



Ten Common Commitments for Strengthening the Chair-CEO Relationship

10 Commitments		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Comments
Keep everyone focused on the organization's mission.	The board and staff have a clear sense of organizational, programmatic and individual efforts to achieve the organizational mission	1	2	3	4	5	
	The board and CEO annually agree on the organization's priorities.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The organization uses resources on projects not truly related to its core objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	
	Everyone in the organization understands who is responsible to whom and for what.	1	2	3	4	5	
	There is a strategic plan in place.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The organization has reviewed and agreed on its mission, vision, and values.	1	2	3	4	5	
Clearly define and respect each other's roles.	The Chair and CEO know their roles and responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO know what to do if an issue appears to fall under both their mandates.	1	2	3	4	5	



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Clearly define and respect each other's roles.	The Chair and CEO have outlined their goals, roles, leadership styles and needs, and obligations to each other and the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO have a formal, written document outlining their roles and responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The staff understand the roles and responsibilities of the Chair and CEO.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Board of Directors understand the roles and responsibilities of the Chair and CEO.	1	2	3	4	5	
Avoid territorial behavior.	The Chair and CEO speak openly about responsibilities and feel comfortable raising issues, concerns, or questions.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO engage in territorial disputes.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO respect and acknowledge each other's roles.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO have an understood and agreed upon balance of power.	1	2	3	4	5	



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Add 'innovative' value.	The Chair and CEO are courageous, forward thinking, and innovative.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO are focused on the impact they are having on the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO have a strong relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO seize opportunities to create exciting change that has a positive impact on the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO avoid risks.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO are held accountable for what they accomplish.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO seek out opportunities to develop and grow the organization in new ways.	1	2	3	4	5	



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Help to make the Board stronger.	The Chair and CEO initiate discussions and activities to make the Board stronger.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Board understands the governance model they are working under.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Board has a committee or set structure to manage director succession and recruitment.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO keep board members inspired and engaged.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO help to balance the workload of the Board among directors.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The board conducts an annual self-assessment and develops annual board development goals based upon the results of the assessment	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and the CEO seek out development opportunities for all board members	1	2	3	4	5	



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Develop a positive dynamic between the staff and the Board.	There is a lack of respect between the staff and the Board.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO model the type of relationship that should occur between the Board and staff.	1	2	3	4	5	
	Lines of accountability are clear between the staff and the Board.	1	2	3	4	5	
	There is a lack of personal and professional boundaries between the staff and Board.	1	2	3	4	5	
	Staff are occasionally invited to board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	
	Staff and board members know how and when to communicate with each other.	1	2	3	4	5	



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Make communications a priority	The Chair and CEO are transparent with each other.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO filter and channel information to key audiences.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO consistently thank people for their contributions to the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO have regular communication with each other.	1	2	3	4	5	
Maintain a united front.	The Chair and CEO are consistent and united on important issues.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and/or CEO acts in a self-interested manner.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO engage in respectful debate and disagreement.	1	2	3	4	5	



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Protect and support on another.	The Chair regularly brings the concerns of other Board members to the attention of the CEO.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The CEO regularly briefs the Chair on day-to-day matters that impact the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair provides meaningful feedback to the CEO.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO can speak with candor about what is working and what is not working.	1	2	3	4	5	
Keep passions and emotions in check.	The Chair and CEO are committed to the organization and its mission.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO can be objective about specific issues concerning the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO exhibit wisdom and patience.	1	2	3	4	5	
	The Chair and CEO never lose sight of the goals and the mission of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	

Adapted from: "The Chair-CEO Relationship: Ten Commitments for a Better Partnership," by Michael Naufal of Ray & Berndtson, 2005.