

Integral Leadership

Collaborative but decisive **INTEGRAL LEADERSHIP** is key to strengthening colleges and universities as well as renewing public trust in higher education, requiring leaders to function effectively in many domains.



The Leadership Imperative, Washington, DC: AGB, 2006, p. 10.

West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
Board of Governors Summit

Stonewall Resort
Roanoke, West Virginia
July 20-21, 2012

Board Development Checklist

1. **Committee Structure.** The board has a standing committee with responsibility for board development activities.
2. **Statement of Expectations.** The board has a written statement of expectations for board member participation and behavior.
3. **Board Orientation.** The board has a comprehensive orientation program for new members, which includes discussions of current and long term strategic issues, and of board culture and values.
4. **Board Education.** The board provides opportunities for board members to educate themselves on their governance responsibilities, including campus visits and attendance at regional and national meetings.
5. **Annual Plan.** The board develops an annual plan with goals and objectives, and issues an annual report on its accomplishments.
6. **Annual Retreat.** The board has an annual retreat that focuses on strategic priorities and strengthening board relationships.
7. **Board Assessment.** The board regularly assesses its own performance, both formally with an outside facilitator, and informally by conversations among board members and with their chief executive and other leaders.
8. **Consent Agenda.** The board uses a consent agenda to make efficient use of time, and to insure that major strategic issues receive appropriate attention.
9. **Relationships.** The board holds periodic meetings with major internal and external constituencies (e.g. political and governmental leaders, community and business leaders, other advisory or governing boards, faculty groups and student groups.)
10. **Risk Assessment.** The board has a procedure for assessing risks and thinking about "What if?" questions.
11. **Legal Requirements.** The board periodically reviews its own policies and legal responsibilities to eliminate or modify those that are out of date, and to better understand both the restrictions and possibilities of its legal responsibilities.
12. **Crisis Communications.** The board has a crisis communications plan which it periodically reviews and updates.

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General Eisenhower's Advice

In September, 1943, Admiral Mountbatten, who had recently been named supreme Allied Commander for Southeast Asia, wrote General Eisenhower requesting advice on how best to perform his new role.

The challenges (and risks) faced by Mountbatten and Eisenhower were significantly different from those facing system and institutional executives and their boards, but the advice offered by General Eisenhower provides some useful guidelines for navigating complex organizational environments populated by strong personalities and big egos. The following are some pertinent thoughts and quotations from Eisenhower's letter:

- ... unity "involves the human equation and must be met day by day. Patience, tolerance, frankness, absolute honesty in all dealings... is absolutely essential."
- "Without a great degree of decentralization no... command can be made to work."
- Eisenhower told Mountbatten that mutual respect and confidence among the senior commanders was the most important ingredient in achieving allied unity.
- "All of us are human and we like to be favorably noticed by those above us and even by the public. An Allied Commander-in-Chief... must more sternly than any other individual repress such notions. He must be self-effacing, quick to give credit, ready to meet the other fellow more than half-way, must seek and absorb advice and must learn to decentralize. On the other hand when the time comes that he feels he must make a decision, he must make it in a clean fashion and on his own responsibility and take full blame for anything that goes wrong; in fact he must be quick to take blame for anything that goes wrong whether or not it results from his mistake or from an error on the part of a subordinate."
- While clear-cut lines of authority are important, in the last analysis "your personality and your good sense must make it work. Otherwise... action... will be impossible."

Smith, Jean Edward, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, [New York: Random House, 2012] 292-293.