BOARDS

The Board Reset Checklist

Twenty-five things a healthy charity board does. Tick what is true today, be honest, and use the gaps as your agenda for the next three meetings.

When a board is not working it is rarely because people do not care. It is almost always the way the board has been set up to work. Take fifteen minutes with your chair, or the whole board, and go through this list together. Fix the sign that stings the most first.

1. Meetings that decide things

- [ ] Papers and reports go out at least five days before the meeting, and directors are expected to have read them.
- [ ] The agenda names two or three real decisions or questions, not just a list of reports.
- [ ] More than half of each meeting is discussion and decision, not people reading updates aloud.
- [ ] Every decision is minuted with who is doing what by when.
- [ ] Meetings start and finish on time, and finish with a two-minute "how did that go" check.

2. Shared load

- [ ] Every director has one clear job between meetings, even a small one.
- [ ] The chair and the CEO or founder are not the only people who ever speak.
- [ ] The board has a simple skills list and knows which skills it is missing.
- [ ] There is a plan for who joins the board in the next two years, and who steps down.
- [ ] New directors get an induction: constitution, finances, strategy, a site visit and a coffee with the chair.

3. Clear duties

- [ ] Every director has talked through their legal duties in the last twelve months.
- [ ] Conflicts of interest are declared at the start of each meeting and recorded.
- [ ] The board knows the key compliance dates (ACNC, ASIC or state regulator, insurance, grants) and who owns each.
- [ ] Finances are presented in a form every director understands, with the three numbers that matter most.
- [ ] The board has read the constitution in the last two years and it still matches how you actually operate.

4. Connected to the work

- [ ] A staff member, volunteer or person you serve shares a short story at most meetings.
- [ ] Directors visit the work at least once a year.
- [ ] The board can say in one sentence who the organisation serves and what changes for them.
- [ ] Staff know who the board is and what it does, and the board knows the staff by name.
- [ ] Difficult news reaches the board early, not after it is in the newsletter.

5. A plan beyond this year

- [ ] There is a written strategy, under five pages, that the board reviews at least twice a year.
- [ ] Funding for the next twelve months is mapped by source, with the gaps named.
- [ ] The board has talked about succession for the chair and the CEO or founder.
- [ ] One planning day is booked each year, away from the normal meeting.
- [ ] The leader's own wellbeing is on the agenda at least twice a year, and someone is responsible for asking.

Your score

20 to 25: a strong board. Protect it, and plan succession before you need it.
13 to 19: solid in places. Pick the section with the fewest ticks and spend the next three meetings on it.
Under 13: the board is carrying the leader, or the leader is carrying the board. A reset is worth a planning day. This is fixable.

Want a hand with the reset?
Book a free hour with Dave at **tenxed.community**, or take the free board health check in the TenXed app at **app.tenxed.community**. No cost, no pressure, one clearer next step.