

## Getting at the Right Questions: Strategic Planning Committee

**A challenge for committee members is knowing when to ask questions and what questions to raise.** Below are questions the strategic planning committee members can discuss to ensure they are effectively exercising their oversight duties.<sup>1</sup>

### Oversight:

- Are we efficiently reviewing and making recommendations for the strategic plan on an annual basis to ensure it is always up-to-date and reflects the organization's priorities and long-range vision? How do we ensure the strategic plan reflects and furthers the organization's mission, vision, and values?
- Are we effectively providing advice on corporate policy, strategic issues management, long-range plans, and, in general, the overall strategic direction of the organization and its subsidiaries and/or affiliates?
- What is our process for reviewing proposals and recommending new business ventures and alignment opportunities, including affiliation/collaboration proposals, new technology, and proposals for discontinuing services? Are we receiving the information we need to make knowledgeable recommendations? Are we having generative discussions at committee meetings and asking the right questions to fully understand the "why" of these proposals?
- Are we effectively reviewing present information systems in view of current technology and making recommendations regarding systems to more fully integrate clinical, financial, and managerial functions, and to more fully support strategic business objectives and operational needs?
- Do we adequately engage physicians and other key stakeholders in the strategic planning process?

<sup>1</sup> Some boards can conduct strategic planning at the full-board level; we recommend assessing whether a standing committee is needed or if an *ad-hoc* task force could be created instead when the plan needs to be updated, for planning the annual strategy retreat, and/or when a new strategic plan needs to be created.

### **Working with Management to Execute Strategy:**

- How do we sufficiently monitor implementation of the strategic plan and major strategic initiatives? What is our process for this, and could it be improved?
- How do we hold management accountable for accomplishing the strategic plan? Do all major strategic projects have measurable criteria for success, and is it clear who is responsible for implementation?
- Are we working closely with management to gain awareness of, and properly prepare to respond to, matters of business disruptions?

Governance support professionals can help the strategic planning committee fulfill its oversight responsibilities by posing these questions and ensuring it has a clear charter that addresses these duties. Click the links below for sample strategic planning committee templates:

[Sample Strategic Planning Committee Charter—Freestanding Hospital Board](#)

[Strategic Planning Committee Charter—Health System Board](#)

*For additional samples of committee charters, visit our template library at [www.governanceinstitute.com/templates](http://www.governanceinstitute.com/templates).*

