

Governance vs. Management



In a congregation, different matters need to be discussed and conducted at different levels of leadership.

Trustees are the steward's of the congregation's vision. They are invested with the congregation's trust to manage as a "fiduciary", which is a legal responsibility to manage money or property for the benefit of members and not for themselves. Chairs are not fiduciaries.

In general, governance needs to be conducted at the board level, while management should be conducted by working groups or task forces.

Definitions:

Governance is thinking strategically about the organization: leading the organization by setting a vision for what the organization should be now and in the future. Governance meetings focus on goal setting and monitoring progress toward goals. The focus is on the big picture and not on how the work will actually be done—the operational aspects.

- The board of the congregation is the governing body.
- There are three modes of governance: **fiduciary, strategic, and generative.**

Management is the how: the work that needs to be done to achieve the congregational goals.

- TAS has working groups which are ongoing teams to handle the operational/management functions and task forces are time-limited teams set up to achieve governance or management goals.
- Without a permanent Executive Director, our Board is responsible for some management tasks of the congregation.

Exercise: Is it Governance or Management?

1. The congregation is coming upon its 50th anniversary, and members are suggesting that there be a year of celebration. The leadership agrees, and planning must begin.

Is the act of planning your congregation's anniversary celebration governance or management?

2. The congregation has been shrinking as more and more families move to newer suburbs further away from the congregation. The congregation has begun offering religious school classes in a rented space in a new neighborhood. Congregants are asking for services to be held in that space as well.

Is the decision of whether or not to conduct services at the suburban location governance or management?

3. A prominent member has died and her family wishes to establish a fund in her honor. They have asked the leadership to consider what kind of fund would best serve the congregation's needs.

Is the decision about the purpose of the fund governance or management?

4. The grounds of the congregation are beginning to look overgrown and there is talk of hiring a new landscaping contractor.

a. Is the decision to allocate funds to hire a landscaping contractor governance or management?

b. Is the act of hiring a landscaping contractor governance or management?

5. There are members of the congregation who want to start a new committee to plan social events for empty nesters.

Is the act of creating the new committee - governance or management?
