



July 2025

ClubED

Bite-Sized Learning

CEI Monthly Newsletter



Club Education Institute

Welcome to the July edition of our Bite-Sized Learning newsletter.

Governance & Accountability

Effective governance is the cornerstone of any successful organisation, especially for clubs and member-based entities. For board directors, understanding the chain of accountability and the key responsibilities that come with their role is essential in ensuring the club remains aligned with its core purpose and delivers value to its members.

The Accountability Chain

At the heart of governance lies a clear accountability structure:

- **Membership:** The ultimate source of authority. Members define the club's purpose and are the reason for its existence.
- **Board of Directors:** Elected by the membership, the board is accountable to them. Directors are stewards of the club's mission and values.
- **CEO (or General Manager):** Appointed by the board, the CEO is responsible for implementing board policies and managing operations.

The board is not the captain — it's the lighthouse. Anchored in member expectations, it guides the club safely forward.

- **Staff:** Hired by the CEO, staff carry out the day-to-day work at the club.

This chain ensures that decisions and actions flow from the members' expectations down through the club, while accountability flows back up to the members.



The Three Pillars of Governance

To fulfill their role effectively, directors must focus on three key areas of governance:

1 Engaging in Ongoing Dialogue with Members

Directors must maintain a continuous conversation with the membership to understand their evolving expectations and the outcomes they want to see. This dialogue helps the board stay grounded in the club's core purpose and ensures that strategic decisions reflect the members' needs and aspirations.

2 Translating Expectations into Criteria for Success

Once expectations are clear, the board must translate them—along with their own values and relevant external factors—into written policies and measurable criteria for success. These criteria form the foundation for strategic planning, resource allocation and performance evaluation.

3 Monitoring and Ensuring Policy Implementation

Governance doesn't stop at setting direction. Directors must regularly monitor whether the club is meeting the established criteria. This involves reviewing reports, asking critical questions and holding the CEO accountable for results. It's about ensuring that the club is not only doing things right but doing the right things.

An Analogy: The Board as a Lighthouse

Think of the board as a lighthouse. It doesn't steer the ship (that's the CEO's job), but it provides the light that guides the ship safely to shore. The lighthouse must be firmly anchored (grounded in member expectations), shine consistently (clear policies and criteria) and be visible from afar (transparent monitoring and reporting). Without it, the ship risks drifting off course.

Supporting Tools: The Director Calendar Guide

To support directors in fulfilling their governance responsibilities, a [Director Calendar Guide](#) is available. This tool outlines all compliance and governance activities on a monthly basis, helping directors stay on track with key tasks such as policy reviews, financial oversight, member engagement and strategic planning milestones.

Conclusion

Good governance is not a one-time event—it's a continuous cycle of listening, translating and checking. By understanding the accountability chain and focusing on these three pillars, board directors can ensure their club remains vibrant, relevant and member-focused.

Upcoming CEI Seminars Round 2 are commencing:

Topics:

- Evolve or Fade: Strategies to Secure Your Club's Future
- Refinance Wisely: Timing, Techniques, and Tactics to Save

Upcoming Training

CEI has scheduled F2F Mandatory Director Training in all regions as well as Virtual sessions, plus the following new courses:

- Board Chair Masterclass
- Finance for Non-Accountants
- Financial Decision Making for Directors and Managers.

Find out more [here](#) or call ClubASSIST on 1300 730 001.

Customised Training

Interested in bespoke or mandatory training for your board or region? We're ready to deliver face-to-face sessions for groups of 10 or more! To discuss your learning needs, email me at RMendes@clubsnsw.com.au.