executive officer is an invaluable source of information and support for you and the officers. While the EO is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the office and supporting various activities of the association it is difficult to also to expect

the EO to be responsible to motivate committee & council chairs to do their job in a timely basis.

The motivation of committee & council chairs to be accountable for their jobs is a key ingredient of the Leadership Partnership that is best undertaken by the senior officers of the association (*President, 1st VP, 2nd VP, Secretary and Treasurer*).

Volunteers - A trade association like NSHBA is a volunteer based organization with limited staff. The role of the staff is to administratively support the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Volunteers are expected to plan, organize and produce the work of the association with only limited staff support. Successful management and motivation of volunteers requires different methods and concepts than traditionally used by a business. The vitality and growth of an association is the result of an active and involved volunteer core! A willingness to volunteer comes from a desire to be recognized by one's peers and an individual's desire to make a difference. It also helps a lot if the assigned task is something that is fun! Recognition as motivation will work for many simple tasks but it is often not enough to get a commitment from a volunteer to accept a complex job. Complex tasks often require some skill or knowledge on the part of the volunteer. Unless a volunteer feels they have mastery of that specific ability their lack of confidence becomes a barrier to volunteering.

A sense of ownership by a volunteer also increases their level of commitment and follow-through. Building a sense of ownership occurs when two things happen. 1) The volunteer is recruited knowing that they are matched to the job based upon their skills and abilities. 2) Let volunteers design, plan and organize their work. This enhances feelings of ownership, which results in increased accountability. Committees and Councils are the framework where volunteers plan, organize and produce the association's work. Once volunteers are secured, the issue of recognition comes full circle as the astute President provides ongoing motivation, recognition and approval by reporting the progress of the volunteer's activities to their peers and thanks the volunteer by name for their service, in front of the local association. It is important that this recognition be further enhanced with a spirit of fun and camaraderie so that the term of service is fondly remembered.

Strengths & Weakness: When leading a statewide volunteer organization one must recognize that there are inherent strengths and weakness and account for them. The ability to provide volunteer recognition is such an example. Although involvement at the state and national level has more prestige and is considered to be a strength, it is also a significant weakness. As NSHBA only meets four times a year there are limited opportunities for recognition as compared to a Local HBA that will meet 8 to 12 times a year. The recognition and reward of volunteers in front of their peers at the Local HBA is far more powerful than praise presented at the state level. For this reason the senior officers of NSHBA need to recognize NSHBA volunteers at the Local HBA level. To accomplish this requires the NSHBA Officers to visit Local HBAs. Local visits to express appreciation or a heart felt personalized note to volunteers by NSHBA senior officers is important!

The problem of time and distance involved in traveling to participate in state meetings is another significant problem. To a great degree the use of conference calls

can be just as effective as a face-to-face meeting. But the fundamental issue of concern for the volunteer still is "time away from their business". There is no single answer to resolve this concern, as there are many different reasons why individuals fear to leave their business. The best thing that officers can do is to promote the notion that there are "special personal gifts" that a volunteer receives if they are willing to serve. First, by making time to volunteer they will learn to become a better steward of their priorities, and their time. The gift they give to their business is one of delegation and empowerment. Third, knowledge learned as a volunteer are valuable and transferable to their business. But these "gifts" cannot be received unless they actually volunteer.

Organization Focus: It is important for leaders to recognize that there are differences between the various committee and councils and manage their time and attention accordingly. Typically, a large investment of a leader's time and effort is committed to "governance committees" such as Strategic Planning, Membership Development and the Executive Committee, as they are necessary to manage the activities of volunteers. Volunteers are in a sense much like temporary employees. They demand a lot of oversight and frequently "reinvent the wheel". So governance needs are important.

Unfortunately, this often leaves the association leadership with little time to realize the real mission of the association - ***member services and benefits!*** Individuals join an association to receive services and benefits. Services or benefits for the individual member take the form of a professional designation or participating in networking activities to cultivate business contacts. Services or benefits also accrue for the good of the industry or to a specific business or industry segment. A successful governmental affairs initiative is such an example. It is important that the senior leadership makes every effort to reach well beyond the governance role and make a special effort to do two things.

- (1) Enlist and motivate volunteers to accomplish the activities of committees and councils, which provide member services and benefits.
- (2) Inform members about what the association does for them and how they can receive the benefits and services that the association offers.

The NSHBA Mission Statement ...

The Nebraska State Home Builders Association represents the residential and light commercial building industry at the state level and assists member associations and individual members by pursuing a suitable environment to ensure the vitality of the building industry for the benefit of its members, and to meet the housing needs of the citizens of the great State of Nebraska.

Mission Goals:

- To be an effective governmental affairs and political action force that advocates the needs and concerns of our industry at all levels of government.
- To provide professional development opportunities for members.
- To be a strong communications link between, and among, national, state and local associations.
- To be a strong association through increased membership, and to support the growth and effectiveness of local associations.

Committees & Councils are classified as either Governance Committees which addresses internal affairs and do not provide member benefits. Or Industry Services Committees whose activities benefit the industry as a whole or businesses in an industry segment. The target of Member Services Councils is to benefit individuals in the industry.

Industry Services

Codes & Standards Committee
 Industry Awards Committee
 Green Building Task Force
 Affordable Housing Task Force

Government Affairs Trustees
 NSHBA PAC
 NSHBA BUILD Fund

Member Services

Associates Council

Professional Development Council

Governance

NSHBA Executive & BOD
 Membership Development

Nominations & Install

NAHB, NSHBA and Local HBA Relationships: Special consideration must be paid to our affiliated organizations. Each Local HBA receives its charter from the state association and the national association charters the state association. But do not be fooled by this vertical hierarchy, in fact it operates much differently, more like a confederacy instead of a union. Local HBA's make far more money through their Home & Garden Show and Parade of Homes, than through membership dues. The national and state organizations are dependent upon the Local HBA to collect and remit dues on a timely fashion on their behalf. The point being, the power lies at the local level and respect and consideration should be shown!

This makes everything from planning a golf outing to reaching agreement over political issues **a big deal!** The key is to not have hurt feelings. Agreement by consensus is the preferred way of operating. The resolution of issues by a simple majority is how things are done in democratic organizations, but sometimes this can prove to be a contentious process. As the leaders of the state association you are charged to ***keep the group together and get the job done.***

There are real differences in viewpoints that can make keeping the group together very challenging. The Metro Omaha Builders Assn market accounts for 55%-60% of the state's single-family starts, with HBA of Lincoln having a market share of 20%-25%, and the remaining is made up from the rest of the Local HBAs which are the HBA of Norfolk, Columbus HBA, Central NE HBA (*Grand Island*), West Central NE HBA (*Kearney*), and the North Platte HBA. Further stratification occurs as there are 9 production builders in Omaha whose combined housing starts make up 20% of all the single-family starts in the state and who have the financial resources to hire a lobbyist to represent their unique viewpoint.

Again the responsibility of the state leadership is to ***keep the group together and get the job done***, while respecting the different viewpoints and local HBAs.